

## **CALIFORNIA AWARDS \$12.1 MILLION FOR OPIOID AND STIMULANT USE DISORDER PREVENTION TO PROVIDERS WITH PROVEN TRACK RECORD OF SUCCESS IN COMMUNITIES OF COLOR**

**SACRAMENTO** – As part of Governor Gavin Newsom’s \$1 billion [Master Plan for Tackling the Fentanyl and Opioid Crisis](#), the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) has awarded \$12.1 million to [54 entities](#) through the Opioid and Stimulant Use Disorder Prevention for Communities of Color Project.

“Awardees will use their funding to increase community understanding of opioid, stimulant, and polysubstance use, reduce stigma, and increase access to treatment services through referrals and partnerships,” said **DHCS Director Michelle Baass**.

**PROJECT GOALS:** The project directs funding to entities that have demonstrated they can effectively and equitably serve individuals in Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities who are disproportionately impacted by the negative consequences of drug use and the criminalization of substance use disorders (SUD). These communities include Native American, African American, Latino, and Asian-Pacific Islander communities and often have less access to treatment and information about opioid and stimulant use and supports.

The project is designed to overcome gaps in access through the following expected outcomes:

1. Increase individual and community understanding of opioids and opioid use, stimulants and stimulant use, and/or polysubstance use in BIPOC communities, prioritizing harm reduction and public health solutions that focus on positive messages to prevent SUD.
2. Reduce community and individual stigma of people who use drugs and care and treatment services.
3. Increased knowledge of treatment services, particularly Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) and stimulant use disorder treatment, including where and how to access services, as well as integrating and strengthening referral pathways to community SUD care treatment providers to prevent or stop disordered use.

**WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT:** In California, from October 2020 through September 2021, more than 3,296 people from BIPOC communities died from opioid-related overdoses, accounting for 46% of deaths. Communities of color have faced historical and ongoing trauma, systemic racism, and criminalization.

This trauma is perpetuated by the lack of investment in community-based prevention, intervention, and treatment access, especially for culturally responsive, healing-centered, and trauma-informed approaches, and by the ongoing stigma related to seeking SUD treatment in American culture.

**BROADER EFFORT:** This project is part of DHCS' broader efforts to address SUDs, collectively known as the [California MAT Expansion Project](#), to increase access to MAT, reduce unmet treatment needs, and reduce opioid overdose-related deaths through the provision of prevention, treatment, and recovery activities. MAT is the use of medications in combination with counseling and behavioral therapies, which is effective in the treatment of opioid use disorders and can help some people sustain recovery. For more information, please visit the DHCS [website](#).

**BIGGER PICTURE:** Since coming into office, Governor Gavin Newsom has dedicated more than \$1 billion in funding to fight the opioid crisis by removing opioids from the streets, providing resources to California communities in need, and increasing education and awareness to prevent harm in the first place. In fiscal year 2022-23, DHCS invested more than \$558 million in various opioid prevention and treatment grant activities.

**AWARD DETAILS:** The project has a total of \$12.1 million in available funds awarded to 54 entities, with a maximum of up to \$250,000 per entity for the 12-month contract period of July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024.

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