

Investments will help address barriers to medical school, from youth through college, and support the development of today's practicing physicians

SACRAMENTO, Calif., April 10, 2025 [PRNewswire/](#) -- [Health Net](#), one of California's most experienced Medi-Cal managed care health plans, and the [Centene Foundation](#), the philanthropic arm of [Centene Corporation](#) (NYSE: [CNC](#)), today announced a partnership investment of more than \$9 million to help bolster the future of California's physician workforce in collaboration with multiple not-for-profit organizations. The funding aims to address the state's physician workforce shortage, specifically to engage Californians at critical milestones starting in childhood through medical school and beyond, to encourage a career path to becoming a practicing physician and support professional development.

The United States could be short 86,000 physicians by 2036, [according](#) to the Association of American Medical Colleges. To help tackle this issue in California, Health Net and the Centene Foundation awarded more than \$3 million in seed funding to [Physicians for a Healthy California](#) for a physician pathway project that supports young people – starting as early as pre-K – to become doctors. By supporting students starting in early childhood, this initiative will help expand the future physician workforce and ensure California's growing population has access to the care it needs. The goal of this partnership is to build a framework that allows diverse care systems to contribute to this need through a comprehensive, holistic approach.

"No one company, organization, or non-profit can tackle this alone, and the enormity of the problem adds to the urgency," said Dorothy Seleski, Medi-Cal president at Health Net. "That's why Health Net has decided to convene partners across the healthcare ecosystem, provide seed funding for organizations focused on building capacity to expand the number of new doctors in California and invite other funders to the table. It takes a community of partners to achieve positive impact, and we thank all who have matched our enthusiasm and action."

The physician pathway project will also prioritize 11 initiatives to drive policy change, remove industry barriers, foster cross-industry collaborations and mobilize public and private funding. The work involves strategic partnerships among key leaders in the healthcare, education and advocacy sectors, including Physicians for a Healthy California, the Latino Coalition for a Healthy California, California Health Care Foundation (CHCF), California Wellness Foundation, AltaMed and more.

"Health Net has consistently shown their commitment to addressing the root causes of many healthcare inequities, leading California's most vulnerable populations to a healthier, more inclusive future," said Lupe Alonzo-Diaz, president and CEO at Physicians for a Healthy California. "Together, we will build a network of support that ensures resources are allocated where they are needed most, bridging gaps and empowering underserved populations."

Health Net and the Centene Foundation also awarded a \$5.5 million grant to the [Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science](#) to provide full-tuition scholarships, financial support for medical residents and other resources to recruit and retain future doctors. This will ensure students receive the training and support they need to deliver high-quality, culturally competent care in the communities they serve.

"We are dedicated to increasing physician representation for Californians," said Dr. David M. Carlisle, president and CEO of Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science. "With the support of Health Net, we will continue to train and empower future physicians who are passionate about providing culturally congruent care to the state's diverse population."

In addition, the [National Hispanic Health Foundation](#) was awarded a more than \$1 million grant to enhance the leadership capabilities of physicians and their understanding of current health policies through a new career development program for talented mid-career physicians interested in future careers in advocacy or policymaking. Since physicians play a pivotal role in shaping healthcare policies, their firsthand experience provides crucial insights into patient needs, systemic challenges and opportunities for improvement.

"Health Net recognizes that physician input is essential to creating healthcare policies that are both clinically sound and focused on patient care," said Elena Rios, MD, MSPH, MACP, president of the National Hispanic Health Foundation. "By investing in leadership and advocacy skills for practicing physicians, we are helping to ensure that the voices of healthcare providers are heard and valued in shaping the future of California's healthcare landscape."

Physicians play a pivotal role in providing informed and inclusive care, their insight is invaluable to the shaping of effective healthcare policies, and their expertise is essential when addressing barriers to health. This investment in California's physician workforce will shape the future of the state's healthcare landscape by tackling the overall physician shortage, delivering high-quality training and providing a voice to our future healthcare providers.

"In California, where Latinos represent nearly 40 percent of our population but face significant underrepresentation in the medical profession, this \$9 million investment is an important step forward," said Assemblywoman Blanca Pacheco. "These grants represents the kind of strategic partnerships that our state needs to create more equitable healthcare access and culturally responsive care."

About Health Net

Founded in California more than 45 years ago, Health Net, LLC ("Health Net"), a company of Centene Corporation, believes that every person deserves a safety net for their health, regardless of age, income, employment status or current state of health. Today, we provide health plans for individuals, families, businesses of every size and people who qualify for Medi-Cal or Medicare. With more than 90,000 of our network providers, Health Net serves more than three million members across the state. We also offer access to substance abuse programs, behavioral health services and managed healthcare products related to prescription drugs. We make these health plans and services available through Health Net and its subsidiaries: Health Net of California, Inc., Health Net Life Insurance Company and Health Net Community Solutions, Inc. These entities are wholly owned subsidiaries of Centene Corporation (NYSE: [CNC](#)), a leading healthcare enterprise committed to transforming the health of the communities we serve, one person at a time. Health Net and Centene Corporation employ more than 5,700 people in California who work at one of five regional Talent Hub offices. For more information, visit www.HealthNet.com.

About Centene Foundation

The [Centene Foundation](#) (the "Foundation"), a private nonprofit focused on investing in economically challenged communities, is the philanthropic arm of [Centene Corporation](#) (NYSE: [CNC](#)) ("Centene"). The Foundation supports projects and initiatives strategically aligned with Centene's mission-driven culture and enhances the work Centene Corporation is doing to remove the barriers to wellness underserved and low-income populations face. The Foundation is committed to addressing social drivers of health and improving health equity in three distinct areas of focus: healthcare access, social services and education. To learn more, visit the Centene Foundation's [website](#).

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