



**A project of the Worker Education & Resource Center, Inc. funded
by L.A. Care Health Plan**

Care Navigator Apprenticeship Pilot (CNAP), 2016-17

Request for Applications (RFA)

I. CARE NAVIGATOR APPRENTICESHIP PILOT

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) has increased eligibility and access to over 1 million L.A. County residents, which includes Medi-Cal expansion patients (low-income, childless adults ages 18-64) who are new to L.A. Care and their network of contracted safety net clinics. Many of these patients are unaccustomed to having health care coverage and are more likely to have complex health, behavioral health, and social needs when presenting at their assigned clinic/provider. These new L.A. Care members require continuous education about the health care delivery system, including information and support on utilizing and navigating physical and behavioral health services, investing in their own health care on a regular basis, and keeping their health care coverage active.

Community clinics with limited staff and resources have struggled to expand services at a pace rapid enough to serve newly insured Medi-Cal patients under the ACA. In addition, community clinics are requiring to change by adapting their business model, infrastructure, and care delivery approaches to manage new patients with complex care issues in the post-ACA environment. Many clinics have expressed a need for workforce development assistance in coordinating care for these members, integrating medical care with behavioral health and social services, strengthening team-based care, and improving quality of care. One approach to assist clinics with care coordination of high utilizer patients has been using Community Health Workers functioning as Care Navigators as a member of a medical team to address health and psychosocial issues outside of the clinic setting. **Attachment A – Selected Care Navigator Care Models** provides examples of Care Navigator programs providing team-based care in the health care safety net nationwide.

As a response to this community clinic resource need, L.A. Care is launching the Care Navigator Apprenticeship Pilot (CNAP). The objective of CNAP is to assist community clinics in improving care for complex patients with multiple chronic conditions by: (1) preparing and deploying Care Navigators into primary care and (2) providing targeted education to the medical team to promote Care Navigator integration. Additionally, L.A. Care intends to determine if CNAP yields a return on investment by decreasing emergency department and inpatient hospitalization costs to support a business case to continue and expand this innovative care delivery model as a workforce initiative. One desired outcome of CNAP will be for the participating clinics to value the Care Navigator contribution and offer them employment at the end of the pilot period.

To carry out this work, L.A. Care funded the Worker Education & Resource Center (WERC), a non-profit organization with 15 years of workforce development experience, to work with L.A. Care Safety Net Initiatives Department to develop and implement CNAP. CNAP's design reflects the expertise of an advisory committee that includes L.A. Care; the Community Clinic Association of Los Angeles County; WERC; Health Care LA, IPA; and select community clinic representatives.

On behalf of L.A. Care, WERC will select five clinics to participate in CNAP in 2016-2017 and will recruit, hire, educate, and pay the apprenticeship salary for 10 Care Navigators (two per clinic) using an apprenticeship model.¹ Selected clinics will gain two (2) WERC trained Care Navigators who will be deployed into medical teams providing care coordination at each clinic. Each clinic will be required to identify a clinical team member to be a preceptor/mentor for the Care Navigator, who will be

¹ An apprenticeship is an earn-and learn model in which an individual is paid to learn a set of skills through a combination of classroom instruction and work-based learning.

responsible for observing and documenting competencies achieved. WERC will orient and provide ongoing support for the preceptor/mentor and the entire medical team for the duration of the pilot. **Attachment B – CNAP Roles** provides more information about the required members of a clinic medical team to accept a Care Navigator and their respective roles.

CNAP will use the following criteria for selecting eligible community clinic patients who are high cost/high utilizers for the Care Navigator caseload:

- Patients with two (2) or more identified chronic conditions
- Two (2) or more emergency department visits within a 6-month period
- Two (2) or more inpatient hospital admissions within a 6-month period
- Two (2) or less inpatient admissions with at least one primary diagnosis of:
 - Congestive heart failure
 - COPD/asthma
 - Coronary artery disease

II. ABOUT L. A. CARE HEALTH PLAN AND THE WORKER EDUCATION & RESOURCE CENTER

L.A. Care Health Plan (Local Initiative Health Authority of Los Angeles County) is a public entity and community-accountable health plan serving residents of Los Angeles County through a variety of programs including L.A. Care Covered™, Medi-Cal, L.A. Care’s Healthy Kids, L.A. Care Cal MediConnect Plan, and PASC-SEIU Homecare Workers Health Care Plan. L.A. Care is a leader in developing new programs through innovative partnerships designed to provide health coverage to vulnerable populations and to support the safety net. With over 1.9 million members, L.A. Care is the nation’s largest public health plan and has been awarded an Excellent Accreditation by the National Committee for Quality Assurance. For more information, please visit www.lacare.org.

The Worker Education & Resource Center (WERC) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization initiated in 2002 that offers high quality workforce development programs for workers to improve their skills and prepare for high demand occupations in the health care sector. WERC’s mission has expanded to include offering career ladder, skills development, and educational workshops and programs for the frontline workforce that provides healthcare services to Los Angeles County’s most medically vulnerable communities. For more information, please visit www.we-rc.org.

III. COMMUNITY CLINIC BASELINE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The following community clinics are eligible to apply for the CNAP 2016-2017:

- Non-profit clinics contracted with L.A. Care through Health Care LA IPA, primarily serving Los Angeles County’s low-income and uninsured adults who qualify for free or low-cost health care programs, that are a stand-alone, private non-profit 501 (c)(3) status clinic, and
 - Has a minimum aggregate Medi-Cal membership (including Plan Partner membership) of 1,000 members at the clinic organization level, and
 - Has the infrastructure to identify patients who have chronic conditions and are high utilizers of emergency services and hospitalizations

IV. RESOURCES AVAILABLE THROUGH THE CARE NAVIGATOR APPRENTICESHIP PILOT

L.A. Care is the sole funder of the CNAP and has selected WERC to recruit, hire, train, and deploy Care Navigators into care teams at community clinics as Apprentices. An apprenticeship is when an individual is paid to learn a set of skills through a combination of classroom instruction and work-based learning. WERC has created the Care Navigator Apprenticeship with the state and federal departments that oversee apprenticeship programs. Upon completion of the apprenticeship program, the Care Navigator will receive an industry-recognized credential, and qualify for a permanent position as a Care Navigator/Community Health Worker.

Selected community clinics will receive workforce resources from WERC in the form of Care Navigator Apprentices and educational support for the Care Navigator Apprentices, their Preceptor/Mentor, and their medical team in which they are deployed. Apprentices' salaries, benefits, and administration cost incurred to deploy Care Navigators to the community clinic will be the sole responsibility of WERC. At no time during the CNAP will the community clinics receive direct funding.

V. SELECTION PROCESS

Applications must be complete at the time of submission and include all required documentation requested in the application. Applications will be reviewed by a multi-disciplinary committee of both L. A. Care and WERC staff as well as external experts. Evaluation of applications are based on a variety of criteria including but not limited to the following:

- **Leadership Engagement**
 - Key leadership (i.e., CEO, CMO, COO) is engaged and committed to CNAP's vision, goals and objectives, and implementation
 - Evidence of supporting documentation (i.e., strategic plan) promoting or using Care Navigators in a care coordination team-based model
- **Lead Clinician Engagement**
 - A lead clinician is identified (i.e., MD, NP, RN) and committed to CNAP's vision, goals and objectives, and implementation
- **Mentor/Preceptor**
 - Able to identify and appoint a committed clinic manager or team member who can serve in this role for the duration of the CNAP
- **Team-Based Care/Patient Centered Medical Home Delivery Model**
 - Clinic has an established team-based care model for targeted patient population
- **Eligible Patient Population: High Cost/High Utilizers of Emergency Department and Inpatient Hospital Admissions**
 - Serve patients who have high levels of inappropriate use of emergency department and inpatient hospital admissions, including 30-day readmissions
- **Eligible Patient Population: Complex Patients**
 - Serve patients who have 2 or more identified chronic conditions
 - Able to identify their patient population with 2 or more identified chronic conditions
- **Clinic Referral Coordination Process**
 - Functional referral coordination process with documented procedures to assist patients with referral follow up

- **Electronic Medical Record (Data Collection)**
 - Documented Electronic Medical Record system
 - Level of use within clinic structure
 - Functionality within clinic departments/units for data analysis
- **Clinic Onboarding and Training Infrastructure**
 - Documented formal employee onboarding program or procedures and contacts
- **Value-Based Programs**
 - Documented level of outreach and services available to the patient population served to community-based services and social supports outside of the clinic

WERC will be conducting a site visit with applicants to conduct an Onsite Readiness Assessment as part of the application evaluation process. L. A. Care Health Plan and WERC will also take into consideration during the application review process that patient demographics and geographic diversity of L.A. County is reflected in the selected community clinics. Applicants will be scored and ranked for: (1) meeting minimum requirements; (2) completeness of application; and (3) onsite readiness assessment.

The ranked score of any application will not be published or provided to applicants as permitted under applicable law. Decisions are final and no appeals from applicants will be considered.

VI. MONITORING AND OTHER EXPECTATIONS

WERC will monitor the selected organizations to assure that they are performing according to the terms of the agreement between WERC and the clinic. Selected organizations will be required to submit timely reports to WERC that provide complete and accurate documentation of program activities and progress during the pilot.

VII. TERMS OF AGREEMENT

The term of Agreement will commence on the date noted in the fully executed Memorandum of Understanding between WERC and the clinic. WERC will select clinics that will receive Care Navigators Apprentices and targeted education support for one year.

VIII. INFORMATIONAL WEBINAR

To assist prospective applicants, L.A. Care and WERC will hold one (1) Informational Webinar with a limit of two persons per clinic:

Wednesday, April 13, 2016 at 1pm-2pm

To access the webinar, please use the following information:

WebEx Access:	https://conferencing.lacare.org/orion/joinmeeting.do?MK=998959357
Phone Number:	1-855-846-1604 (Toll Free Access Dial In Number)
Access Code:	998-959-357

IX. SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION

Please e-mail in Adobe Acrobat .pdf format the following documents to CNAP@we-rc.org:

- The email subject line should read: Organization's Name, Care Navigator Apprenticeship Pilot application.
- The attached electronic documents from 1 through 4 should be titled as follows:
 1. *Organization's Name, CNAP Application 2016-17**
 2. Signed W-9
 3. Organization's Name, 501 (c)(3) IRS notification letter
 4. Organization's Name, Board of Governors (Board of Directors) and list of Senior Management (list should include names, titles, and connections to L.A. Care Health Plan. If no connection to L.A. Care please write "*no connection*" next to each name).

**Please overnight (e.g. Fed Ex) one signed original copy + seven (7) hard copies of Document 1.*

Documents 2 through 4 are to be sent only electronically, no need to send hard copies.

Send hard copies to: Shani Byard, Worker Education & Resource Center
1545 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 500, Los Angeles, CA 90017.

All the electronic and hard copies of the full application and attachments are due:

April 28, 2016 by 5:00pm

We highly discourage walk-ins.