



# News Release



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**CONTACT:** Norman Williams  
(916) 440-7660  
[www.dhcs.ca.gov](http://www.dhcs.ca.gov)

## **CALIFORNIA'S ACES AWARE INITIATIVE ANNOUNCES NEW GRANT FUNDS TO COMBAT TOXIC STRESS**

SACRAMENTO – Working to further expand 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), this week released a [Request for Proposal \(RFP\)](#) for a second round of ACEs Aware grants.

The grant funds target communities that want to build upon or grow a robust system – a network of care – to support Medi-Cal providers and their communities in effectively responding to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) to interrupt the toxic stress response in children and adults.

“Providing grant support to further establish networks of care across the state will help ensure the availability of evidence-based interventions and resources to assist Medi-Cal providers in treating toxic stress,” said California Surgeon General Dr. Nadine Burke Harris. “Networks of care are an integral part of a cross-sector science-based response to combat ACEs and toxic stress in our communities.”

The ACEs Aware initiative, led by DHCS and CA-OSG, is a first-in-the-nation statewide effort to train providers on how to screen patients for ACEs and treat the impacts of toxic stress. The initiative has also been an integral part of the Medi-Cal program’s response to the COVID-19 public health emergency, helping providers identify, treat, and prevent the secondary health effects associated with stress caused by the pandemic.

The network of care grant funds will be available to 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, and to prevent future trauma and toxic stress, whenever possible.

Two types of grants will be available – network of care planning and network of care implementation. The planning grants will be targeted to communities that have a high prevalence of ACEs, rural areas, tribal communities, or other communities that do not have existing ACE response activities underway. Implementation grants will be awarded to communities that demonstrate a high level of readiness and engagement with Medi-Cal providers to operate trauma-informed networks of care.

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“The goal of this second grant opportunity is to facilitate the further participation and immersion of Medi-Cal providers into existing community networks of care,” said DHCS Medical Director Dr. Karen Mark. “Ultimately, these grants will strengthen and formalize networks of care that include primary care practices, while also leveraging existing community collaboratives to address ACEs and toxic stress.”

RFP Letters of Intent are due on December 14, 2020. An informational webinar will be held on December 11, 2020. Potential applicants are encouraged to submit questions for the webinar via email to [info@acesaware.org](mailto:info@acesaware.org) by Noon on December 7, 2020. More information about the network of care RFP and the informational webinar is available on the [ACEs Aware website](#).

Earlier this year, ACEs Aware awarded \$14.3 million in grants to 100 organizations in California to promote the ACEs Aware initiative and broaden the availability of provider training. The grants currently fund a range of provider engagement and communications activities across the state to inform and educate Medi-Cal providers about the importance of screening for ACEs and responding with trauma-informed care.

Building upon the success of the first eleven months, the ACEs Aware initiative will continue to support Medi-Cal providers and their teams with [educational events](#), [clinical ACE resources](#), and a [provider toolkit](#) that includes information on how to screen for and respond to ACEs and trauma-informed strategies to treat ACEs and toxic stress.

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### **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.

### **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 13 million Medi-Cal beneficiaries.

### **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](http://www.ACEsAware.org).