

## CALIFORNIA INVESTS \$70.5 MILLION IN NONPROFITS TO IMPROVE EQUITY IN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE

**SACRAMENTO** — The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) announced the awarding of \$70.5 million to [101 nonprofit entities](#) across the state as part of the Health Equity in Behavioral Health Recovery Services (HEAR US) project. These investments will help expand access to, and use of, behavioral health recovery services among communities of color and other historically marginalized communities.

“California is undergoing an historic transformation and modernization of our behavioral health system. As part of our efforts, these grants provide trusted, community-based organizations with resources to ensure mental health and substance use disorder recovery services are grounded in racial and health equity and are utilized by those who need them,” said **Dr. Mark Ghaly, Secretary of the California Health & Human Services Agency**.

**WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT:** Over an 18-month period between December 1, 2023, and June 30, 2025, these Phase 2 awardees will help implement the roadmap to increase the number and quality of culturally responsive behavioral health recovery programs statewide and enhance access and utilization of behavioral health services by underserved communities.

“In order to meaningfully increase access and utilization, we are supporting behavioral health projects that provide culturally responsive recovery services and systems, lower barriers to access services, integrate peer support across the recovery continuum, and utilize harm reduction approaches to drug use and recovery that address the needs of the whole person,” said **DHCS Director Michelle Baass**

**ABOUT THE NONPROFITS:** Today’s awardees are nonprofit California community-based organizations, tribal organizations, county governments, clinics, and coalitions with a demonstrated history of working with targeted communities.

### **EXAMPLES OF FUNDED ACTIVITIES:**

- **Cal Voices:** Funding will improve equitable access to recovery services for underserved communities, including Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC), Two-Spirit (2S) LGBTQ+, transitional-age youth, and people with disabilities who are unhoused and/or justice-involved, through peer training and workforce development provided by California Association of Peer Professionals learning collaboratives covering Northern, Central, and Southern California regions.

- **Community Agency for Resources, Advocacy, and Services:** Funding will provide Spanish- and English-language community-based behavioral health services to individuals and families in Santa Clara County, with an emphasis on underserved communities, including communities of color, immigrants, and justice-involved people, by expanding clinical and peer staff in outreach, community clinics, and telehealth settings.
- **El Sol Neighborhood Educational Center:** Funding will enhance prevention and recovery services for up to 10,000 people in the Inland Empire with serious mental illness, serious emotional disturbance, and substance use disorders by supporting a comprehensive community-driven, culturally and linguistically appropriate public education and care coordination campaign with community health workers.
- **Youth Empowerments Finest:** Funding will enhance access to behavioral health recovery services for justice-impacted youth and adults with or at high risk for substance use disorders, serious mental illness, and serious emotional disturbance in San Diego County. Youth Empowerments Finest will assess current challenges, update programs with a licensed therapist, expand mentoring hours with new lived experience mentors, and hire a program director to strengthen partnerships with local mental and behavioral health agencies. The goal is to significantly broaden the referral network, fostering systemic impact and better serving the target population in San Diego County.

**HOW WE GOT HERE:** At the conclusion of Phase 1 of the HEAR US project, underserved communities, including BIPOC communities, 2S LGBTQ+ communities, and people living with disabilities, helped inform the creation of the [Roadmap to Improve Access and Care for Diverse Communities in Mental Health and Substance Use Recovery](#).

**BIGGER PICTURE:** The HEAR US project is part of the DHCS Behavioral Health Response and Rescue Project, which is funded by supplements to the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant and the Community Mental Health Services Block Grant awarded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Funding was made available to SAMHSA through the passage of the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act and the American Rescue Plan Act.

For more information, please visit the [Behavioral Health Recovery Services Project](#) website.

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