



News Release



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CALIFORNIA'S ACES AWARE INITIATIVE LAUNCHES STATE OF CARE PROVIDER ENGAGEMENT CAMPAIGN

SACRAMENTO – May 13, 2021 – The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) and Office of the California Surgeon General (CA-OSG) today launched the “*State of CAre*” health care provider engagement campaign to expand the reach and impact of the ACEs Aware initiative. The campaign slogan is, “Our State of CAre is ACEs Aware.”

The campaign uses digital and print media to raise awareness about Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and the long-term health effects they can have on children and adults if not addressed.

“Decades of research demonstrate that ACEs and the resulting toxic stress response, when left untreated, contribute to some of the most significant and costly societal challenges facing our communities,” said California Surgeon General Dr. Nadine Burke Harris. “The *State of CAre* campaign is designed to help providers understand the importance of screening for ACEs and to leverage our ACEs Aware resources to effectively integrate ACE screening and referrals into their practices.”

The core component of the *State of CAre* campaign is a free, two-hour “[Becoming ACEs Aware](#)” online training and certification. Once certified, providers who participate in Medi-Cal can receive payment for screening patients for ACEs and responding to the symptoms of toxic stress.

More than 17,600 individuals have completed the ACEs Aware training since it became available in December 2019. As a result, Medi-Cal providers screened more than 300,000 patients for ACEs between January and September 2020. Providers who complete the training receive 2.0 Continuing Medical Education and/or 2.0 Maintenance of Certification credits.

The launch of the *State of CAre* campaign includes updates and improvements to the online [Becoming ACEs Aware](#) training modules, a refreshed ACEsAware.org website, and lessons learned and best practices shared on the ACEs Aware Grants [webpage](#).

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ACEs Aware is also launching new clinical materials that are focused on helping health care practitioners and clinics implement ACE screening in their practices in a health equity-focused manner. The materials include “[The ACE Screening Implementation How-To Guide](#)” available at [ACEsAware.org](#).

The first-in-the-nation ACEs Aware initiative has been an integral part of California’s response to the COVID-19 public health emergency, giving providers tools and [resources](#) to help Medi-Cal beneficiaries manage stress and identify and address stress-related physical and mental health concerns, like asthma, heart disease and depression, that can occur due to prolonged exposure to toxic stress.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the need for strong trauma-informed care teams to be integrated into health care practices, clinics, and across our communities,” said Dr. Karen Mark, Medical Director for DHCS. “The *State of CAre* campaign will reach more providers and send a clear message that California is leading the way in identifying, preventing, and addressing the impacts of ACEs and toxic stress.”

Additionally, the ACEs Aware initiative is working closely with the [ACE Resource Network](#) to promote the new [NumberStory.org initiative](#), a resource for consumers and patients to learn more about ACEs, toxic stress, and how to heal.

“ACEs are not destiny,” said Dr. Burke Harris. “Community organizations, health care teams, and individuals throughout California can play a vital role in improving lives and transforming health outcomes. Together, we can make our state of care, ACEs Aware.”

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About ACEs Aware

The Office of the California Surgeon General and the California Department of Health Care Services are leading a first-in-the-nation 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 improves outcomes. The bold goal of this initiative is to reduce ACEs and toxic stress by half in one generation, and to launch a national movement to ensure everyone is ACEs Aware. To learn more about ACEs, toxic stress, and how they impact individuals and families, visit [ACEsAware.org](#).