



Elevating The Safety Net

An L.A. Care Health Plan Initiative to
Strengthen the Provider Safety Net in L.A. County



Provider Loan Repayment Program

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA)

Note: There is *no deadline* to apply. However, applications are being accepted for the program's waitlist and will be considered as funds become available.
Applications submitted do not guarantee eligibility for funding.

Program Administrator

Eric Santizo, Program Director, Uncommon Good
Phone: (909) 625-2248 or Email: esantizo@uncommongood.org

I. PURPOSE

A 2017 study by the University of California San Francisco (UCSF) Healthforce Center found that California will need almost 9,000 additional primary care clinicians by 2030 to meet demand, and about 40% of those will be needed in Los Angeles, Orange, and the Inland Empire regions. For medical providers that serve a growing Medi-Cal population, this gap could be even more acute because safety net providers have fewer resources to recruit providers.

In response to the looming physician shortage, L.A. Care Health Plan (L.A. Care), in partnership with Uncommon Good (Program Administrator), is pleased to release a Request for Applications (RFA) under the *Elevating the Safety Net Provider Loan Repayment Program (PLRP)*. *Elevating the Safety Net* is a long-term initiative to recruit highly qualified providers into the Los Angeles County safety net for the first time. PLRP will provide loan repayments of up to \$5,000 per month, for 36 months, with an opportunity to extend for an additional two (2) years. Eligible primary care specialties include Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, Obstetrics/Gynecology, Pediatrics, and primary care Psychiatry.

II. ABOUT L. A. CARE HEALTH PLAN AND UNCOMMON GOOD

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, and L.A. Care Cal MediConnect Plan. L.A. Care is a leader in developing new programs and innovative partnerships designed to provide health coverage to vulnerable populations and to support the safety net. With more than two and half (2.5) million members, L.A. Care is the nation's largest publicly operated health plan.

For more information, please visit: www.lacare.org

Uncommon Good is a nonprofit organization with the mission of breaking the intergenerational cycle of poverty through programs in education, health, and environmental health. One of its programs is Medicine for the Economically Disadvantaged (MED) through which health practitioners receive educational loan repayment assistance in return for serving low-income populations.

For more information on Uncommon Good, please visit: <http://uncommongood.org/>



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III. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Note: There is no deadline to apply. However, applications are being accepted for the program's waitlist and will be considered when further funds become available. Moving forward, due to limited funding, the awarding process will be more selective and prioritize certain criteria (geographic areas, types of practices, areas of specialization, provider ethnic and cultural background, amount of debt, hours of direct patient care and demonstrated commitment to practicing in underserved communities), which are currently underfunded by the program.

Physician Criteria

To be eligible, a provider must:

- a. Be new to L.A. Care's Medi-Cal network, but does not have to be new to Los Angeles County.
Completed required training in a primary care specialty including Family Medicine, Obstetrics/ Gynecology, Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, or primary care Psychiatry. Please provide MD/DO board eligibility or certification documentation, if available, although it is not required to be eligible for the program.
- b. Clear credentialing with L.A. Care and/or delegated entity.
- c. Be employed by a qualified practice site.
- d. Commit to practicing for at least 36 months in a qualified practice site.
- e. Provide at least 16 hours of direct patient care per week in a primary care setting. 32 hours of direct patient care is the baseline for an 100% award.
- f. Submit an application within six (6) months of hire by a qualified practice site.
- g. Demonstrate financial need based on outstanding educational debt from a government or commercial lending institution.
- h. Demonstrate cultural competency to serve L.A. Care's Medi-Cal member populations.

Practice Site Criteria

The practice site must be a contracted provider in L.A. Care's Medi-Cal network (including independent private practices) primarily delivering primary care services. Psychiatrists must be an employee of contracted clinics and practicesites serving L.A. Care members in a primary care setting. Psychiatrists employed by medical groups and/or L.A. County will be viewed on a case by case basis for PLRP funding.

IV. AWARD REQUIREMENTS

Awardees must:

- a. Complete application including personal information, educational background, current employer and practice site details, educational debt information, personal statement, and all required attachments.
- b. Submit annual report summarizing outstanding educational debt from an approved educational lending institution throughout their service commitment; summary of work activities in the past year.
- c. Participate in post-program survey to evaluate the effectiveness of the program.



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Education Health Environment

V. AWARD DISBURSEMENT

Award funds will be disbursed in the following manner:

- a. Program Administrator will approve awards based on L.A. Care's established eligibility criteria for providers and qualified practice sites.
- b. Awardees will be required to sign a promissory note with Program Administrator.
- c. Award funds will be disbursed to awardees on a monthly-basis. Awards are considered a loan (non-taxable income) repaid with service commitment in a qualified practice site.
- d. Awards will be suspended with any leave taken by the awardee and will be terminated if the awardee leaves a qualified practice site.

VI. ADDITIONAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY: Provider Recruitment Program

Qualified practice sites that wish to apply to L.A. Care's *Elevating the Safety Net Provider Recruitment Program* may do so as well. This program provides up to \$125,000 per entity for salary and benefits subsidies, sign-on bonuses, and/or relocation costs. Although the two (2) programs are complementary, they have separate application processes. Acceptance to one (1) program does not automatically qualify applicant for the other.

For further information about *Elevating the Safety Net* initiatives, please visit: www.lacare.org/elevateproviders.

VII. INFORMATIONAL CONFERENCE CALLS

To assist prospective applicants, L.A. Care will be holding quarterly informational conference calls. Please check the website to registration information for the calls. During these informational calls, presenters will provide an overview of **Provider Loan Repayment Program** and **Provider Recruitment Program** and will answer any questions related to Request for Applications, application contents and/or timelines.

Please Note: New and prospective applicants are encouraged to register to participate in at least one (1) informational call.

For more details on informational calls, please visit: www.lacare.org/elevateproviders.

VIII. APPLICATION SUBMISSION

To download the application, please visit: www.lacare.org/elevateproviders.

Submit completed application, board certifications if available, most recent tax return, proof of loan balances, and other loan repayment program eligibility documents via mail or e-mail to Program Administrator:

Mail: Uncommon Good
211 W. Foothill Blvd.
Claremont, CA 91711
Attn: Eric Santizo, MED Director

E-mail: Attn: Eric Santizo
esantizo@uncommongood.org Subject
Line: Applicant's name, Provider Loan
Repayment Program

ALL DECISIONS ARE FINAL AND THERE IS NO APPEAL PROCESS

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**ELEVATING
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IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY
SINCE 1997