

Population Health Management Learning Center (Learning Center)

Equity & Practice Transformation (EPT) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

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Population Health Management Learning Center
A fiscally sponsored project of the Tides Center, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization
Questions? Email info@pophealthlc.org

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Participating in the EPT

- 1. A practice has not been notified of their final award amount. Can the practice assume that it will be the original amount listed for the number of patients they submitted for?**
All practices can receive up to the maximum they applied for. DHCS has posted a document that contains the accepted practices list with the maximum potential payment amount, which is available here: <https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/qphm/pages/eptprogram.aspx>.
- 2. The maximum awarded payment was based on the practice's number of assigned lives. What if the number of total assigned lives increases over the life of the EPT program?**
Even if assigned lives change, the maximum potential payment is based on the assigned lives at the time of submission of the EPT application and will not change over the life of the EPT program.
- 3. Can MCPs retain a portion of the payment as administration costs for the disbursement of funds to the practice?**
No. EPT is a CMS directed payment program to practices, thus MCPs must pass through the entire awarded amount to the practice.
- 4. Can a practice that was not awarded for the first cohort apply again for the second cohort?**
Yes! If a practice applied and was not awarded or if they did not apply, they are eligible to apply for the second cohort.
- 5. Can practices who participated in the first cohort apply for the second cohort?**
No. Practices that participate in the first cohort are ineligible to apply for the second cohort.
- 6. When will practices be able to apply for Cohort Two?**
The timeline for Cohort Two applications are forthcoming; a specific date for the application to Cohort Two has not been finalized.

7. **What if a practice wants to discontinue participation at some point during the 5 years?**
A practice can withdraw at any time with no penalty, and all future payments for unmet milestones will be forfeited. Any payments previously received for completed milestones would not be affected.
8. **Is EPT a grant program?**
No, EPT is not a grant program. It is a directed payment program where practices receive payment for achieving milestones as evidenced by completing specific deliverables.
9. **Will participating in this program affect practices with capitation payment programs?**
No, it will not impact capitation payments.

Contracting

10. **To participate in EPT, do practices sign a contract with DHCS?**
There is no contract between the practices and DHCS for the EPT program.
11. **Does the practice have to be in contract with their sponsoring MCP to participate?**
Yes, the practice must be in-network as defined by APL 19-001.

Milestones and Payment

12. **Do practices need to complete activities in a particular order, or is it at the practices' discretion?**
The Population Health Learning Center (Learning Center) will provide a recommended sequencing of activities, with required activities being the focus for the first two years of the program, but practices will have flexibility in selecting when to work on various activities.

Practices may work on multiple milestones at once, meaning that practices are not required to complete all milestones for one activity before working on milestones for another activity. While practices should work on required activities prior to working on optional activities, practices may choose the order in which they work on the required and optional activities.
13. **How does meeting or not meeting milestones impact payment?**
Each milestone is tied to payment. If a practice satisfies the requirements for a milestone, they will qualify for the payment associated with that milestone.



14. How do practices set their milestones? Is there a specific number of milestones that practices should set, or a specific timeframe that milestones should be completed within?
Each practice applied for specific EPT categories and associated milestones, and these are the milestones that are tied to payments. Practices will submit deliverables to the Learning Center as evidence of completing each milestone. There is no deadline for achieving specific milestones to allow practices to progress at their own pace. Required category milestones should be completed prior to optional category milestones for most practices. Additional detail about milestones and the corresponding activities is available here - <https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/qphm/Documents/Provider-Directed-Payment-Program-Activities-and-Milestones.pdf>. The Learning Center will release updated information as it is available.

If a practice indicated in their original EPT application that they've already achieved a milestone, then the practice can submit evidence of this to the Learning Center by May 6, 2024. If a practice did not indicate it has already achieved a milestone on its original application, then the milestones will be included in the total number to be completed by the practice and paid out during the program.

If a practice applied for optional categories, then the milestones associated with each of these categories are also included in the total number of milestones to be completed over the course of the EPT program.

15. How do practices demonstrate progress towards meeting their milestones?
The first milestone is completing the Population Health Management Capabilities Assessment Tool (PhmCAT), which is due on April 30, 2024, at 11:59 PDT. Practices can find the PhmCAT at <https://takethephmcat.com>, password "phmcat."

Deliverables that evidence milestone completion will be due May 1st and November 1st of each year. Payments will be calculated and released by DHCS only twice a year, following the May 1 and November 1 deadlines. Starting with the November 1, 2024 deliverable submission deadline, practices will be able to submit evidence of meeting more than 1 milestone at a time through specified deliverables. The Learning Center website directs practices to the PhmCAT and will release information on deliverables as it becomes available.



16. What specific data system will the Learning Center use to track the milestones that have been met? Does a practice need to have a specific EMR to collect or submit the deliverables?

The Learning Center is procuring an e-learning platform through which practices will submit milestones/deliverables and track various EPT related activities. No specific EHR or other technology is required to submit the deliverables.

17. Does a practice have to complete all milestones for a specific activity before they are eligible to receive payment?

No, all milestones have an individual value, and practices can qualify for payments as they work through milestones in one activity. Deliverables that evidence milestone completion will be due May 1st and November 1st of each year. Payments will be calculated and released by DHCS only twice a year, following the May 1 and November 1 deadlines. Starting with the November 1, 2024 deliverable submission deadline, practices will be able to submit evidence of meeting more than 1 milestone at a time through specified deliverables. The Learning Center website directs practices to the PhmCAT and will release information on deliverables as it becomes available.

18. If deliverables are deemed sufficient to meet program requirements, what happens next?

After each submission deadline (May 1 and November 1), the Learning Center will review deliverables and provide specific feedback to the practice if any are insufficient. Practice track facilitators and coaches can provide support in incorporating feedback to revise deliverables for re-submission.

19. Will the Learning Center provide practices with templates for deliverables?

Yes, the Learning Center will provide templates for deliverables. The PhmCAT, which is due on May 1st 2024, is currently available at www.takethephmcat.com, password "phmcat". The Learning Center will release additional templates for future deliverables submissions as early as June 2024 to support the completion of milestones ahead of the November 1, 2024 deadline.

20. Can a practice change the selection of optional activities they made on their original application?

In general, practices must continue with the activities and milestones they indicated on the original application, as this serves as the basis for the amount of payment that DHCS awarded. If there are extenuating circumstances, the Learning Center will consider practice requests on a case-by-case basis. Please contact info@pophealthlc.org with requests.

21. Will practices be penalized if they do not complete the first milestone, the PhmCAT? Can practices still participate if they miss this milestone opportunity?

Practices who do not complete the Year 1 PhmCAT milestone will not receive a directed payment for this milestone. Even if a practice does not complete this first milestone, they are encouraged to continue their participation in EPT. All practices who have been selected for EPT may participate in EPT for the full 5 years of the program and will receive directed payment for any EPT milestones successfully completed.

Population Health Management Capabilities Assessment Tool (PhmCAT)

22. How do we submit our PhmCAT? Does it need to be in a specific form? Can it be submitted to a MCP?

All PhmCAT responses must be submitted as an online form, which you can find a link to here - <https://pophealthlearningcenter.org/phmcat/>
The password to the form is phmcat.

23. We are trying to submit the PhmCAT, however the “next” button is greyed out. How should we proceed?

To advance to a subsequent screen, all fields must be completed on the existing page.

24. Practices are required to submit the PhmCAT by May 1st. If a practice recently completed a PhmCAT as part of their EPT application, what do they do?

If a practice recently completed the PhmCAT (either as part of their EPT application or for another purpose), the practice should review their answers to assure they are still accurate and can submit that PhmCAT online for the May 1st PhmCAT submission. To satisfy the requirements of the PhmCAT deliverable, at least three individuals from the practice need to complete and submit their own PhmCAT. Please see further instructions here, <https://pophealthlearningcenter.org/phmcat/>.

25. How many PhmCAT responses should my practice submit?

All practices must have three roles represented and completed individually: one Provider; one Clinic front-line staff (MA or Nurse); and one administrative/office manager staff. Larger practices with the following roles should include PhmCAT responses: Executive Sponsor (e.g., CEO, COO); Clinical Lead (e.g., CMO, CNO, medical director); Finance Lead (e.g., CFO, accounting manager); Data and technology lead (e.g., CIO, IT director, data manager, etc.); Quality lead (e.g., quality manager/director). The Learning Center recommends that practices submit up to eight responses, although a practice may submit additional responses if desired.



- 26. How should I score my practice on the PhmCAT? Can I give my practice all “10s”?**
The Learning Center uses PhmCAT responses to understand your practice’s baseline capabilities, and to identify opportunities to advance population health management capabilities. Responses to the PhmCAT are also used to inform the technical assistance that Learning Center provides, and to measure practice change over time. Your honest responses help support these objectives. No milestone payments are tied to specific responses on the PhmCAT.

Technical Assistance

- 27. How do EPT practices participate in the coaching pool?**
The Learning Center is currently developing the coaching pool. If your practice is interested in coaching, please email us at info@pophealthlc.org and let us know what topics you would like to work with a coach on.
- 28. My practice has been assigned to an MCP. What is their role in the coaching pool?**
MCPs have the opportunity to contribute to the coaching pool to fund coaching for their EPT sponsored practices.
- 29. Will the webinars be recorded? Where can we find the recordings?**
All webinars are recorded and posted on the Learning Center website, available here: <https://pophealthlearningcenter.org/webinars/>