



# Pension and Health Benefits Committee

## Agenda Item 6a

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**December 17, 2019**

**Item Name:** Mental Health: An Update on Challenges and Innovations

**Program:** Health Benefits

**Item Type:** Information

### **Executive Summary**

This item provides an update to the August and November 2019 Pension and Health Benefits Committee (PHBC) presentations that focused on the challenges and innovations of mental health access and treatment among the California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS) members and in California. For this update, three large health plans, Anthem Blue Cross, Blue Shield of California, and UnitedHealthcare will each provide an overview of its activities to address mental health access and services for CalPERS members.

### **Strategic Plan**

This item supports the CalPERS 2017-2022 Strategic Goal "Transform Health Care Purchasing and Delivery to Achieve Affordability."

### **Background**

Over the last several months, the PHBC has been thoroughly analyzing CalPERS' role in ensuring members receive high-quality mental health care, and how CalPERS is working strategically and innovatively with our health plans and other stakeholders to achieve mental and physical wellness for our members. In August 2019, CalPERS team members presented an overview of mental health disorders, their social, financial, and physical impacts and discussed barriers to achieve mental health wellness, including stigma and a shortage of mental health care providers. In November 2019, the Department of Managed Health Care presented to the PHBC on their responsibility to protect CalPERS members' health care rights and ensure a stable health care delivery system through their enforcement of the Knox Keene Act and the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008 (MHPAEA). Additionally, Kaiser Permanente provided a report on their own challenges and innovations regarding mental health access and treatment using a standard set of guidelines that CalPERS team members put together based on PHBC feedback. The PHBC requested that all the large health plans present using the same set of guidelines.

## **Analysis**

The three remaining health plans with large CalPERS membership, Anthem Blue Cross, Blue Shield of California, and UnitedHealthcare, will each provide an overview of efforts to improve mental health access and services for CalPERS members. These plans will also demonstrate how they are integrating mental health and primary care, addressing the social drivers of health, and are complying with mental health parity laws.

## **Budget and Fiscal Impacts**

Not applicable.

## **Benefits and Risks**

CalPERS must continue to stay focused on mental health and its deleterious effects, and ensure that screening and early detection continues to occur. CalPERS staff will continue to analyze and monitor trends in the mental health care of our members and hold its plans accountable. There are financial and societal risks of not caring for the mental and physical health of our members.

## **Attachments**

Attachment 1 – Anthem Blue Cross Presentation

Attachment 2 – Blue Shield of California Presentation

Attachment 3 – UnitedHealthcare Presentation

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