

January 20, 2021

San Francisco NUHW Therapist Colleagues:

Thank you for the opportunity to address some concerns you have raised in your letter. We have an interest in working collaboratively with NUHW. The well-being of our members is a joint endeavor with Kaiser Permanente and the mental health professionals who provide that exceptional service.

Delivering exceptional mental health services is the cumulative goal and we share the same vision with you. While there is still work to be done, we feel we have been working actively to continuously improve our mental health care services and provide safe, ethical and clinically appropriate care. Our aim is to provide the best care in the nation that is centered around our patients', physicians' and providers' wellbeing. We hear and acknowledge the challenges clinicians face each day and appreciate all the work during these most uncertain times. The COVID-19 pandemic may have forever changed how we will deliver our services. The future is unclear, and we must work together and be able to pivot quickly and precisely when we face challenges. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Kaiser Permanente has kept the safety and well-being of our patients, staff, and physicians at the center of all our decision-making.

We are committed to ensuring timely access to appointments and high-quality care for our members. We have an increase in new initial assessments seen during COVID and appreciate your dedication to timely access. Treatment plans and clinically appropriate return intervals are based on the individual needs of the patient and the clinical judgement of the therapist. We conduct regular audits on our ability to book return appointments according to the individual treatment plan. In Northern California, the percentage of patients with a booked appointment within the timeframe identified in the treatment plan is above 90% for the most recent quarter.

We have maintained the obligated new to return ratio as stated in the collective bargaining agreement. The average number of patients booked on a provider's schedule on a given day has remained stable throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, and we are happy to work with you to ensure the implementation of our new 1:5 ratio and 15% IPC. We encourage individuals to work with their direct manager to address any specific concerns they might have.

We also remain dedicated to recruiting and hiring. We have an aggressive hiring plan for 2021 and are working closely with Talent Acquisition to fill all replacement positions and hire ahead of any attrition. We are in the process of posting net new positions. This is an important goal that we are monitoring closely, and we are ensuring that we meet the equity, inclusion and diversity needs of our population.

Please know that the San Francisco MH Leadership team considers the union's concerns very seriously. We are committed to the health, well-being and safety of our patients and employees. We are eager to stay on track with the existing collaborative venues and forums alongside our dedicated therapists to affect positive change. These processes guide and inform us and are evolving as we delve further into the issues.

Thank you for raising these critical concerns and we look forward to working through them together.

December 22, 2020

NUHW DSA Therapist Colleagues:

Thank you for the opportunity to address some concerns you have raised in your letter. We have an interest in working collaboratively with NUHW. The well-being of our members is a joint endeavor with Kaiser Permanente and the mental health professionals who provide that exceptional service.

Delivering exceptional mental health services is the cumulative goal and we share the same vision with you. While there is still work to be done, we feel we have been working actively to continuously improve our mental health care services and provide safe, ethical and clinically appropriate care. Our aim is to provide the best care in the nation that is centered around our patients', physicians' and providers' wellbeing. We hear and acknowledge the challenges clinicians face each day and appreciate all the work during these most uncertain times. The COVID-19 pandemic may have forever changed how we will deliver our services. The future is unclear, and we must work together and be able to pivot quickly and precisely when we face challenges. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Kaiser Permanente has kept the safety and well-being of our patients, staff, and physicians at the center of all our decision-making.

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We are confident that our existing structures of the LPPC and our performance improvement work, such as the HOPE Value Stream Analysis for Depression, provide opportunity to effectively address the issues unique to the DSA. These groups were built in a way that allows for direct engagement and real-time problem solving. We've had a number of rapid improvement events (RIEs) for improving timely treatment for patients with major depressive disorder in 2020, and we are committed to continuing this work in 2021 with several RIEs already planned.

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Thank you for raising these critical concerns and we look forward to working through them together.