



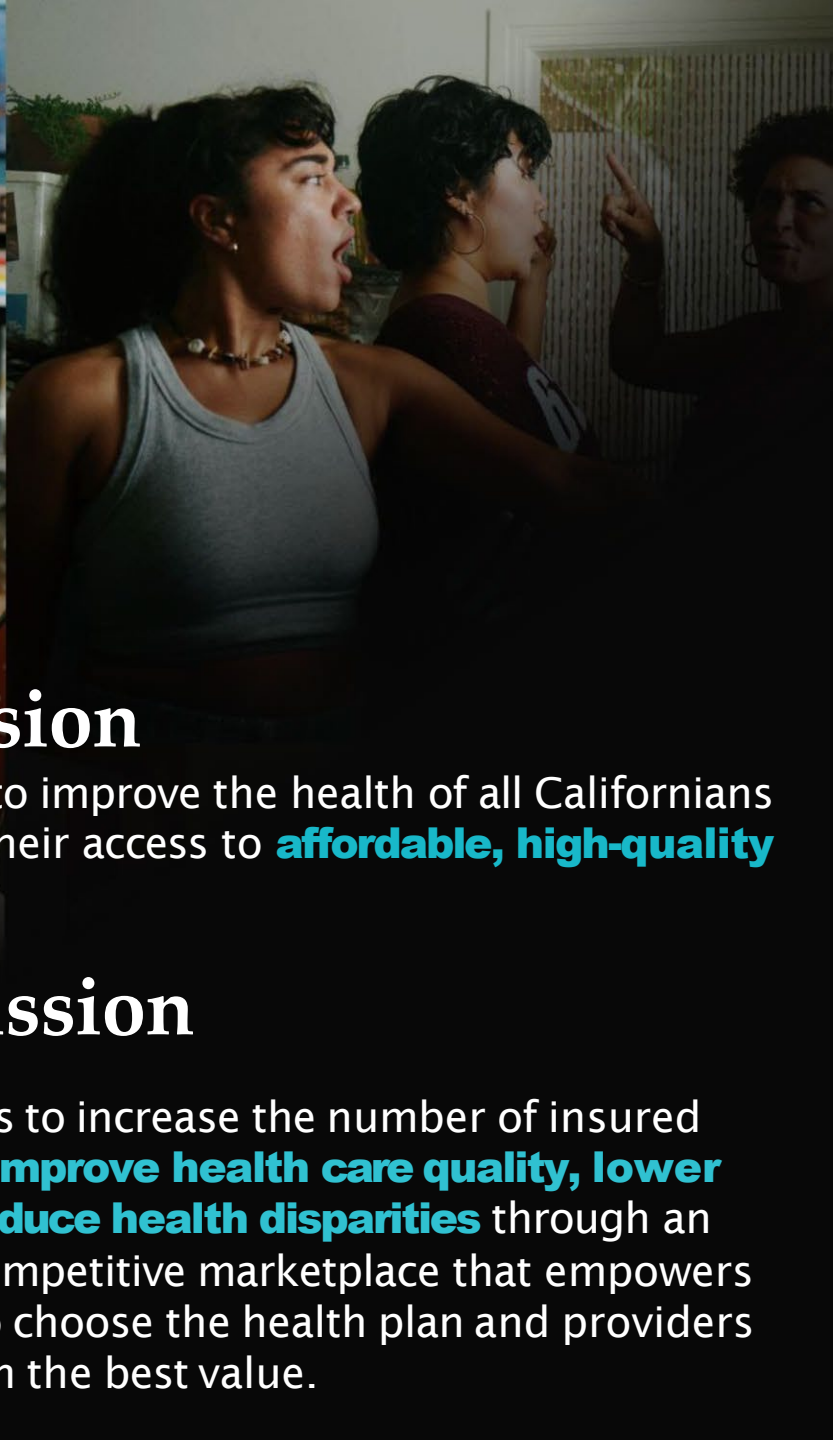
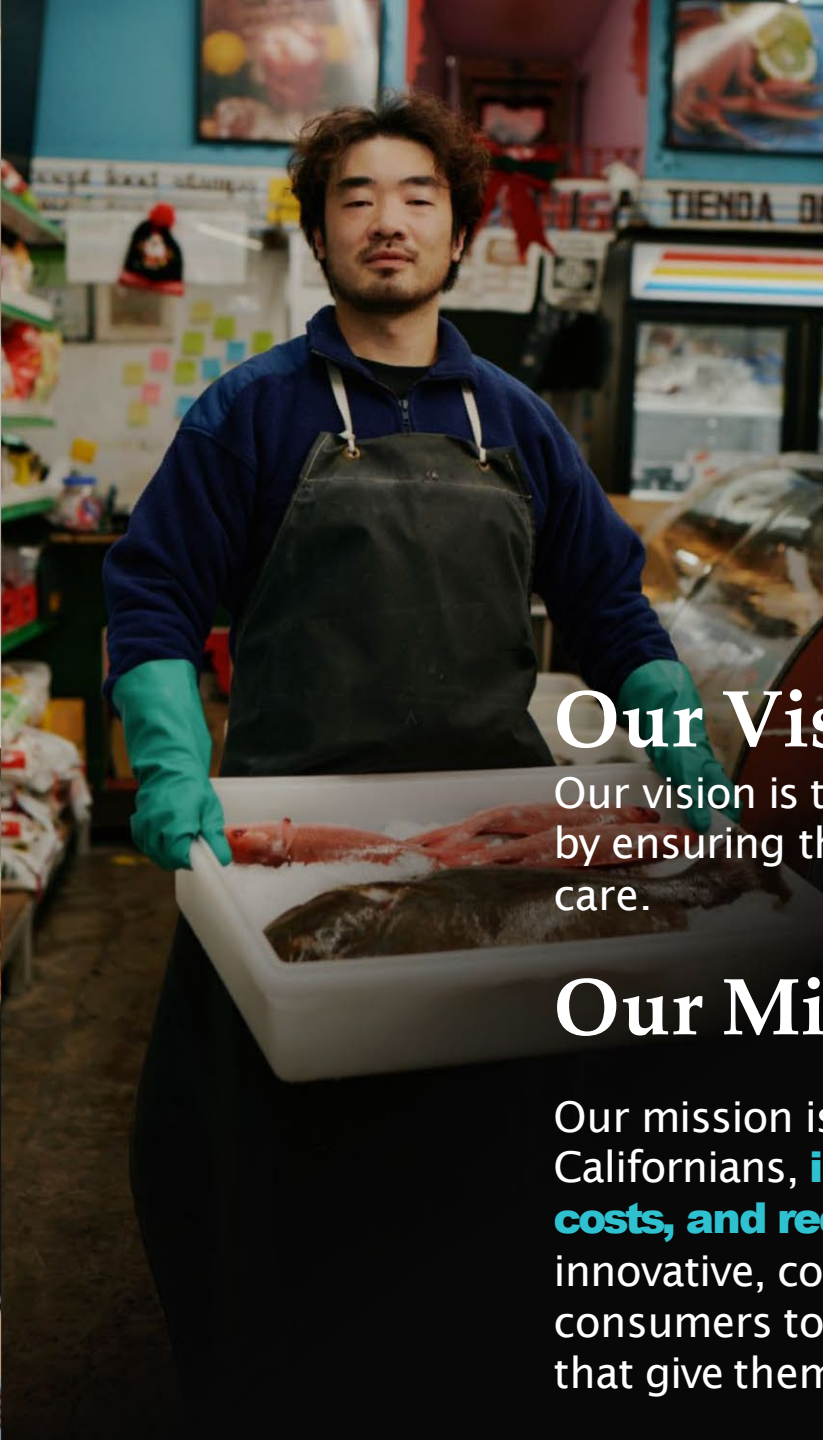
Investing into California's Health Care Workforce

A new partnership between Covered California and the Department of Health Care Affordability and Innovation (HCAI)

April 29, 2026

Agenda

1. Background of Quality Transformation Initiative (QTI)
2. Workforce Evidence & Research
3. Population Needs Assessment
4. New 2026 PopHI: Health Professions Pathways Program (HPPP)
5. HPPP Program Structure & Timeline
6. Q&A



Our Vision

Our vision is to improve the health of all Californians by ensuring their access to **affordable, high-quality** care.

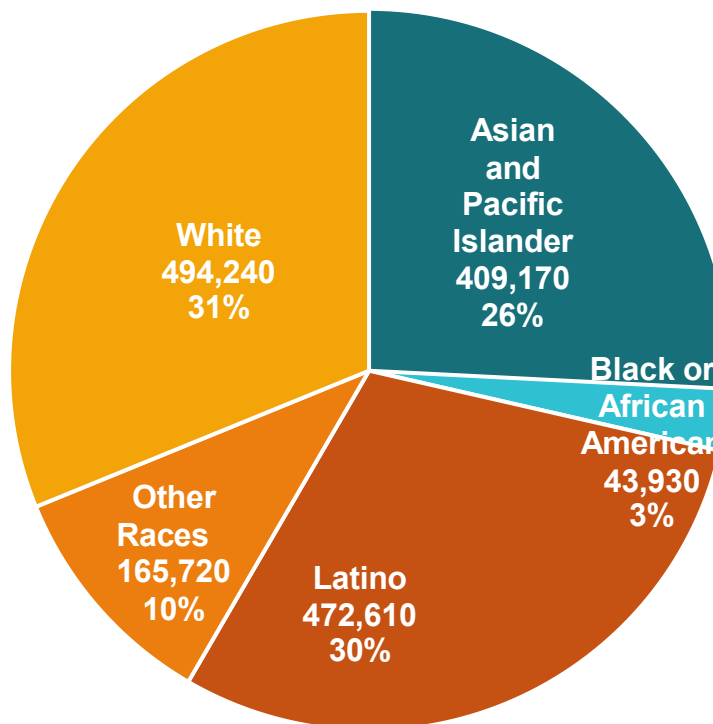
Our Mission

Our mission is to increase the number of insured Californians, **improve health care quality, lower costs, and reduce health disparities** through an innovative, competitive marketplace that empowers consumers to choose the health plan and providers that give them the best value.

Covered California At a Glance



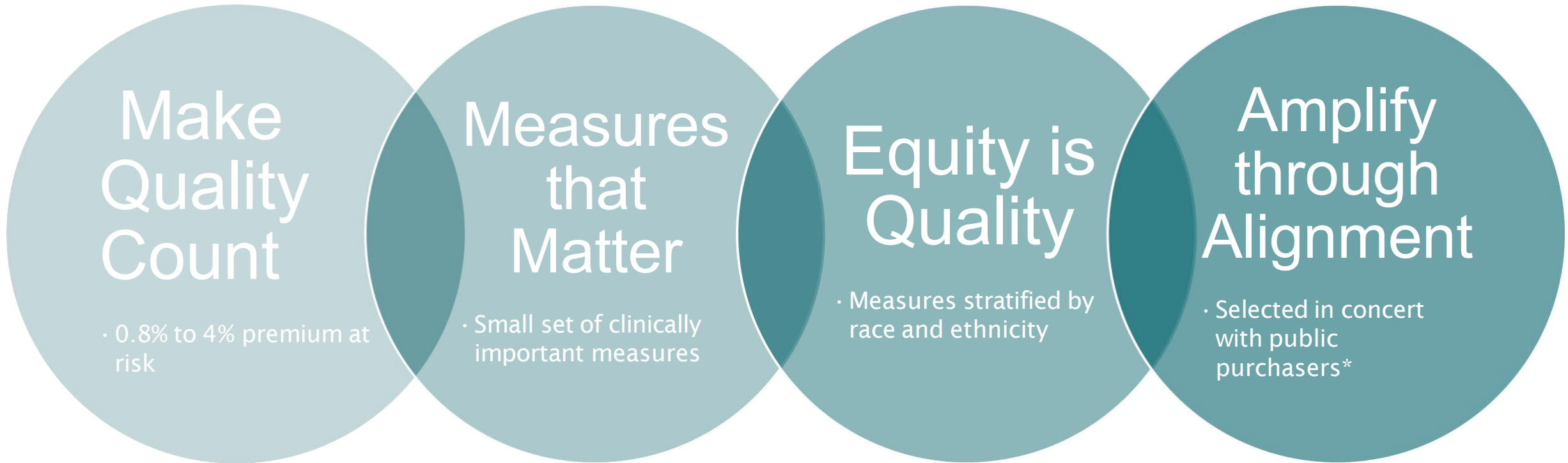
Enrollment Reflecting California's Diversity



Covered California by the Numbers

- 11**
Carriers
- 1.9 Million**
Enrollees
- ~90%**
Subsidized
- 4 out of 10 enrollees earn < 200% of FPL (\$64,000 - family of 4)
- HMO, PPO and EPO products offered

Quality Transformation Initiative



*Public purchasers includes CalPERS and DHCS/Medi-Cal

Guiding Principles: Use of Funds

Centered on goal to improve health outcomes for Covered California enrollees



Equity First: funds should preferentially focus on geographic regions or communities with the largest identified gaps in health and quality among California subpopulations



Direct: use of funds should lead to measurable improvements in quality and outcomes for enrollees that are related to QTI Core Measure performance

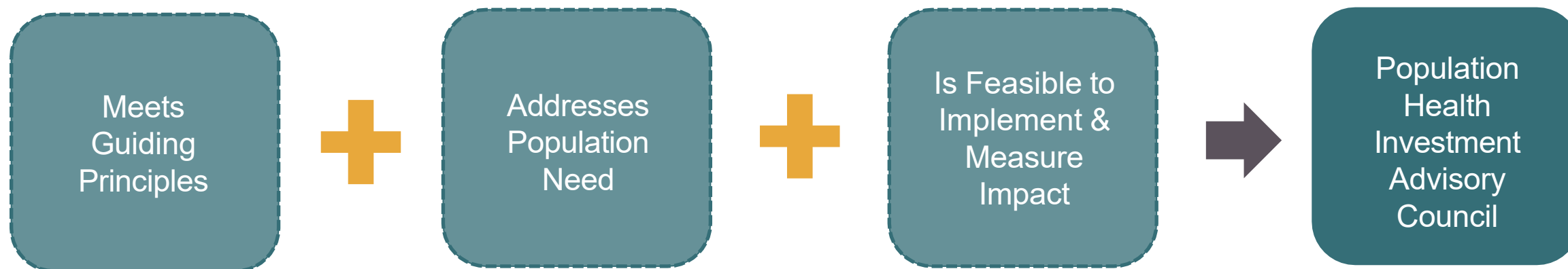


Evidence-based: use of funds should be grounded in approaches that have established evidence of success in driving improvements in quality or outcomes



Additive: funds should be used to advance quality in a currently underfunded arena.

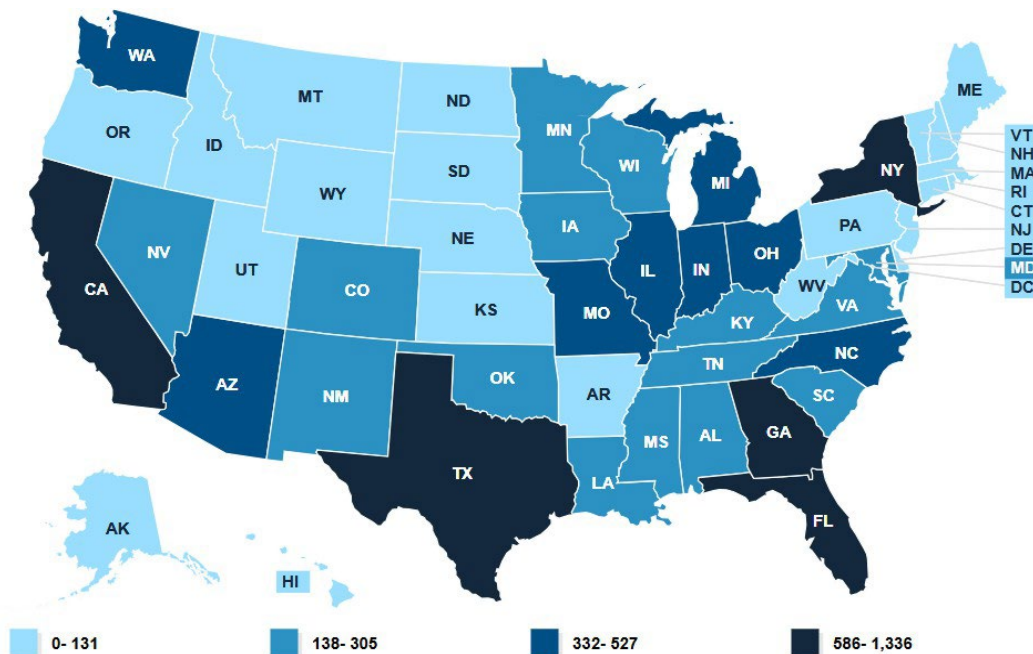
Population Health Investments: Selection Criteria



A longstanding problem will worsen if we don't change our approach

California is one of several states with highest number of PCPs needed

Number of Practitioners Needed to Remove Primary Care HPSA Designations, by State (12/31/24)

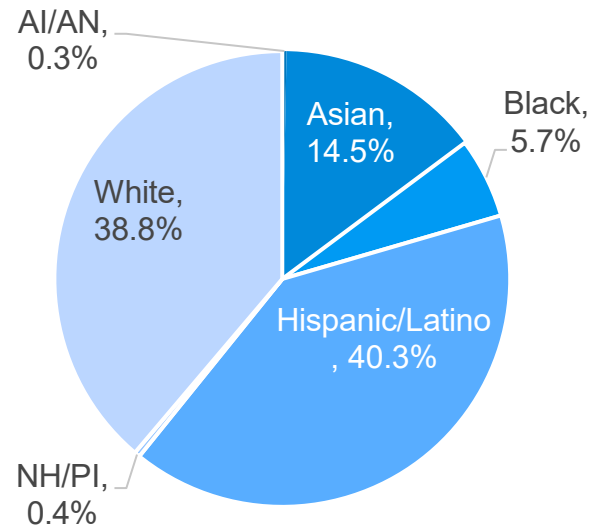


Source: KFF State Health Facts Data / Providers & Service Use / Health Professional Shortage Areas <https://www.kff.org/other/state-indicator/primary-care-health-professional-shortage-areas-hpsas/>

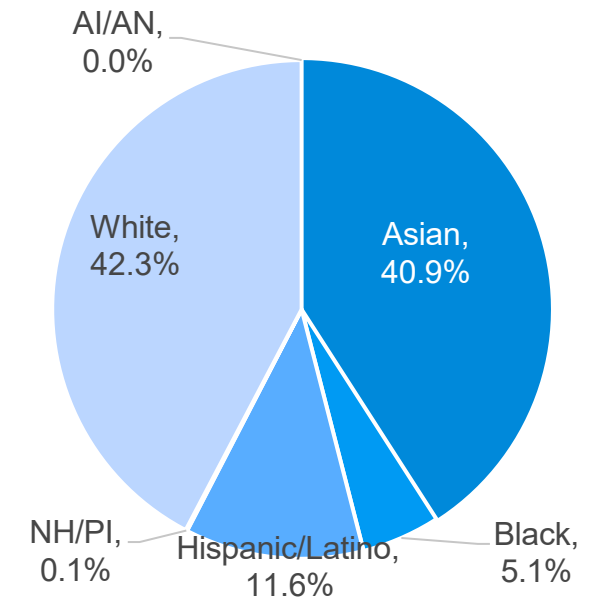
Covered California

Racial/Ethnic disparities in California's emerging physician workforce

2016 California Population Estimates, N=37,954,861 People



2016-2017 Medical School Graduates, N=947 Graduates



Source: AAMC Data & Facts Table B-6.1; U.S. Census Bureau 2016 American Community Survey (ACS)

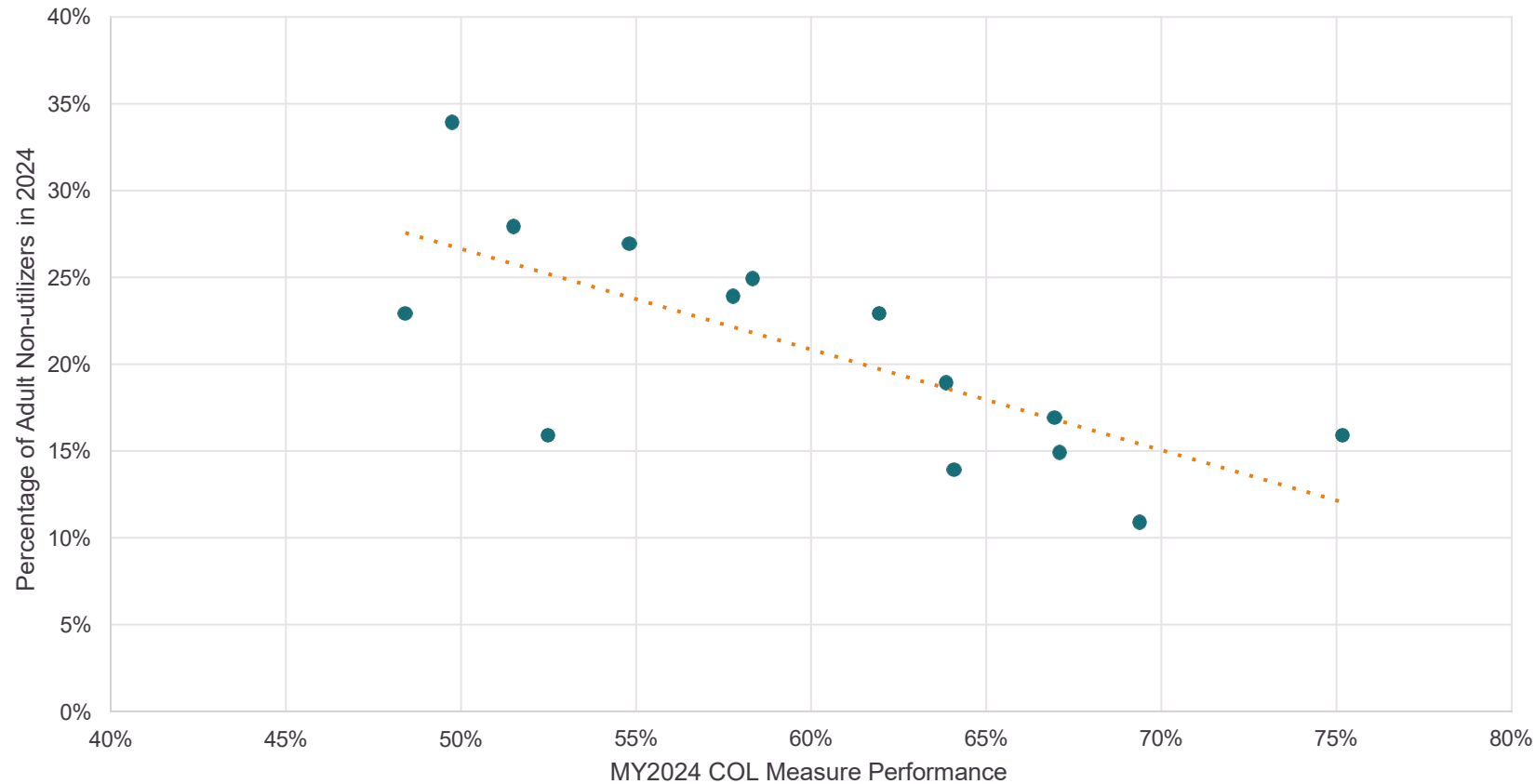
A Look into Persistent Racial and Linguistic Gaps

- For example, Latino physicians are severely underrepresented – it would take five (5) centuries to reach parity under current conditions

(Source: [California's Physician Shortage: Brief | Latino Policy & Politics Institute](#), 2020)

Access to Primary Care is a key driver of QTI measure performance

Correlation between COL Measure Performance and Non-utilization of Services by Adults

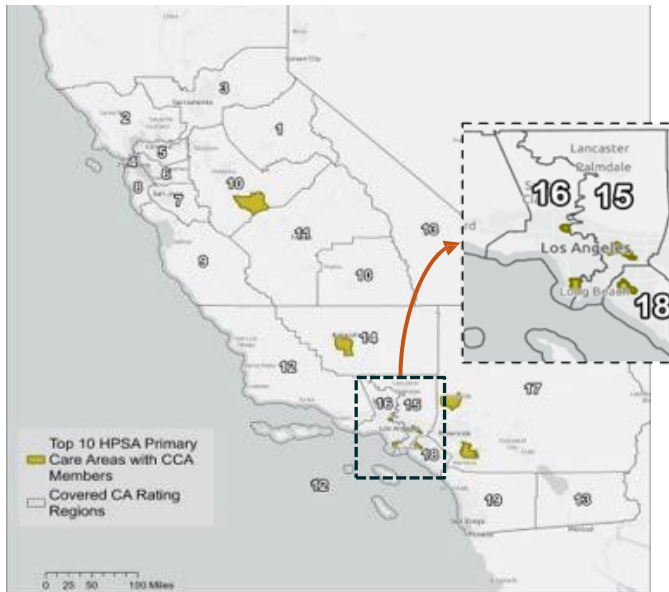


For the Colorectal Cancer screening measure, there is a clear correlation between performance and utilization. **Higher utilization is associated with stronger performance.**

Other QTI measures show similar alignment, further supporting the idea that member engagement and primary care access are key drivers of QTI performance.

California’s health care workforce shortages impact over 35% of Covered California enrollees

Primary Care HPSAs with Highest Count of Covered California Members



263,298 Covered California enrollees reside in a Primary Care HPSA. Primary Care healthcare workforce shortages impact about **16%** of our members.

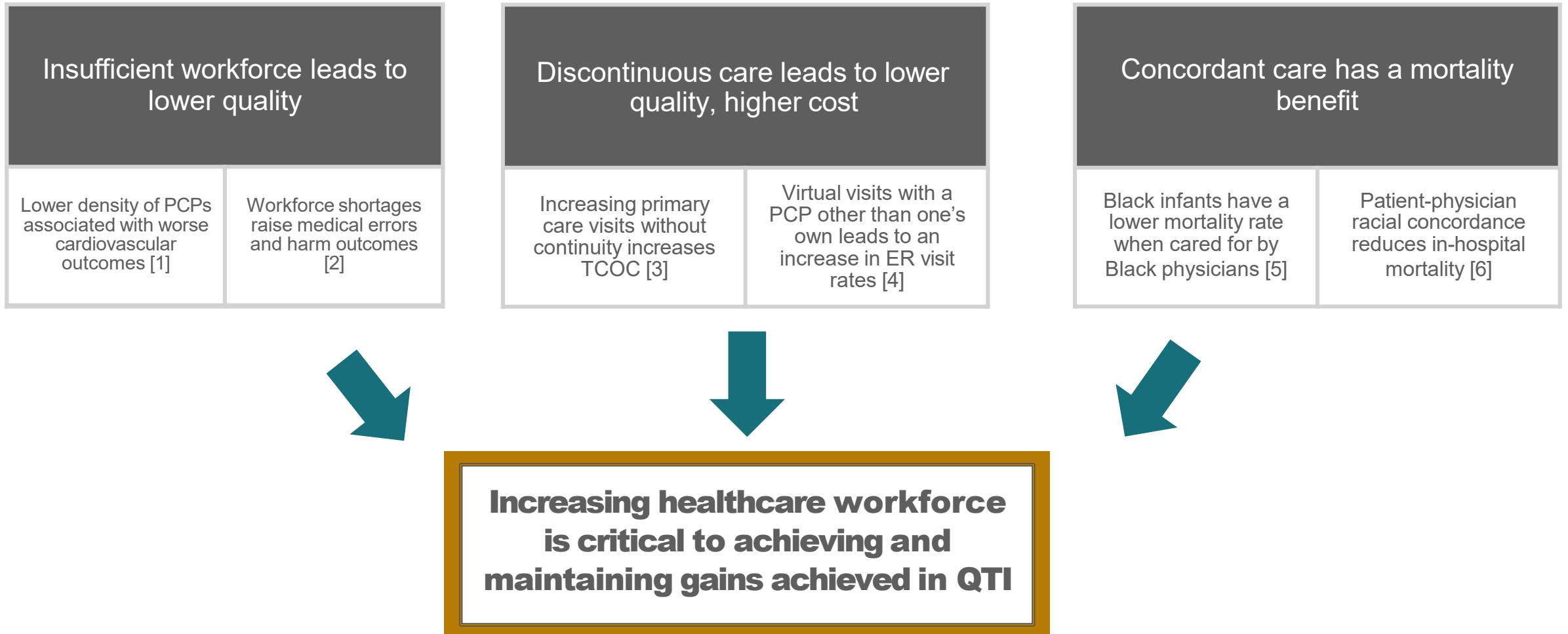
Behavioral Health HPSAs with Highest Count of Covered California Members



For Behavioral Health, the number almost doubles, with 486,414 Covered California enrollees residing in a Behavioral Health HPSA. This impacts about **30%** of our total enrollee population.

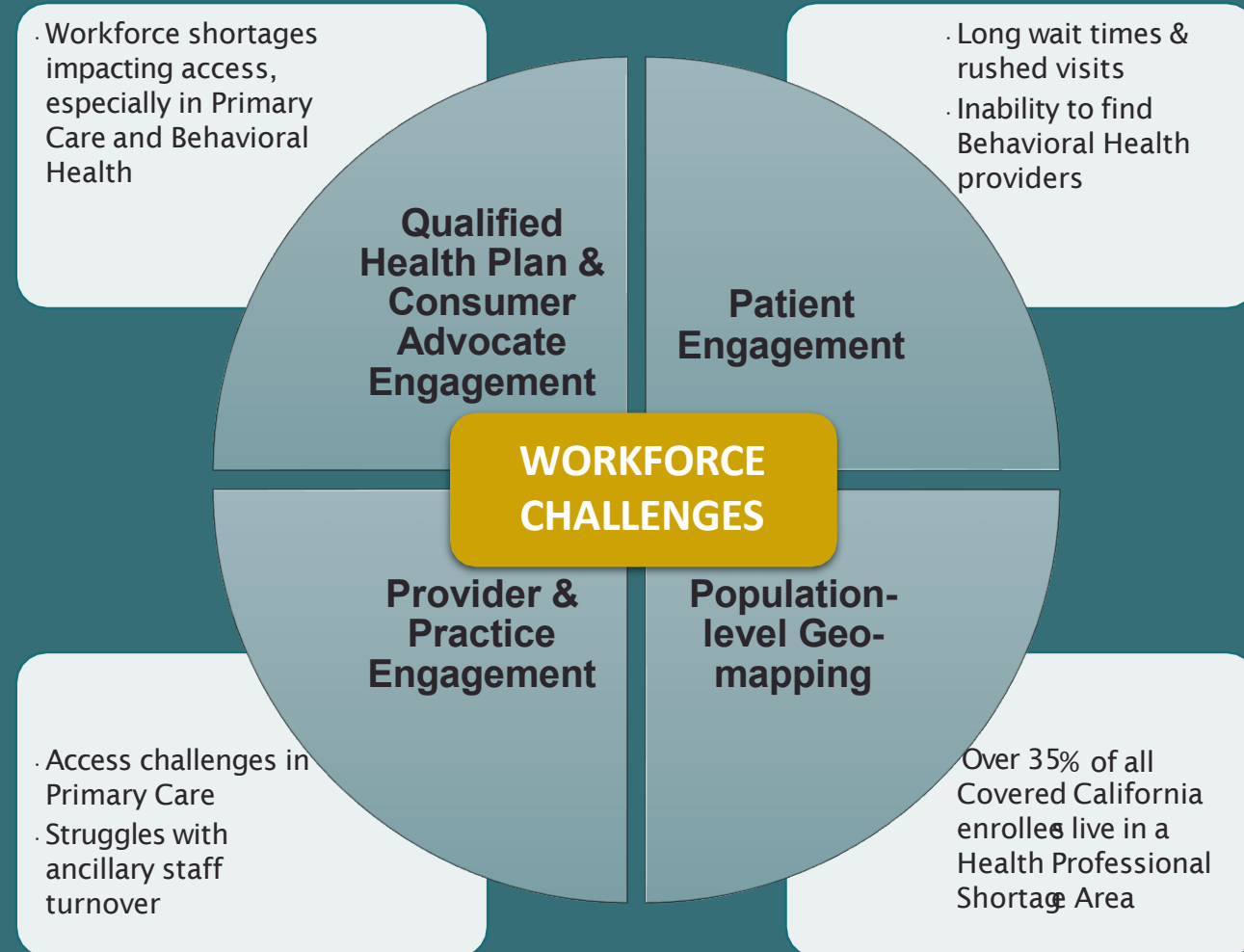
HPSA Designation	Count of Unique Members	Percent of Total Members
Any HPSA	558,874	35.25%
Both PC and BH HPSA	190,838	12.04%

Impacted Healthcare Workforce Leads To Worse Outcomes



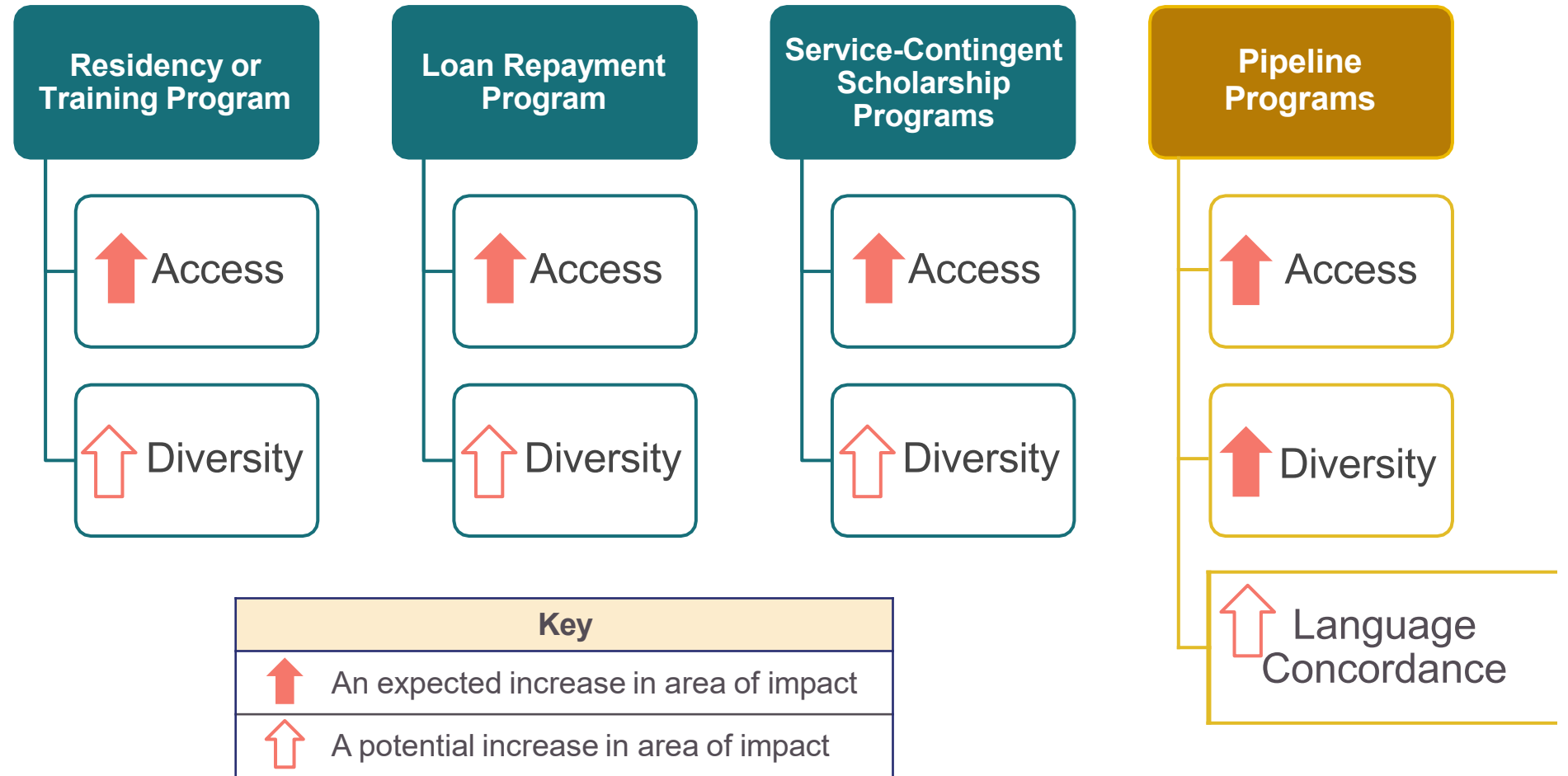
Population Needs Assessment

The PopHI Advisory Council reached a consensus that workforce challenges hinder achievement and maintenance of quality outcomes.




There Is Clear Evidence Supporting Health Workforce Investment and Opportunity

Evidence shows that pipeline programs, known also as career pathway programs, can have a positive impact on access, diversity, and language concordance by targeting support towards students from under-represented backgrounds.



2026 Population Health Investments (PopHIs)



Beyond Covered by Covered California: Child Scholarship Account Program

- Funds are deposited directly into CalKIDS Child Scholarship Account to incentivize timely vaccination and well-child visits
- Targets families with newborns enrolled in Covered California and children under 2 years old



Beyond Covered by Covered California: Grocery Support Program

- Reusable cards loaded with funds to use at grocery stores and other food retailers
- Targets Covered California members with income levels below 250% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) with certain chronic conditions



Covered California Equity and Practice Transformation

- Funds will accelerate adoption of practice transformation through 1:1 coaching & subject matter expertise to foster sustainable practice change
- Targets primary care practices enrolled in DHCS EPT program and serving Covered California enrollees

New for 2026



Health Professionals Pathways Program

- Targets California workforce by focusing on **select health professional shortage areas** which most impact Covered California members
- Leverages HCAI's HPPP infrastructure to **invest \$4.8M** in a health workforce

New 2026 PopHI: Health Professions Pathways Program



Program Structure



- **Leverage HCAI's HPPP infrastructure** to invest in a health workforce that reflects Covered California's diversity while **addressing shortages and inequities**
-



- Provide grantee organizations with funds to support programs that **encourage individuals to pursue health careers** through advising/career development programs, summer internships, post undergraduate fellowships, and post baccalaureate scholarships
-



- Tailor the grant program to **focus on health professional shortage areas** where Covered California members reside and health professions such as **primary care** that manage the chronic conditions and preventive care measured by QTI
-



- Short-term output includes **evaluating participants' knowledge, intent and perception** of health careers
- Long-term output includes **diverse professionals entering the health workforce** to better serve Covered California members

HCAI Health Professions Pathways Program (HPPP)

The HPPP supports and encourages individuals in shortage areas to pursue health careers and develop a needed workforce in primary care and behavioral health.

HPPP expands California's health workforce across the continuum by awarding across four (4) categories:

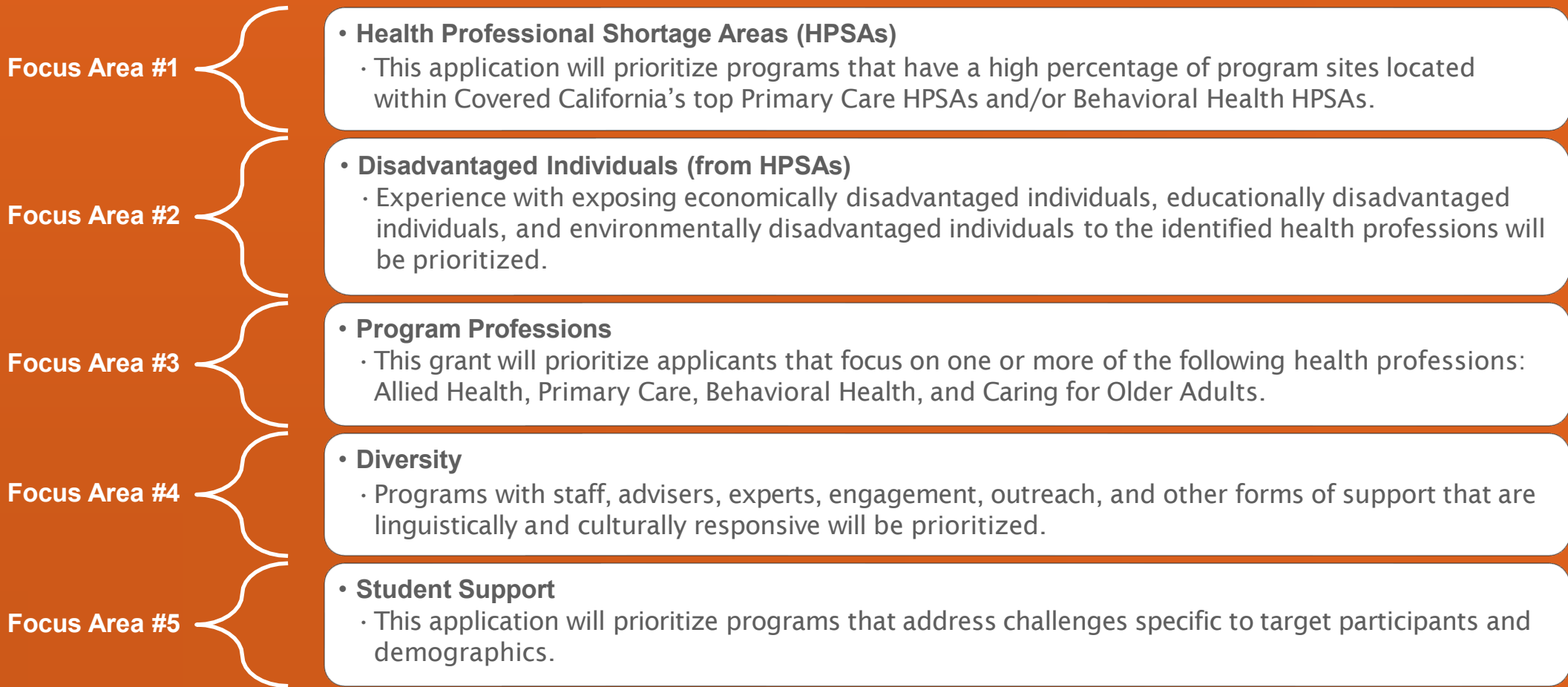
1. Award Category A: Pipeline Program
2. Award Category B: Summer Internships
3. Award Category C: Post Undergraduate Fellowships
4. Award Category D: Post Baccalaureate Scholarships

Available Funding: \$4,800,000

2026-2027 Grant Application will be released in mid-August 2026.

Application Deadline: October 16, 2026 at 3 pm

Main Areas of Focus



Evaluation Plan – Example of Program-level Metrics

All Grantees

- Number of Participants
- Aggregate Participant demographics and characteristics
- Facilitators and barriers to successful implementation of the HPPP

Grantees serving High School students (Award Categories A or B)

- Overall Grade Point Average (GPA)
- Number of students or participants who graduate from High School or obtain their GED
- Number of students who apply to college, admit to college, and/or enroll in college
- Number of students that complete courses required for admission to CSU or UC
- Number of students who work in a healthcare profession (did not attend college; part-time work)

Grantees serving Undergraduate students (Award Categories A or B)

- Any change in overall and science Grade Point Average (GPA)?
- Number of students that persist in post-secondary enrollment
- Number of students who graduate college
- Any effect on non-cognitive skills such as resilience, leadership, etc.?
- Any effect on participants' perceptions on health career goals or aspirations?

Grantees serving Recent College Graduates (Award Categories C or D)

- Number of graduates who complete a fellowship or post-baccalaureate program
- Number of graduates who work in a health care career following completion of program
- Number of graduates who work in a Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) or Medically Underserved Area (MUA)
- Number of graduates who apply, admit, enroll, or matriculate from a health professional school
- Any change in standardized test scores (e.g. MCAT) or pre-requisite course grades?

Evaluation Plan – Example of Participant-level Metrics

General Demographics

- Are you first in your family to attend college?
- Are you a first-generation immigrant?
- Race/Ethnicity, Languages spoken, Family Income

Knowledge

- Change in knowledge of health careers
- Change in knowledge of health career pathways
- Change in knowledge of support resources

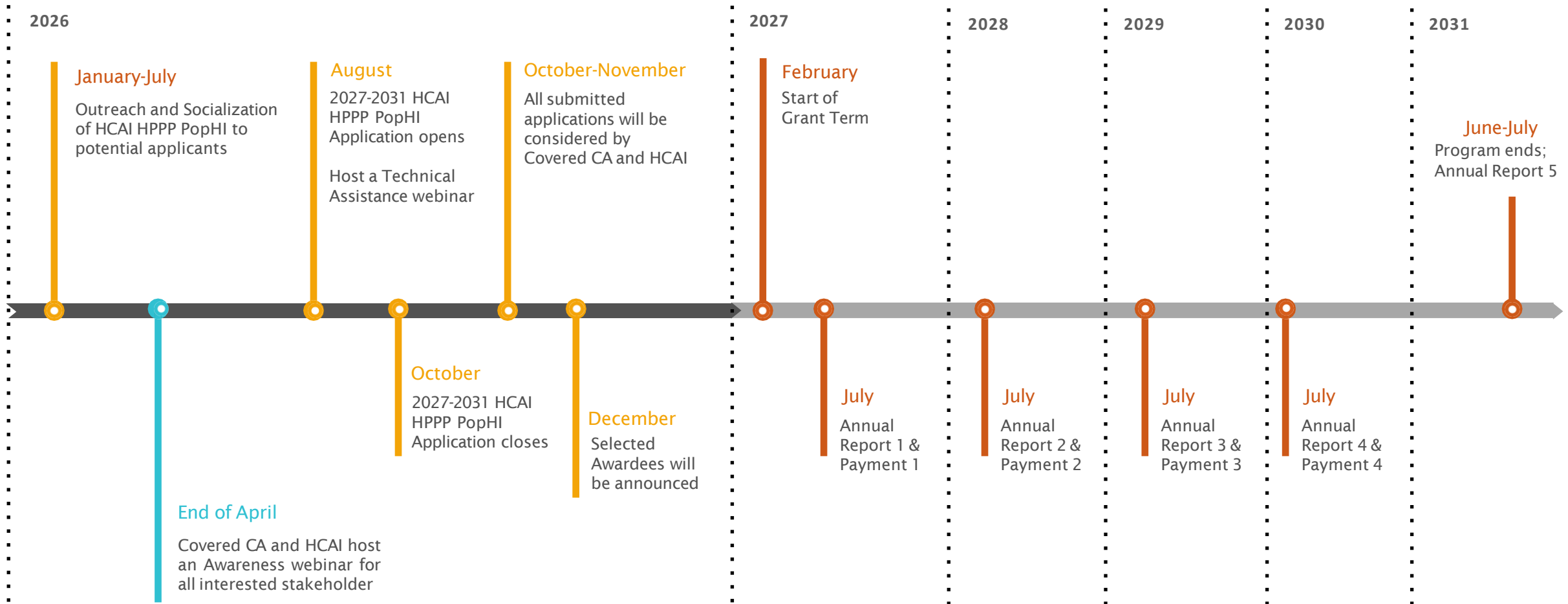
Psychosocial

- Any influence on who or what participants imagine they could become in the future?
- Any effect on participants' sense of self as a future healthcare professional or healthcare student?
- Any effect on participants' attitudes towards health careers?
- Any effect on non-cognitive skills such as resilience, leadership, etc.?
- Any effect on participants' perceptions on health career goals or aspirations?

Perceptions

- Overall satisfaction with the HPPP
- Perceived quality of the program and its applicable elements
- What components of the HPPP did students of participants find most valuable?
- Do participants perceive the HPPP as important to their future path?

2026 Timeline



Thank you!
Questions?

