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California Commission on Aging

# AGEWATCH

## State Announces MOU for 8-County Duals Demonstration Project; Agreement with CMS Includes Key Changes

California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) today announced the release of the signed Duals Demonstration Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between DHCS and the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). Approval of the MOU was a necessary step before the state can implement the transition to integrate care for dual eligible beneficiaries as a component of California's Coordinate Care Initiative (CCI).

According to the announcement from DHCS Director Toby Douglas, "the MOU signifies the implementation of the state's program to better integrate California's fragmented service delivery systems under a program to be called **Cal MediConnect**. Through Cal MediConnect, eligible beneficiaries will have the opportunity to combine all their Medicare and Medi-Cal benefits into one health plan -- and receive more coordinated and accountable care. Enrollment is expected to begin no earlier than October 2013."

Changes from the state's original plan found in the MOU include:

- Enrollment will begin in October 2013, rather than March. Beneficiary notification will begin in July.
- Enrollment phase-in strategies for each county are outlined in the MOU, rather than implementing enrollment for all counties on the same timeline.
- Enrollees will have the option of disenrolling at any time after signing up.
- The state's Home and Community Based Service waivers will remain in effect.
- The 8-county demonstration will cover approximately half of the individuals in the State's original proposal, with enrollment for Los Angeles County capped at 200,000.

To access a fact sheet on the agreement or read the full MOU, please visit <http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/Pages/demoMOU.aspx>.

*Excerpted from DHCS electronic announcement Important MOU Announcement*

## Sequester to Reduce Older Americans Act Program Support

With the onset of federal sequestration, this month the Obama Administration released updated information about how the cuts will be applied. As reported by the National Council on Aging, of most importance to programs and services for older adults are:

- A 5% cut in nondefense discretionary funding
- A 5.1% cut in nondefense mandatory funding (Social Security and Medicaid are excluded and Medicare cuts are limited to 2% on provider payments)

Discretionary spending reductions include:

- Administration for Community Living (ACL): \$75 million
- Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP): \$23 million
- Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP): \$175 million
- Social Services Block Grant (SSBG): \$117 million
- Prevention and Public Health Fund: \$51 million
- Section 202 Housing for the Elderly: \$19 million

Since the reduction for most programs will be taken from funds available for the remaining seven months of the fiscal year, the Administration reports that the cut is effectively 9% for nondefense programs. The White House Office of Management and Budget Sequestration report is available at

[http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/assets/legislative\\_reports/fy13ombjcsequestrationreport.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/assets/legislative_reports/fy13ombjcsequestrationreport.pdf)

Advocates are still waiting to hear how the Administration will apply several of the cuts. For example, the ACL budget must be reduced by \$75 million, but it's not clear yet how individual Older Americans Act programs will be affected.

**NCOA's greatest concern is that local organizations, which have been extremely innovative to continue providing services despite limited resources, may be forced to incur lengthy waiting lists or eliminate programs altogether.**

Excerpted from National Council on Aging Policy News, *Congress Fails to Stop Sequester*, March 4, 2013

## State Health Insurance Assistance Programs Impacted by Sequester

According to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), the \$85 billion across-the-board sequestration spending cuts will reduce state funding for grants from the State Health Insurance Assistance Program, known as SHIP. According to CMS, SHIP Basic Grants will be reduced by 4.4%. SHIPs provide personalized counseling and assistance to 45 million Medicare beneficiaries and their caregivers who need help navigating the increasingly complex health care system, including the Medicare program.

CMS reports that together with the Department of Health and Human Services, every step is being made to mitigate the effects of these cuts.

Information obtained from March 22, 2013 CMS Correspondence to State Officials.



## CALIFORNIA SENIOR GATEWAY

### Empowering seniors with information and resources

The Senior Gateway is a one-stop website intended to provide seniors, their families, and caregivers with the information they need to connect to helpful services and resources, to find answers, and to solve problems.

Find information on such topics as:

- Avoiding and reporting abuse and neglect.
- Preventing fraud, financial abuse, and common scams.
- Health care information.
- Your rights.
- Other resources.

Senior Gateway is sponsored by the Elder Financial Abuse Inter-agency Roundtable (E-FAIR), a working group with representatives from many California State agencies, and is hosted by the California Department of Insurance.

[www.seniors.ca.gov](http://www.seniors.ca.gov)

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## COMMISSION ON AGING SETS 2013 MEETING SCHEDULE

The California Commission on Aging has set its meeting schedule for the remainder of 2013.

April 24-25 Placer County

June 11-12 San Francisco

Sept 25-26 Sacramento

Nov 12-14 Sacramento

For additional information about the Commission and meetings, visit

[www.ccoa.ca.gov](http://www.ccoa.ca.gov).

### UC BERKELEY EVENT TO FOCUS ON AGING SOCIETY

A vision of society in a time of unprecedented aging will be the focus of *The Challenge of an Aging Society*, an event of the Berkeley School of Social Welfare. Scheduled for 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. on April 29<sup>th</sup>, the event will explore innovative responses to the challenges faced by senior communities in the Bay Area. The event is open to the public.

Presenters include:

**Richard Adler**

Distinguished Fellow, Institute for the Future

**Robert Edmondson**

CEO/Executive Director, On Lok Lifeways

**Anne Hinton**

Executive Director, San Francisco Department of Aging and Adult Services

To RSVP or for more information, please email [socialwelfare@berkeley.edu](mailto:socialwelfare@berkeley.edu)



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### Upcoming Events

**April 10, LGBT & Aging; Focus on Equality** sponsored by the Institute on Aging and UCSF Division of Geriatrics. [www.ioaging.org](http://www.ioaging.org) for information and to register.

**April 24 - 25, California Commission on Aging Meeting, Placer County.** [www.ccoa.ca.gov](http://www.ccoa.ca.gov) for information.

**May 23-24, Triple A Council of California, Sacramento,** [www.4TACC.org](http://www.4TACC.org) for information.

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