

**To:** AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana Obstetric, Midwife, and Family Practice Practitioners

**Date:** March 1, 2023

**Subject:** Changes to the AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana Perinatal Quality Enhancement Program (PQEP) Incentive Program

**Summary:** AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana has made changes to the Perinatal Quality Enhancement Program (PQEP), a value-based compensation program for participating obstetric, midwife, and family practice practitioners. Changes include alignment of Louisiana Department of Health's (LDH) efforts to reduce health disparities with the addition of an incentive for Health Equity. Modifications to the PQEP are detailed in this document, as well as the updated PQEP manual.

The Louisiana Department of Health has prioritized maternal and child well-being in state health improvement efforts, citing that Black/African Americans are twice as likely to die from a pregnancy-associated cause than their white counterparts<sup>1</sup>. Currently, 33 of Louisiana's 64 parishes are designated by the March of Dimes as low-access or 'maternity care deserts' – areas where birthing persons have little or no access to maternity health care services, either because of the absence of services or the existence of barriers to accessing pre, perinatal and postnatal care.<sup>2</sup> Preterm birthrates in New Orleans and Baton Rouge were among the highest in the nation, with 14.4% and 12.3% respectively<sup>3</sup>. AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana is working to actively support providers in addressing these disparities and achieving equitable maternal outcomes for our Black/African American members.

**Effective April 1, 2023**, the PQEP program includes a Health Equity measure to promote equitable outcomes for our pregnant Black/African American members. Practice scores are calculated as the ratio of attributed Black/African American members who received timely Prenatal and Postpartum Care compared to those Black/African American members receiving obstetrical care, who are eligible for these services. Maternity providers eligible to participate in the PQEP and whose rate is ranked in the top 50<sup>th</sup> percentile will be eligible for an incentive under this metric. A fixed funding pool will be distributed across these eligible

<sup>1</sup> Louisiana Department of Health. (2022). Louisiana State Health Assessment. Retrieved December 28, 2022, from <https://dashboards.mysidewalk.com/louisiana-state-health-assessment/community-engagement-report>

<sup>2</sup> SOURCE: <https://www.marchofdimes.org/research/maternity-care-deserts-report.aspx>

<sup>3</sup> SOURCE: <https://www.marchofdimes.org/sites/default/files/2022-11/2022-MarchofDimes-ReportCard-UnitedStates.pdf>

providers on a sliding scale whereby the highest performing providers receive a larger share of the available pool.

The full PQEP manual can be found on our website:

<https://www.amerihealthcaritasla.com/provider/resources/qep.aspx>

**Questions:**

Thank you for your continued support and commitment to the care of our members. If you have questions about this communication, please contact AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana's Provider Services department at 1-888-922-0007 or your [Provider Network Management Account Executive](#).

**Missed an alert?**

You can always find a complete listing of provider alerts on the [Newsletters and Updates](#) page of our website.

**Need to update your provider information?** Send full details to [network@amerihealthcaritasla.com](mailto:network@amerihealthcaritasla.com)

**Where can I find more information on COVID-19?**

AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana has updated its website to streamline communications and important notifications about COVID-19. Please visit <http://amerihealthcaritasla.com/covid-19> for update-to-date information for both providers and members, including frequently asked questions, cancellations and postponements, and important provider alerts from AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana and the Louisiana Department of Health.