



# News Release

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## **DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CARE SERVICES ANNOUNCES REGIONAL PILOT PROJECTS TO ENHANCE DELIVERY OF HEALTH CARE TO CHILDREN**

SACRAMENTO – The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) today announced the intent to award five contracts to regional health care organizations for pilot projects aimed at improving care for children with special health care needs through the California Children’s Services (CCS) program. Part of the state’s ongoing Bridge to Reform waiver, the program will launch in Alameda, Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego and San Mateo counties.

DHCS issued “intent to award” notices to Rady Children’s Hospital of San Diego County, Children’s Hospital of Orange County, L.A. Care Health Plan, Health Plan of San Mateo County and Alameda County Health Care.

“These pilot projects will help provide more effective and efficient health care to some of the state’s most medically vulnerable children,” said DHCS Director Toby Douglas. “We have the opportunity to develop strong best practice standards and an integrated system so our existing network of specialty care providers and county partners can better care for our neediest children.”

The CCS program provides health care and services for children up to 21 years of age who have certain diseases or health problems, such as congenital heart disease, cancers or tumors, sickle cell anemia, serious chronic kidney problems, spina bifida and cerebral palsy. CCS connects families with doctors and trained health care professionals who have specific knowledge of how to care for children with these special needs.

Expected to begin in January, the pilot projects will focus on improving care provided to children in the CCS program through better and more efficient care coordination, with the goals of improved health outcomes, increased consumer satisfaction and greater cost effectiveness. Existing state and federal funding will be used for the pilot projects, which are expected to serve 15,000 to 20,000 children. The positive results of these projects could lead to improved care for all 185,000 children enrolled in CCS.

The projects are a major component of the Bridge to Reform’s goal of strengthening the state’s health care delivery system for children with special health care needs. In total, the waiver will bring \$10 billion in federal resources to California for the expansion of health coverage for low-income, uninsured residents and improved care for vulnerable populations.

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Alameda County Health Care will implement a whole-child service model with a robust system of medical homes for CCS children and youth and enhanced communication and linkages among physicians, specialists, hospitals and other programs that serve them, making use of shared data and electronic health records.

In Los Angeles County, L.A. Care Health Plan is collaborating with three children's hospitals to implement three health care delivery systems to provide a medical home and coordinated care and services to CCS children. The model is designed to offer the full spectrum of required services and lay the groundwork for developing a coordinated system of care for all CCS-eligible children in the county.

In Orange County, the model administered by Children's Hospital of Orange County will focus on the whole child, from the family-centered medical home to the CCS-designed Specialty Care Centers in an accountable, flexible and well-coordinated environment. The goal is to leverage existing relationships between the hospital and its community clinic and physician partners to develop a provider-based accountable care organization (ACO) developed around a number of specialty areas to allow for a multidisciplinary approach.

Rady Children's Hospital of San Diego County and its affiliated physicians, in collaboration with the county CCS program, will establish an ACO jointly designed, implemented, managed and continually improved by its founding partners. The model will promote the "triple aim" of health care, including improved health care outcomes, improved health of the population served and greater efficiency and reduced costs in providing appropriate services.

In San Mateo County, the Health Plan of San Mateo County will utilize the existing managed care system to enhance and improve the county's CCS program. The model will provide an integrated, family-centered care delivery and coordination system that eliminates fragmentation of specialty, primary and ancillary services. Care coordination will be driven by the needs of the whole child, including primary care, specialty care, social and psychological needs and any other services necessary to address child and family well-being.

The pilot projects will be evaluated to measure outcomes for children served. DHCS will use the results of the evaluation to recommend next steps, including possible expansion to other counties.

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