



Memorandum

To: Gold Coast Health Plan Providers

From: C. Albert Reeves, M.D.
Chief Medical Officer

Re: **Meningococcal Outbreak Health Advisories**

Date: August 16, 2016

On June 24 and August 3, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) issued health advisories related to an outbreak of invasive meningococcal disease occurring in Southern California, primarily among adult gay and bisexual men.

Meningococcal disease is caused by the bacteria *Neisseria meningitidis* and can cause meningitis and bloodstream infections (sepsis). Although rare, meningococcal disease is serious and potentially fatal.

“Vaccination is the best protection against meningococcal disease,” said Dr. Karen Smith, CDPH Director and State Public Health Officer.

The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) is reminding providers that the meningococcal vaccines recommended for treatment of at-risk individuals (meningococcal conjugate or polysaccharide vaccines) are covered without a Treatment Authorization Request (TAR) or Service Authorization Request (SAR) through fee-for-service Medi-Cal.

For members of Gold Coast Health Plan (GCHP), these vaccines are covered without restriction at any participating pharmacy through the pharmacy benefit for those over the age of 18 and are covered without prior authorization under the medical benefit in accordance with CDC ACIP recommendations.

Qualified pharmacists may administer the vaccination to at-risk patients without obtaining a prescription from a physician. DHCS and GCHP encourage providers to vaccinate those who are at risk.

Click [here](#) and [here](#) to read the CDPH Health Advisories in their entirety.

For more information about coverage of meningococcal vaccines through fee-for-service Medi-Cal, click [here](#) to refer to the Drugs: Contract Drugs List Part 1 section of the Medi-Cal Contract Drugs List.

Click [here](#) for information about GCHP's coverage of meningococcal vaccines through the Plan's pharmacy benefit.

If you have any questions, please contact Anne Freese, GCHP's director of pharmacy, at afreese@goldchp.org.