



News Release



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CALIFORNIA'S ACES AWARE INITIATIVE AWARDS \$30.8 MILLION IN GRANT FUNDS TO STRENGTHEN TRAUMA-INFORMED NETWORKS OF CARE

SACRAMENTO - Further expanding the reach and impact of the [ACEs Aware initiative](#), the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), in partnership with the Office of the California Surgeon General (CA-OSG), today awarded \$30.8 million in ACEs Aware grant funds to 35 organizations across California.

The grants will help build and strengthen robust networks of care to effectively respond to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and toxic stress with community-based health and social supports that meet the needs of children, adults, and families.

For a full list of the grantees and to learn more about the ACEs Aware grants program, visit www.ACEsAware.org/heal/grants.

“The science is clear: Without intervention, Adverse Childhood Experiences and the resulting toxic stress response can lead to lasting negative mental and physical health outcomes,” said California Surgeon General Dr. Nadine Burke Harris. “These grants will strengthen the capacity of our networks of care to support health care providers to effectively screen, treat, and heal patients with ACEs.”

The newly awarded grants focus on planning and implementation. The state awarded \$7.9 million in planning grants across 27 counties to assist them in preparing to execute a robust screening, referral, and response process designed to interrupt the toxic stress response. The state also awarded \$22.9 million in implementation grants across eight counties to pilot the effectiveness of health care, social service providers, and community-based organizations working together to create a seamless screening, referral, and response process to support families in mitigating toxic stress and preventing further ACEs. The implementation grant funds will be available for up to 18 months.

The planning grants focus on communities with a high prevalence of ACEs, rural and tribal areas, and communities that do not have existing ACEs response activities underway. Implementation grants focus on communities that demonstrate the highest level of clinical and operational readiness and engagement with Medi-Cal providers to

fully execute trauma-informed networks of care. Implementation grantees will also leverage information technology platforms to help communities improve health outcomes for patients and families.

“This second round of ACEs Aware grants will significantly advance the Department’s work to support communities and Medi-Cal providers in addressing many of the complex health challenges facing California’s most vulnerable residents,” said Dr. Karen Mark, Medical Director of DHCS. “This funding recognizes the opportunity to reduce health disparities and inequities stemming from childhood adversity by building strong network of care teams across disciplines that are connected and trauma-informed.”

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to underscore the need to provide California communities with trauma-informed networks of care to mitigate the negative health impacts of ACEs and toxic stress. ACEs Aware has been an integral part of the Medi-Cal program’s response to COVID-19, helping providers identify, treat, and prevent the secondary health effects associated with stress caused by the pandemic.

Since launching in December 2019, the ACEs Aware initiative has made significant progress training providers across California to screen, recognize, and respond to ACEs and toxic stress. The network of care grants will create, augment, and sustain formal connections between health care providers, social services systems, and community partners to address the referral and response needs of Medi-Cal providers, patients, and families following an ACE screening, and to prevent future trauma and toxic stress whenever possible.

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ABOUT DHCS

The mission of DHCS is to provide Californians with access to affordable, integrated, high-quality health care, including medical, dental, mental health, substance use treatment services, and long-term care. The DHCS vision is to preserve and improve the overall health and well-being of all Californians. DHCS funds health care services for more than 13 million Medi-Cal beneficiaries.

ABOUT THE OFFICE OF THE CALIFORNIA SURGEON GENERAL

The role of California Surgeon General was created in 2019 by Governor Gavin Newsom to advise the Governor, serve as a leading spokesperson on matters of public health, and drive solutions to our most pressing public health challenges. As California’s first Surgeon General, Dr. Nadine Burke Harris has established early childhood, health equity, and ACEs and toxic stress as key priorities. Dr. Burke Harris has set a bold goal to reduce ACEs and toxic stress by half in one generation. More information on the CA-OSG can be found at <https://osg.ca.gov/>.

ABOUT ACES AWARE

The CA-OSG and DHCS are leading a statewide effort to screen children and adults for ACEs in primary care, and to treat the impacts of toxic stress with trauma-informed care. The ACEs Aware initiative is built on the consensus of scientific evidence demonstrating that early detection and evidence-based intervention improve outcomes. The initiative has launched a national movement to ensure everyone is ACEs Aware. For more information, visit www.ACEsAware.org.