

Advocacy Needed for California Dual Eligibles

We want to alert advocates for people who are dually eligible for Medi-Cal and Medicare to an important opportunity to provide input to the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) on a developing initiative to integrate and coordinate the care of dual eligibles.

In April of this year, DHCS received a contract from the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to design an integration model or models in up to four pilot counties (including one County Organized Health System (COHS) counties and one two-plan model county). These models will seek to integrate into one delivery system financed by one funding stream the full array of Medicare and Medi-Cal services including preventive, acute, behavioral health and long term supports and services (institutional long term care as well as Home and Community Based waiver services, adult day health care, In-Home Supportive Services and more).

As part of this design process, DHCS has released a [Request for Information](#) (RFI) and is seeking responses from all interested stakeholders - including advocates for seniors and people with disabilities. The RFI seeks input on many important issues such as:

- What should the enrollment rules be (opt in v. opt out)?
- Which long term supports and services should be integrated?
- How best to integrate behavioral health services?

DHCS has set an aggressive timeline for developing these models. It is imperative that advocates raise questions, concerns and ideas now to ensure they are considered as the state makes important policy decisions.

Responses on the RFI are due by June 1. NSCLC will be preparing a detailed response and plans to share a draft with advocates by May 27. Advocates are encouraged to develop their own comments and are welcome to base them on comments developed by NSCLC. If you have questions, please contact Kevin Prindiville (kprindiville@nsclc.org), Georgia Burke (gburke@nsclc.org) or Anna Rich (arich@nsclc.org).

The [RFI](#) includes more details about the state's plans including a timeline for the

project.

Background

California was one of 15 states to receive an integration design contract from CMS. The contract was awarded jointly by two new offices within CMS that were created by the Affordable Care Act. The two offices are the Medicare-Medicaid Coordination Office (known by many as the "Duals Office") and the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation. More information about the state integration demonstration project (including a list of the 15 states that received contracts) is available at the Medicare-Medicaid Coordination Office [website](#).

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