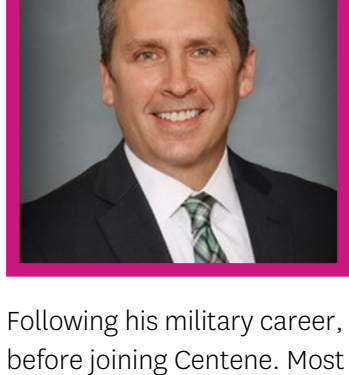


HEALTH NET NEWS

Meet Eric Schmacker, Health Net’s Interim CEO



Health Net is pleased to welcome Eric Schmacker as Interim CEO. Eric brings more than three decades of military and healthcare leadership experience, along with nearly seven years at Centene.

A military dependent who lived across the U.S. and in Europe growing up, Eric also has longstanding ties to California. After college, he served 21 years in the U.S. Army, beginning as an aviator before becoming a healthcare administrator and leading Army hospitals.

Following his military career, Eric held executive leadership roles with Tenet Healthcare’s Baptist Health System in Texas before joining Centene. Most recently, he served as CEO of Silver Summit Health Plan in Nevada.

What drew him to Health Net? A deep connection to purpose.

“I’m a big believer in being aligned with an organization’s mission and values,” Eric said. “The opportunity to make a meaningful impact on the health of Californians and the communities we serve made this an easy decision.”

After spending his first weeks meeting with leaders and teams across the organization, Eric said one thing stands out above all else: the people.

“The consistent theme I’ve heard is how strong this Health Net team is. Health Net is an admired organization, and I couldn’t be more proud to be part of this team.”

As Brian Ternan prepares for his next chapter in Florida, we thank him for his leadership and many contributions while with Health Net. Eric’s appointment as Interim CEO helps ensure continuity as we continue our mission to improve the health and well-being of the communities we serve.

INDUSTRY NEWS

How California is Rebuilding Rural Healthcare

To improve rural healthcare in California, the state and federal governments are investing heavily in a new, modernized framework to combat hospital closures, workforce shortages, and long travel distances.

California is implementing a \$50 billion, five-year federal initiative known as the Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP). The state received over \$233 million to execute the [California Rural Health Transformation \(CalRHT\) Program](#).

The initiative focuses on three main pillars:

1. Transformative Care Networks

- **Hub-and-Spoke Models:** The state is linking geographically isolated regional hospital "hubs" with smaller local clinics and birthing centers to ensure continuous, coordinated care. [\(1,2\)](#)
- **Transition Payments:** Funding is being distributed directly to financially distressed rural hospitals that are essential to regional care networks. [\(1\)](#)

2. Expanding Telehealth & Digital Health

- **Remote Patient Monitoring:** The state is heavily investing in broadband expansion and at-home monitoring devices so chronically ill patients can manage conditions without driving hours to a specialist. [\(1,2\)](#)
- **e-Consults:** Telemedicine networks are being expanded to let rural primary care doctors instantly consult with specialists, keeping patients in their local communities rather than sending them to urban centers. [\(1,2\)](#)

3. Strengthening the Workforce Pipeline

- **Medical Education:** Local healthcare nonprofits like [Healthy Rural California](#) are operating accredited residency programs (Psychiatry and Family Medicine) directly in rural regions, as over 50% of doctors remain where they train. [\(1,2\)](#)
- **Allied Health Expansion:** Funding aims to train non-physician providers such as community health workers, doulas, midwives, and nurse practitioners to fill crucial gaps in rural care. [\(1,2\)](#)

Health Net has invested in healthcare and community-based organizations across Northern California, the Central Valley, and Los Angeles to improve healthcare availability, increase Medi-Cal and Covered California enrollment, and expand services in medically underserved communities. Organizations receiving support include rural-serving groups such as Ampla Health and the Community Health Initiative of Kern County.

Health Net supports community clinics, mobile health programs, and local partnerships that help Californians access care and navigate the healthcare system.

Through its affiliated rural health plans, Health Net has focused on expanding provider networks, addressing physician shortages, and improving access to care in rural Northern California communities where residents often face long travel distances and limited healthcare infrastructure.

[\(1\) National Health Law Program](#)

[\(2\) Sunhawk Consulting](#)



IN THE COMMUNITY

Visión y Compromiso Launches the MOVES (Mobile Outreach for Vulnerable and Engaged Support) Program



This new initiative will deploy promotora-led* mobile health units across Los Angeles County to expand access to health screenings, care navigation, health education and social support services in underserved communities.

The program, made possible by a \$1.8 million grant from the Centene Foundation and Health Net, is a three-year program expected to reach more than 10,000 Medi-Cal beneficiaries and community members through partnerships with trusted community organizations.

MOVES will:

- Deliver critical services that enhance whole-person care, increase access, and improve health outcomes for over 10,000 community and Medi-Cal members in underserved communities throughout Los Angeles County.
- Support the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) Bold Goals to address care gaps, reduce health disparities, promote health equity, and build lasting community trust and engagement.
- Deploy promotora-led mobile health units staffed by skilled promotoras, a registered nurse, and a community outreach coordinator to provide free health screenings, chronic disease management education, access to specialty care, and social support referrals such as doula support, food assistance, housing navigation, and behavioral health services.
- Partner with community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, schools, local health clinics, and other trusted community partners.
- Use data-driven approaches to identify areas with higher social vulnerability and conduct real-time evaluation on service utilization, patient satisfaction, health outcomes, and social needs referrals.

“The new mobile unit is key but what’s even more important is the care model behind it,” said Dorothy Seleski, Health Net Medi-Cal President. “Programs like MOVES work because they are built on trusted, local partnerships and designed to last. When we invest in approaches that communities help shape and sustain, we’re doing more than expanding access—we’re building a more reliable, connected system of care.”

Learn more at [visionycompromiso.org](#).

And visit our [Health Net Newsroom](#).

**A Promotora is a specialized community health worker who acts as a bridge between underserved, predominantly Hispanic/Latino populations and the formal health and social service systems.*

WELLNESS

August is National Immunization Awareness Month

National Immunization Awareness Month (NIAM) is an annual observance held every August to highlight the vital importance of vaccination for people of all ages.

The month focuses on promoting recommended vaccines across the lifespan, ensuring children catch up on well-child visits, and addressing vaccine concerns.

Vaccines are widely recognized as one of the most successful and cost-effective public health tools available. They not only protect the individual receiving the shot but also create “community immunity” (or herd immunity) that safeguards vulnerable populations like infants, the elderly, and the immunocompromised.

Vaccination needs change throughout a person’s life:

- **Infants & Children:** Catch-up and routine schedules protect against rotavirus, preventable diseases such as measles, polio, rotavirus, and whooping cough.
- **Preteens & Teens:** Vaccines like HPV, Tdap, and meningococcal shots are critical to preventing cancers and bacterial infections before adulthood.
- **Adults:** Routine flu shots, COVID-19 updates, and Tdap boosters help maintain immunity against circulating viruses and bacterial infections.
- **Seniors:** Adults aged 60 and older are frequently advised to receive specialized vaccines for RSV, shingles, and pneumococcal disease to prevent severe complications.

During NIAM healthcare professionals utilize communication toolkits to address misconceptions, answer questions, and promote evidence-based vaccine education.

For more information, visit Health Net’s [“Your Wellness”](#) page.



JUST FOR FUN

It’s Whale Watching Month!

August is a premier time for whale watching on the West Coast, offering great chances to spot blue whales, humpbacks, and resident gray whales feeding on massive krill blooms.

Fun Facts About Whales

Whales are incredible marine mammals that share many traits with humans, including being warm-blooded, giving birth to live young, and having hair. Despite spending their entire lives in the ocean, they must surface to breathe air.

- **Blue whales** are the largest animals ever to live: They can grow over 100 feet long and weigh as much as 30 elephants. However, their throats are surprisingly narrow, and they can't swallow anything larger than a grapefruit!
- They only sleep with half a brain: Because whales are conscious breathers and must remember to surface for air, they can only let one hemisphere of their brain sleep at a time.
- Whales can't breathe through their mouths: Their respiratory and digestive systems are completely separate. They can only breathe through their blowholes, which means they can't accidentally swallow water when eating.
- They don't chew their food: Whether toothed or baleen, whales swallow their food whole. A blue whale eats up to 40 million tiny krill every day.
- Ears record their life story: Much like reading tree rings, scientists can analyze whale earwax plugs to determine a whale's age, its exposure to toxins, and historical stress levels.
- They are closely related to hippos: Despite looking completely different, the closest living terrestrial relatives of whales and dolphins are hippopotamuses.
- Male humpback whales compose complex songs: Humpback whales sing long, complex, and evolving songs that can travel for miles underwater.

If whale watching is on your to-do list for August, here are some great places to see them.

California Hotspots

- **Monterey Bay:** Known as the "Serengeti of the Sea." In August, you'll find feeding blue whales (the largest animals on earth) and acrobatic humpback whales.
- **Southern California (Newport Beach/Dana Point):** Offers excellent trips where you can see giant blue whales, fin whales, and large megapods of common dolphins.

Oregon Hotspots

- **Depoe Bay:** Known as the "Whale Watching Capital of the Oregon Coast," it is home to a resident population of about 200 gray whales that feed just offshore all summer long. You can book charter boats for \$50.
- **Central Coast & South Coast:** Excellent viewing from land and sea. Try South Coast Tours departing out of Port Orford or view from elevated viewpoints like the Cape Ferrelo Viewpoint.

Happy Whale Watching!

