



**Department of Health Care Services
Non-Specialty Mental Health Services (NSMHS)
2026 Outreach & Education Plan**

**San Francisco Health Plan
50 Beale Street, San Francisco, CA 94105**

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Introduction

San Francisco Health Plan (SFHP)'s mission is to provide superior, affordable health care emphasizing prevention, and promoting healthy living to the largest number of low-income San Francisco residents possible. Many Medi-Cal members experience mental health symptoms that are undertreated each year. Since the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, these findings have been exacerbated with low utilization rates of non-specialty mental health services (NSMHS). In order to increase the utilization rates of these services among Medi-Cal members, particularly among those groups that are found to be underutilizing care, SFHP has created the following member and provider outreach and education plan to increase awareness about the type of mental health services available through SFHP, to help destigmatize seeking care, and ultimately increase utilization of NSMHS.

SFHP delegates the management of behavioral health services to Carelon Behavioral Health, a National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) - Accredited Managed Behavioral Health Organization (MBHO). Members requiring NSMHS can contact Carelon directly to connect with an appropriate provider. SFHP maintains monitoring and oversight of Carelon to ensure the delivery of high-quality, accessible, and effective behavioral health services.

This plan complies with All Plan Letter (APL) 24-012, which is a guideline issued by the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to help managed care plans (MCPs) improve access to mental health services. It was created in response to California Senate Bill (SB) 1019 and aims to address gaps in the use of these services. The plan requires managed care organizations to reach out and educate members and their primary care providers each year about the mental health services that are covered under the plan. This initiative supports the state's CalAIM program, which promotes the idea that there should be no wrong door for accessing necessary mental health services, ensuring that individuals understand how to access the mental health care they need.

The following plan outlines the activities undertaken and planned by SFHP's Behavioral Health department (hereafter Behavioral Health department) in collaboration with SFHP's Population Health Management department to achieve the goals of the outreach and education plan.

SFHP will conduct a comprehensive outreach campaign to increase awareness and utilization of NSMHS among our members. This campaign aims to address gaps in mental health service utilization with special attention to identified disparities.

Stakeholder and Tribal Partner Engagement

Community Engagement

In 2025, Carelon collaborated with SFHP's Enrollment and Outreach Services team to attend pop-up tabling events for community engagement and outreach on NSMHS. Carelon plans to identify a point of contact to partner with to support in future community events.

In June 2025, Carelon also conducted a presentation to the Department of Public Health to highlight NSMHS offered through Carelon. Additionally, Carelon's Provider Quality Management team met with the provider group, North East Medical Services, in August 2025 to partner on medical and behavioral



health integrated care. In this discussion, Carelon reviewed the case management and PCP referral forms to initiate referrals to Carelon for NSMHS. Throughout the year, Carelon has also been in multiple discussions with several Community-Based Organizations to initiate outreach and build partnerships.

Additionally, SFHP developed and shared a general Medi-Cal behavioral health benefit brochure and the DHCS's general "Guide to Medi-Cal Behavioral Health: What's Covered and How to Get Care" to SFHP providers via the December Provider Newsletter to be distributed to SFHP Medi-Cal members within provider clinics.

Tribal Partner Engagement

In collaboration with Tribal Liaisons, SFHP will tailor marketing, education and outreach materials to Tribal members and communities. SFHP will make all marketing, education and outreach materials available to Tribal members through collaborative meetings, as well as print, digital, and social media channels.

Member Advisory Committee (MAC) Engagement

SFHP met with the Member Advisory Committee (MAC) on September 3, 2025, to discuss outreach activities in Fiscal Year 2024-2025 and to gather feedback as well as recommendations for Fiscal Year 2025-2026. The MAC recommended developing a postcard that includes information about Carelon Behavioral Health and distributing it with community-based organizations.

The MAC also recommended SFHP share information with Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) and restructure the SFHP website to allow more visibility for mental health-related resources. SFHP responded by:

- Redesigning the SFHP website to provide more visibility for mental health resources
- Providing digital education through channels like the member newsletter
- Tabling and joining pop-up events

Quality Improvement and Health Equity Council (QIHEC) Engagement

San Francisco Health Plan presented the plan to the QIHEC to review outcomes including population health metrics for NSMHS, web analytics, numbers of providers and members reached through training and marketing efforts. This Council highlighted the outreach and marketing channels that appear to have the best reach to members, including pamphlets shared with community-based organizations.

SFHP incorporated feedback from the QIHEC engagement by creating outreach and education materials that can be distributed to SFHP members when attending primary care appointments with SFHP partner providers. The outreach and education materials include pamphlets that describe the behavioral services offered and how to access the services.

San Francisco County Department of Mental Health Engagement

SFHP works closely with the San Francisco County Behavioral Health Services (SF CBHS) for specialty mental health services (SMHS), and the San Francisco Department of Public Health Primary Care Behavioral Health providers for non-specialty behavioral health services (NSMHS). SFHP and Carelon partner with county programs and providers to support the implementation of this plan. SFHP will



continue to work with the SF County to coordinate efforts for marketing, education, and outreach materials to expand the reach into the community.

Annually, Carelon's Health Equity program description and work plan are presented and approved by the Corporate Quality and Medical Management Committee (CQMMC). Ongoing input is received from members, providers, and stakeholders to continuously refine and improve the Health Equity program. Member input may be received through targeted focus groups.

Carelon Behavioral Health Engagement

SFHP met with Carelon Behavioral in December 2025 to discuss the plan and Carelon's support of the increased education and outreach efforts. Carelon offers PCP decision support, enabling PCPs to consult with Carelon's psychiatrist for guidance on psychiatric diagnoses and medications. SFHP will continue partnering with Carelon to develop member-facing materials in 2026.

In 2025, SFHP's managed behavioral health organization, Carelon, conducted a presentation to the San Francisco Department of Public Health, highlighting the services offered and the channels for accessing services. Carelon's provider quality management team met with North East Medical Services (NEMS) in August regarding improving integrated behavioral health and medical care. Carelon reviewed outreach efforts for case management and behavioral health referral forms for primary care providers to initiate referrals to Carelon for behavioral health services.

Multiple Points of Contact for Member Access

SFHP members can access behavioral health benefits through multiple access points. Members can call the SFHP Customer Service phone number at 1(415) 547-7800, 1(800) 288-5555 (toll-free), or 711 (TTY) Monday-Friday, 8:00am - 5:00pm. Members can also go to SFHP's in-person location at 550 Kearny Street, Lower Level, San Francisco, CA 94108 to speak with a SFHP representative to learn more about accessing BH benefits—the Service Center hours are Monday-Wednesday and Friday 8:30am – 5:00pm; Thursday 8:30am – 3:00pm. Members can view the SFHP website at sfhp.org to learn about accessing BH benefits.

Additionally, SFHP members can access BH benefits by calling Carelon Behavioral Health at 1(855) 371-8117 or by visiting carelonbehavioralhealth.com. Members can also access BH benefits by calling or going in-person to the San Francisco County Behavioral Health Access Center to be connected to BH services—they are located at 1380 Howard Street at 10th, 1st Floor, San Francisco, CA 94103 and can be contacted at the CBHS Access Help Line 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at 1(415) 255-3737 or 1(888) 246-3333 toll free. Lastly, a member can contact the MCPs ombudsman to learn more about the covered benefits and how to access the benefits—the Ombudsman's Office can be reached toll-free at 1(888) 452-8609. The TTY number is 1(800) 952-8349. Office hours are Monday-Friday, 8:00am – 5:00pm.

Population Needs Assessment

SFHP's Annual Population Health Management (PHM) Population Assessment includes an analysis of SFHP's membership and leading health concerns. According to the 2024-2025 PHM Population Assessment, the most prevalent conditions among SFHP's membership are hypertension, serious mental illness, depression, diabetes, and motor neuron disease. When comparing 2023 to 2024, SFHP saw a

decrease of 3.22% in prevalence of serious mental illness but a 4.48% increase in prevalence of depression across all members. Among SFHP's Care Plus (HMO D-SNP) population, serious mental illness was one of the top three leading chronic conditions as of November 2025. Cantonese-speaking members encompass over 80% of the Care Plus (HMO D-SNP) population and approximately 20% of those Cantonese-speakers are diagnosed with serious mental illness while approximately 11% are diagnosed with depression.

Other key statistics as of November 2025:

- Serious mental illness, anxiety disorders, depression, and psychotic disorders are among the top ten leading conditions among all SFHP members.
- Serious mental illness
 - More prevalent among male members at 51.3% of the SFHP population
 - 23.4% of members with serious mental illness are ages 22 to 44
- Anxiety disorders
 - More prevalent among female members at 60.3% of the SFHP population
 - 40.5% of members with anxiety disorders are ages 22 to 44
- Depression
 - More prevalent among female members at 59.9% of the SFHP population
 - 30% of members with depression are ages 22 to 44

SFHP will ensure outreach materials are posted at SFHP Service Center as well as shared with partner CBOs that serve SFHP members, specifically providing information on telehealth behavioral health services available through SFHP's delegate, Carelon Behavioral Health.

Utilization Assessment

A utilization assessment stratified by gender, race, age group, and language was completed. Due to data limitations, the stratification of utilization by sexual orientation, gender identity, and disability is still under development. SFHP is committed to improving the quality of data in future years. The data source for information on sexual orientation, gender identity, and disability will be thoroughly evaluated, and strategies will be implemented to enhance data collection and ensure more comprehensive reporting.

Unique Utilizers | Gender



Figure 1: NSMHS Utilization by Gender

Unique Utilizers | Race

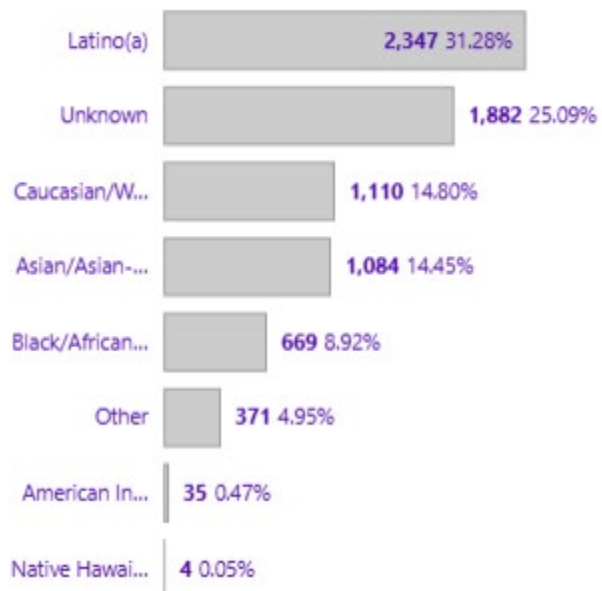


Figure 2: NSMHS Utilization by Race

Unique Utilizers | Age Band

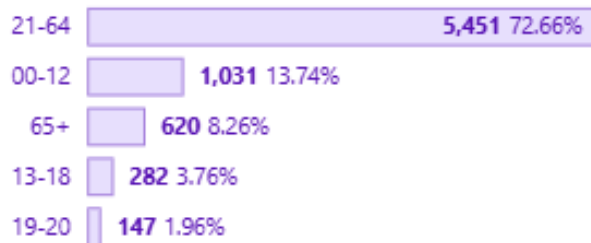


Figure 3: NSMHS Utilization by Age Group

Unique Utilizers | Language

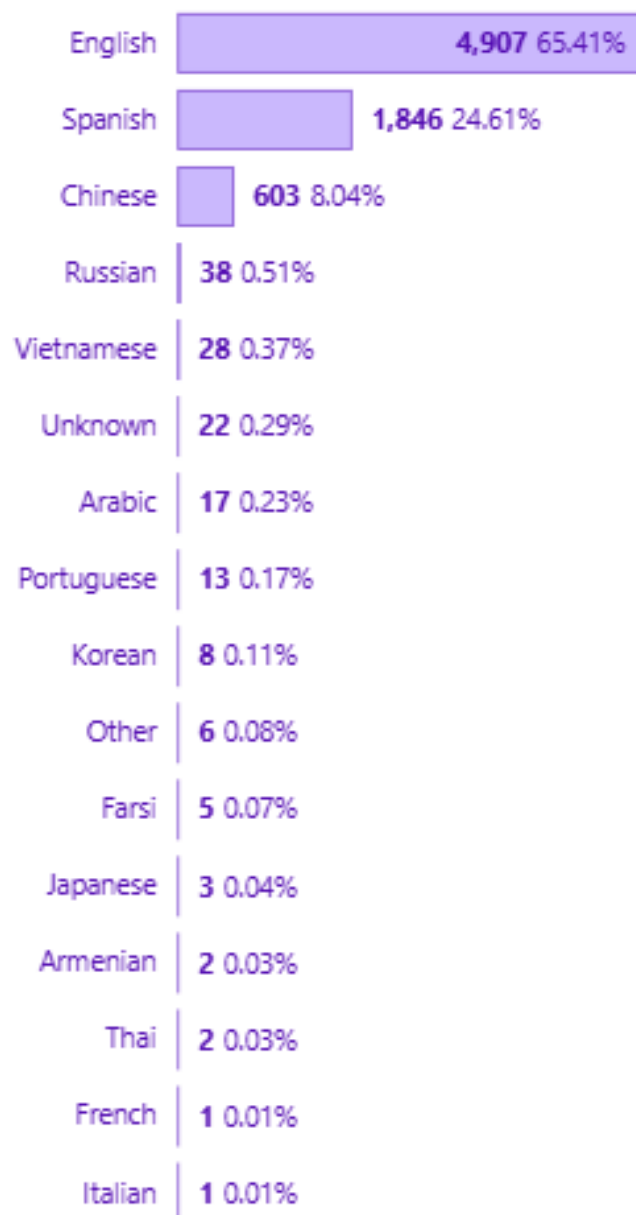


Figure 4: NSMHS Utilization by Language

Utilizing Members	Disabled	Disabled with COB Comprehensive	Disabled with Parts A & E	Total
Inpatient				
Professional				
Professional	147			147
Evaluation and Management (E&M)	77			77
Individual Therapy	19			19
Psychological Testing	9			9
Initial Evaluation	4		2	6
Group Therapy	6			6
Consultation	2			2
Assessment	2			2
Family Therapy	1			1
Medical				
Medical				
Medical	3		1	4
Outpatient				
ABA Services				
Adaptive Behavior Treatment	1,249	36		1,285
Protocol Modification-Professional	395	8		403
Parent Training	168	1		169
Treatment Planning	73			73
Assessment	20			20
Medication Management				
Medication Management	655		85	740
Initial Evaluation	23		2	25
Other - Expanded Therapy				
Ancillary Services	69		49	118
Home Services	60		13	73
Psychological Testing	20			20
Consultation	10			10
Injections	6			6
Case Management Services	4			4
Evaluation	2			2
Ancillary Labs and Testing	2			2
Other	1			1
Assessment	1			1
Therapy				
Individual Therapy	1,990		377	2,367
Initial Evaluation	201	1	45	247
Family Therapy	52			52
Group Therapy	39		7	46
Wraparound				
Community Based Services	3			3
Total	5,313	46	581	5,940

Figure 5: NSMHS Utilization by Disability

Member Outreach Plan

Strategy
Launch a member education campaign on the SFHP website and social media platforms detailing key benefits information and self-management tools; tailor education to key statistics.
Release member education via the SFHP Member Newsletter on key benefits and self-management tools.
Release provider education via the SFHP Provider Newsletter on key benefits information.
Develop a postcard in all threshold languages which includes information on Caredon Behavioral Health and distribute with partner community-based organizations.

SFHP member outreach will focus on:

1. Providing information about covered NSMHS benefits.

2. Educating members on how to access NSMHS.
3. Reducing stigma associated with seeking mental health services.
4. Ensuring culturally and linguistically appropriate outreach.

Social Media Outreach

This outreach campaign is targeted to:

- Members who have underutilized NSMHS.
- Members from diverse backgrounds, with utilization assessment stratified by race, ethnicity, language, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, and disability.
- Members who may be experiencing mental health symptoms that are undertreated.
- Members who may have been impacted by the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, which has exacerbated low utilization rates of NSMHS.
- Communications will be released in Medi-Cal threshold languages – English, Chinese, Spanish, Vietnamese, Tagalog, and Russian.

Social media posts will direct members to Carelon Behavioral Health as well as health education articles, fact sheets, and self-management tools on the SFHP website. Campaigns will include social media posts with paid advertising on platforms such as Google, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Threads.

Member Communications

Digital Communications

SFHP releases three health education articles monthly on the [SFHP website](#). Articles are based on data from the SFHP Population Analysis, San Francisco Community Health Assessment, emerging health issues, HEDIS (Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set) rates, and organizational priorities. In 2026, behavioral health articles will be published during holiday and national health observances, including but not limited to:

- Women's History Month
- Men's Health Month
- Autism Awareness month
- Mental Health Awareness month
- LGBTQ+ Pride month

Many articles already exist on the SFHP website addressing behavioral health services, stigma reduction, and managing mental health conditions. In 2026, these articles will be repurposed and updated, with topics including but not limited to:

- Symptoms of mental health issues
- Depression
- Seasonal Affective Disorder
- Anxiety disorders
- Postpartum depression
- Managing stress
- Identifying and treating alcohol and substance use
- Suicide prevention



- Dyadic care

Print Communications

Your Health Matters (YHM) is a quarterly member newsletter mailed to all SFHP member addresses. The Health Education and Marketing department publish articles in the member newsletter to inform members about important behavioral health services and how to manage or prevent mental health issues. These publications are translated into all threshold languages, written at a sixth grade reading level, and offered in alternative formats. In 2026, newsletter articles will include information on, but not limited to:

- Mental wellness
- Covered behavioral and mental health benefits
- Where and how to access behavioral and mental health care

Resources from Health Education

SFHP offers members access to HealthTrio's Healthwise Knowledgebase, a medical encyclopedia providing evidence-based self-management tools regarding a suite of health topics, symptom descriptions, pictures, and treatment options. These topics include, but are not limited to, mental health, identifying depressive symptoms, managing stress, and more. SFHP members can access Healthwise Knowledgebase through the [SFHP Member Portal](#).

The SFHP Population Health Management team offers providers and members with a [Health Education Library](#) of fact sheets to prevent and manage health conditions, including fact sheets on managing mental health and reducing stress. Fact sheets include information on behavioral and mental health services provided by SFHP, as well as the City and County of San Francisco. Members can download fact sheets online at any time and can request to have these fact sheets printed and mailed to them. All fact sheets are translated into SFHP's threshold languages, written at a 6th grade reading level, and available on accessible formats such as large print.

Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services

SFHP is committed to providing care to members that are culturally and linguistically appropriate. Free language assistance services are available. Interpreting or translation services, information in a preferred language or another format, as well as auxiliary aids and services, can be requested by contacting SFHP at 1 (800) 288-555; TTY 1(888) 883-7347 or through California Relay Service 711. Monday through Friday, 8:30am to 5:30pm. This call is free.

SFHP Care Plus (HMO D-SNP) Customer Service will be available starting October 1, 2025, at 1(415) 539-2273, 1(833) 530-7327 (toll-free), or 711 (TTY). Fax is also available for Care Plus members at 1(415) 547-7825 or email at memberservices@sfhp.org.

When members have a doctor's appointment, they can have a Qualified Health Interpreter with them if needed. Medical providers will provide either a face-to-face or phone interpreter at no cost. Members can ask their provider office or medical group to arrange for Interpreter Services when they make an appointment. Members can call Customer Service at 1(800) 288-5555, Monday through Friday, 8:30am



to 5:30pm. Members are encouraged to utilize professional interpreters, available at no cost, for medical appointments. Outreach materials will be reviewed for readability and will be made available in the relevant languages prior to publishing.

Primary Care Provider Outreach

SFHP has multiple methods for educating providers on behavioral health services to ensure PCPs have adequate access to information on how to refer members to behavioral health care. The following outreach channels and ongoing resources outline SFHP's strategy to educate and engage network providers through a comprehensive, multi-channel approach. This plan ensures providers receive timely, relevant information to support high-quality care delivery and compliance with regulatory requirements.

Provider Newsletter

SFHP will publish regular newsletters featuring articles on behavioral health, clinical guidelines, operational updates, and best practices. Content will emphasize destigmatizing mental health, culturally sensitive care, and new resources. Publications will be concise and accessible to all providers.

Provider Memos

Targeted memos will be distributed to communicate urgent updates, changes in guidelines, and regulatory direction. Memos will clarify new processes, highlight compliance requirements, and share best practices.

Face-to-Face Outreach

Provider Engagement Representatives will conduct scheduled site visits to deliver in-person education, reinforce key initiatives, and gather provider feedback.

Joint Operations Committee (JOC) Meetings

Provider education topics will be included on the agenda for JOC meetings with network providers. These meetings will be used to discuss new guidelines, address provider questions, and share performance insights.

Provider Onboarding Training

Comprehensive onboarding will be provided for new providers, including education on SFHP benefits, referral processes, and available tools. The Behavioral Health section will cover services for SFHP members and referral pathways.

Carelon Provider Resources

SFHP will maintain and promote Carelon's behavioral health screening and referral guides. These resources will be accessible via SFHP and Carelon provider web pages.

Provider Portal

New tools and content will be developed for the provider portal with educational materials, guideline updates, and resources addressing disparities and destigmatization.