



PHC's Medical
Equipment Distribution
Services Program
(PMEDS)

Program Overview

PHC's Medical Equipment Distribution Services program was developed in response to COVID-19 and became effective July 1, 2020. The program started as a pilot project to provide access to medical devices that could be used to help treat and care for members while they remained at home during the pandemic. The program would allow for providers to remotely assist or monitor a members health and quickly identify if a face-to-face visit or hospitalization was needed.

The program provides access to the following devices:

Blood pressure monitors & additional cuff sizes

Oximeters

Thermometers

Vaporizers

Humidifiers

Scales for infants, toddlers and adults

Nebulizers and Nebulizer kits

Some talking devices for low vision members

Medication lock boxes



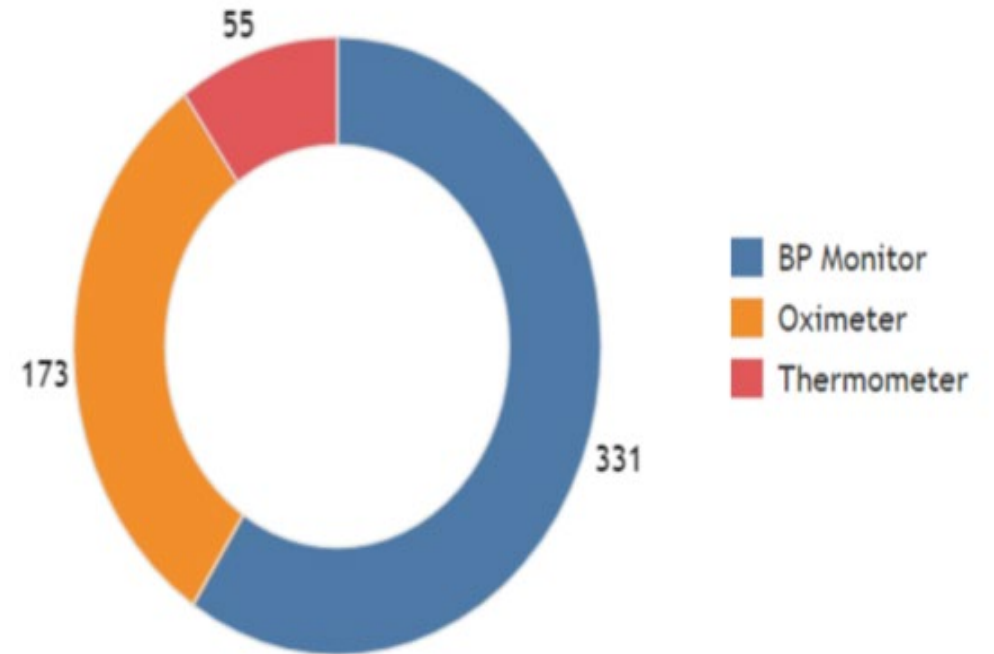
Phase 1 – Pilot

- 1. What is the issue? What are we seeking to address?**
 - Variety of data utilized to understand homebound patients, clinic and hospital closures, telehealth visits, ED visits for hypertension and asthma, inpatient admissions, COVID-19 Tier levels by county, etc.
- 2. Why should we do this? What benefits will the pilot provide?**
 - Opportunity to triage, treat and monitor high-risk patients remotely.
- 3. What are the objectives and targets? What are we seeking to do and deliver?**
 - Purchase BP Monitors, Thermometers and Oximeters to support members in need. Rural and underserved communities as primary areas of focus.
- 4. What are the boundaries? What is in scope?**
 - Distribution in partnership with FQHCs, RHCs and Tribal Health clinics in the northernmost region territories where access to local pharmacies and hospitals is very limited. Easy request process.
- 5. What is the timeline to complete the pilot?**
 - 3 months or more if needed.



Phase 2 - Evaluation

- Evaluation period: July - September 2020
- 27 Healthcare Organizations participated
- 559 total devices sent to members
- Avg. 186 requests received per month
 - 331 BP monitors
 - 173 Oximeters
 - 55 Thermometers
- High utilization of requests for Hypertension, Asthma, COVID-19, Diabetes, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, and many other reasons



Phase 3 – Operationalize & Scale

In October 2020, post successful evaluation, PHC's leadership approved the PMEDS program to become fully operational, which would allow all contracted and eligible specialists, hospitals and all other primary care providers and clinicians to request devices from PHC for members.

Implementation strategies:

- Internal staffing and program team established as oversight for ongoing operations
- Internal tracking, monitoring and reporting of devices managed outside of the Treatment Authorization Request process
- Device guidelines and request protocols firmed up and communicated to the provider network
- Additional devices added to the program in anticipation of the Medi-Cal Rx carve-out
- Creation of simplified user instructions for each device to educate members on proper use and storage
- Vendor partnership solidified for ongoing orders
- Marketing and education communication plan executed to support engagement and provider participation
- Bulk distribution mechanism put into place to allow providers the ability to establish internal structures for device distribution and education on usage to members
- Quarterly evaluations to capture provider and member satisfaction to inform future expansion opportunities

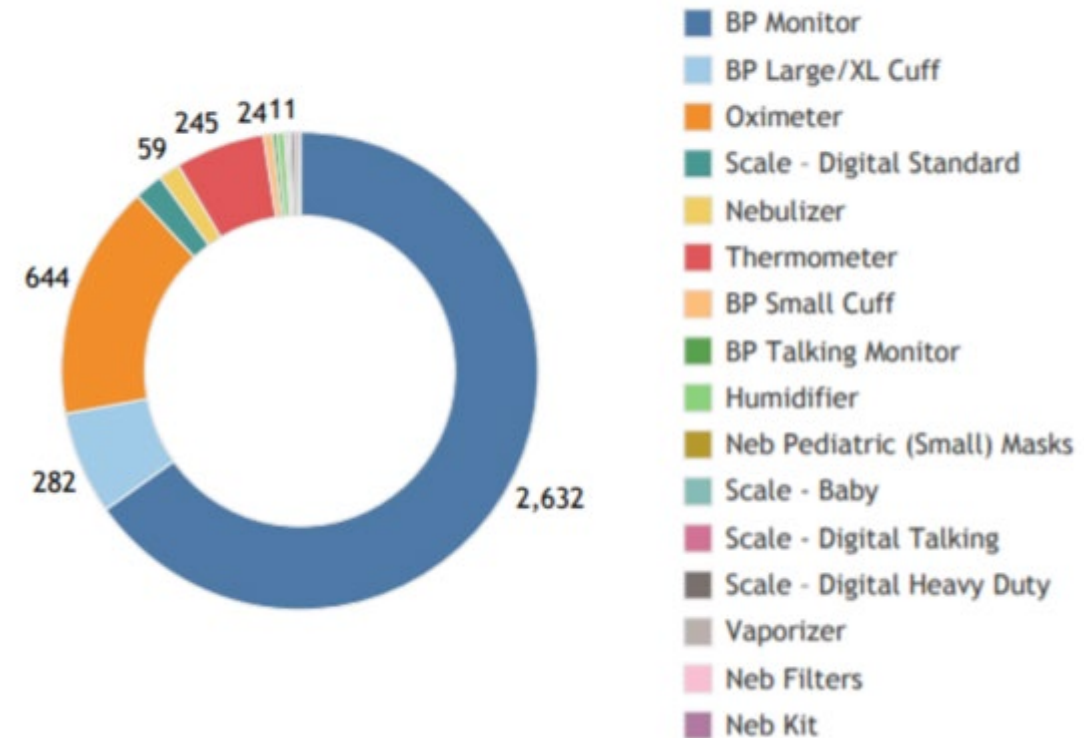




Phase 4 – Expansion & Growth

In response to the DHCS Medi-Cal Rx carve-out, which was initially anticipated to become effective January 1, 2021, PHC prepared for expansion of the PMEDS program to include additional devices that were expected to no longer be covered by the State.

- Added Nebulizers, Humidifiers, Vaporizers, and a variety of Scales to the program effective March 2021.
- Effective September 2021, Medication Lock Boxes became available.
- As of 8/31/2021, PHC distributed 4,039 total devices
- Average about 289 device requests per month
- 61 healthcare organizations participating
- High utilization of requests for Hypertension, Asthma, COVID-19, Diabetes, COPD, and many other reasons



Innovative Solution

Launching the PMEDS program was a huge undertaking for PHC. This program and structure is the first of its kind within the health plan and has never been done before. Additionally, PHC currently covers many of the devices (e.g., nebulizer, humidifier, vaporizer, and BP monitors) through the pharmacy benefit, at community pharmacies. This will end on January 1, 2022 when the pharmacy carve-out takes effect. Pharmacies do not generally want to bill us through a medical claims system, so members would have to try finding a Durable Medical Equipment (DME) company, to purchase these low margin products. Without the PMEDS program our members would have had great difficulty obtaining these devices.

- Streamlines the process for device requests and approvals
- Minimizes the need for local pharmacy fulfillment
- Provides medical equipment directly to members
- Saves members from risk of exposure to COVID-19, cost of travel and waiting in lines at pharmacies
- Virtual component that allows providers to triage, monitor and treat patients while they remain at home
- Allows providers and members to feel supported during times of hardship and unknowns
- Ensures that PHC is helping our members and the communities we serve, be healthy



Testimonials

Dignity Health

“The program has been great! The online form is very easy to use so I sent it to our cardiology team as well. I hope we can really get the program out to folks, great job all around!”
- Dr. Christopher Swales

Anderson Valley Health Center

“This program is really great, especially during a pandemic. Members were very happy to receive their home BP monitors.”
- Marcelle Scramaglia

Mendocino Community Health Clinic

“DME request form was very easy to fill out and fax. Patients reported receiving DME equipment quickly.”
- Araceli Zamora

Ole Health

“It was nice that we were able to get inventory on-site to distribute.”
- Jennifer Durst

Redwood Community Health Center

“Patients found it very helpful, and it also made it easier for us to treat patients.”
- Nickoale Byers

ResolutionCare

“This is a great program. I hope you keep it going. It really benefits our patients.”
- Emily Johnson

Questions?

- PMEDS program materials can also be accessed through PHC's web portal at: <https://tinyurl.com/z5vfrk>
- View our request form: <https://tinyurl.com/ac42hcnv>
- Contact us for any questions: request@partnershiphp.org

