

Population Health Management Learning Center (Learning Center)

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

Version 2.0

September 17, 2024



Population Health Management Learning Center

A fiscally sponsored project of the Tides Center, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization

Questions? Email info@pophealthlc.org

Program Updates

1. What was the impact of the state budget update to the EPT program?

DHCS and the Learning Center remain committed to supporting California primary care practices to advance health equity and reduce COVID-19-driven care disparities by investing in up-stream care models and partnerships to address health and wellness and funding practice transformation. EPT will include robust technical assistance opportunities designed to include practices' PHM capabilities and will maintain the same deliverable submission schedule (May 1 and Nov 1).

Due to the state budget revise, EPT is a now three-year program (1/2024 – 12/2026). The milestone and TA focus has narrowed. There are 25 milestones (reduced from 108), and all are required. In addition, the total potential practice payments have been reduced.

2. What are the revised activities and milestones?

Please see the table below for the number and description of activities and milestones. More detail on the [EPT milestones](#) can be found on the [Learning Center's Milestones and Deliverables page](#).

Table 1. Final EPT Milestones (last updated September 2024)

Activity	Milestones	Description
PhmCAT	3	1. Y1 2024 2. Y2 2025 3. Y3 2026
Empanelment & Access	2	4. Empanelment and access assessment 5. Empanelment policy & procedure
Data to Enable PHM	3	6. Data governance and HEDIS reporting assessment and Data Governance Policy and Procedure 7. Data implementation plan 8. Progress report on implementing data improvement strategies
Care Delivery Model	7	9. Plan to reduce disparities 10. Adopt clinical guidelines 11. Care team assessment & implementation 12. Implement enhanced outreach & engagement 13. Implement pre-visit planning 14. Implement behavioral health screening & linkage 15. Health-related social needs (HRSN) screening & linkage
Value-Based Payment	1	16. VBP assessment

KPI Report	9	17. Stratify HEDIS-like metrics for the Population of Focus (PoF) 18. PoF HEDIS-like measure achievement #1 19. PoF HEDIS-like measure achievement #2 20. PoF HEDIS-like measure achievement #3* 21. Empanelment achievement 22. Continuity achievement 23. Third next available achievement** 24. Assigned and seen in 12-month period 25. Disparity reduction***
Total	25	

*For milestones 18 – 20, practices must show improvement or hit a target.

** For milestones 21 – 23, practices must hit a target.

*** For milestones 24-25, practices must show improvement.

3. What support can my sponsor MCP provide to my EPT practice?

Your sponsor MCP may support your EPT practice in the following ways:

- The PhmCAT 1 payment will be delayed to EPT practices due to the state budget update process. MCPs may **advance** the PhmCAT 1 payment to sponsored practices. The Learning Center recommends that MCPs pay sponsored practices in October 2024.
- MCPs may **enhance** practice payments to compensate for the impact of the state budget reduction.
- MCPs may **fund** coaching for their sponsored practices.

Please reach out to your sponsor MCP to understand how they can support your EPT journey. Please note that the above are optional supports that MCPs may provide, and DHCS does not require these optional supports.

Participating in the EPT

4. If we opt-out, can we participate in EPT in the future?

The Learning Center is considering how to make the EPT curriculum available to additional practices. However, if a practice opts out now, there will not be another opportunity to participate in EPT.

5. What if a practice wants to discontinue participation at some point during the 3 years?

A practice can withdraw from EPT 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.

6. Where can I find my revised practice payment amount? Can the practices assume that it will be the original amount listed for the number of assigned patients included in their EPT application?

Potential practice payments have been reduced due to the reduction in the EPT budget. The updated award amount is based on the number of assigned Medi-Cal lives the practice serves and as stated in their EPT application. Practices may find their updated potential payment amounts here: <https://pophealthlearningcenter.org/milestones-and-deliverables/>

7. What is the anticipated time commitment for participating in EPT?

The time commitment for EPT is based on a few factors, including participation in learning events (e.g., Learning Community, Practice Track meetings), accessing content in the eLearning Hub that will help you make progress on your deliverables (e.g., viewing videos related to Access or Data/IT), leveraging technical assistance (TA) and support (e.g., coaching, curbside consults), and the work you do in your practice to design and implement changes. See Table 2 for more information.

In addition to the monthly time commitment, there are participation requirements. To remain in EPT, each practice must:

- Attend events: 80% attendance at Learning Community and Practice Track events for at least two members of the team (1 person for small independent practices and small clinics)
- Achieve Milestones in year 1: Achieve year 1 deliverables which are empanelment assessment, empanelment policy & procedure, and data governance and HEDIS reporting assessment, by November 1, 2025 deliverable submission.
- Achieve Milestones in future years: Deliverable attainment is TBD after year 1.

Table 2. Estimated Monthly EPT Time Commitment

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Estimated Time by Month</i>
Learning Communities	Every practice is assigned to a Learning Community and there will be three Learning Community convenings per year. This will be a half-day event and some pre-work will be required. Your core team is expected to attend (80% of core team required to attend).	1.75 hrs

Practice Track Convening	Meetings occur every other month and each is 90 minutes. At least two people from the core team should attend (one person for small practices).	0.75 hrs
eLearning Content	Individual team members can expect to spend 1 - 2 hours/month in the eLearning Hub reviewing the EPT curriculum.	1.5 hrs
Practice Work	Each practice is likely to spend 1 - 4 hours per month designing and implementing changes. The time commitment is at each practice's discretion and is based on what's needed to achieve EPT deliverables.	4 hrs
Optional Technical Assistance	EPT will make available a range of support to help your progress. This includes optional coaching, curbside consults, and affinity group meetings. Accessing these supports is at the discretion of each practice and their needs.	1 hr
Total		9 hrs/mo (estimated)

8. **Can a practice that was not awarded for the first cohort apply again for the second cohort?**
Due to the budget reduction, a second cohort isn't planned. Practices accepted into the first cohort may participate in EPT. However, the Learning Center is considering how to expand the EPT curriculum to additional practices.
9. **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.
10. **Will participating in this program affect practices with capitation payment programs?**
No, it will not impact capitation payments.

Contracting

11. **To participate in EPT, do practices sign a contract with DHCS?**
There is no contract between the practices and DHCS for the EPT program.
12. **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

13. What is the new EPT payment methodology?

There have been modifications to the potential practice payments for all EPT practices. All practices, regardless of size, may earn a minimum potential payment of \$250,000. Practices with 2,001+ lives may earn an additional \$20 per assigned life. The maximum potential payment is set at \$3.19M. There are 25 required milestones and all 25 are weighted equally. To receive payment, practices will submit deliverables to demonstrate PHM milestone attainment. Updated payment amounts and milestone templates are available here - <https://pophealthlearningcenter.org/milestones-and-deliverables/>

14. What is due on November 1, 2024?

Practices may submit up to three deliverables by end of day on November 1st – Empanelment assessment, Empanelment policy & procedure, and the assessment of data governance and HEDIS reporting gaps. These deliverable templates are posted on the Learning Center website here: <https://pophealthlearningcenter.org/milestones-and-payments/>
The Learning Center will provide training to EPT practices so that they understand how to successfully complete these deliverables.

November 1st is the first opportunity practices will have to submit these deliverables. If a practice is not ready to submit them on November 1st, they may submit them in May or November 2025.

In addition, practices are required to submit information related to key performance indicator (KPI) measures as follows:

- Medi-Cal assigned lives stratified by race and ethnicity
- Empaneled Patients
- Patient-Side Continuity
- Third Next Available Appointment

The Learning Center will email practices with additional specifications as they become available.

15. If my practice opted out of EPT, will we still be paid for our May PhmCAT submission?

Yes.

16. 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. Practices will have flexibility in selecting when to work on various activities, however, content will be sequenced over the course of the program.

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.

17. 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.

18. How do practices demonstrate progress towards meeting their milestones?

Deliverables that evidence milestone completion will be due May 1st and November 1st of each program year. Payments will be calculated and released by DHCS only twice a year, following the May 1 and November 1 submission 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.

19. 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 procured an electronic platform through which practices will submit milestones/deliverables. No specific EHR or other technology is required to submit the deliverables.

20. 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.

21. When can practices begin submitting deliverables for the November 1, 2024 submission deadline?

The deliverable submission portal is planned to be open by October 1, 2024.

22. If deliverables are deemed insufficient 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 items are insufficient. We will share information about a resubmission process at a later date.

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

Yes, the Learning Center will provide templates for deliverables. All deliverable templates for the November 1, 2024 submission date are posted on the LEARNING CENTER website here:

<https://pophealthlearningcenter.org/milestones-and-deliverables/>

24. 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. The revised award amounts will not change over the life of the EPT program.

25. 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.

Technical Assistance (TA)

26. What are the different TA opportunities available through EPT?

EPT TA has five components that will provide training and support implementation of PHM best practices. Participation will enable practices to meet EPT milestones and receive payment.

- 1) Learning Communities (LCs): Learning Communities include interactive sessions with experts who will train practices on how to implement PHM best practices to meet milestones. Practices will be organized into three LCs, based on geography. LCs will occur virtually for four hours. Learning Communities focus on technical training in each of the EPT Building Blocks.
- 2) PopHealth+: The eLearning Hub, PopHealth+, launches in September 2024! Once launched, EPT Core Members at participating practices will receive an email with their PopHealth+ logins and a Get Started Guide. PopHealth+ will offer interactive mini-courses on the foundational content across the EPT Building Blocks, in addition to training on deliverables.
- 3) Practice Tracks: Practice Tracks provide a small group setting for practices to share about their PHM implementation progress and learn from similar practices. Practice Track meetings will be hosted virtually and every other month, starting in September 2024.
- 4) Expert Consultation: Experts will host optional office hours to answer questions on content recently presented at the Learning Communities and to prepare practices for deliverable submission. Expert consultations will be hosted virtually and every other month, starting in September.
- 5) Practice Coaching: Coaching is optional and provides one on one support to practices to translate the curriculum and tools into workflows and best practices that improve PHM capabilities and align with practice culture; test, implement, and measure the impact of changes on meeting milestones and achieving KPIs (HEDIS measures); and Support with EPT deliverable submission.

Practices may select their coach from a vetted pool managed by the Learning Center ("Coaching Pool") and their desired time commitment ("Coaching Packages"). Please note

that some MCPs have their own coaching programs that support practices and these programs are not part of the Learning Center.

DHCS EPT funding does not cover coaching. Please reach out to your sponsor MCP to understand if they can fund coaching for your practice through the Learning Center Coaching pool or whether they have Health Plan coaches to support your practice. Practices may also purchase coaching packages directly from the Learning Center.

27. How do EPT practices participate in 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 focus on with a coach.

28. My practice has been assigned to an MCP. What is their role in the coaching pool?

MCPs have the opportunity to fund coaching for their EPT sponsored practices. Please contact your MCP to see if they would do this.

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/>