



NEWS RELEASE
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Sacramento County Office of Education Selected to Implement Action Plan Resulting from Sacramento's National Dialogue on Mental Health

Sacramento, California – The Center for Health Program Management, a nonprofit founded by Sierra Health Foundation, today announced that the Sacramento County Office of Education (SCOE) has been awarded \$175,000 to implement a community action plan focusing on mental health in Sacramento. The action plan, titled [*Sacramento Mental Health Action Plan: Breaking Through Barriers on Mental Health*](#), was developed as a result of Sacramento's participation in the National Dialogue on Mental Health, a nationwide effort initiated by President Barack Obama to create community solutions. Locally, the collaborative effort has been led by Sacramento Mayor Kevin Johnson, Congresswoman Doris Matsui, Senate President pro Tempore Darrell Steinberg, Sacramento County Behavioral Health Services and Sierra Health Foundation. The goal of the action plan is to combat stigmas, educate communities and increase access to mental health treatment.

“According to recent statistics, one in 13 California children suffers from a mental illness that limits participation in daily activities, and two-thirds of adolescents with mental health needs do not get treatment,” said Center for Health Program Management and Sierra Health Foundation President and CEO Chet P. Hewitt. “We can no longer ignore the impact that mental health has on the overall health of California, especially its youth. That’s why we are excited that the Sacramento County Office of Education will be implementing Sacramento’s community action plan, because they understand and serve this important population well.”

On July 20, 2013, Sacramento answered President Obama’s call for action during Sacramento’s National Dialogue on Mental Health event, [*Creating Community Solutions*](#). More than 350 Sacramento County and Yolo County residents, community leaders, public officials and guests joined Sacramento Mayor Kevin Johnson, Congresswoman Doris Matsui, Senate President pro Tempore Darrell Steinberg, Assemblymember Roger Dickinson and Sacramento County Behavioral Health Services at the Sacramento Convention Center to address mental health needs in the region. More than 100 youth participated in the event, which focused on ending stigmas, breaking down barriers to care, and promoting recovery and healthy communities, with a focus on helping young people;

In partnership with Mental Health America of Northern California, the SCOE will be responsible for facilitating the implementation of the action plan and continuing engagement of key stakeholders. They will also coordinate youth engagement efforts in the action planning

implementation. Upon conclusion of the contract in August of 2015, SCOE will develop a final report to document findings, outcomes and program measures and opportunities to further support mental health for youth in the community.

“More than half of adolescents in the United States who fail to complete high school have a diagnosable psychiatric disorder,” said Sacramento County Superintendent of Schools David W. Gordon. “The Sacramento County Office of Education takes a cross sector approach to preparing the young men and women of the region to be healthy, productive adults. That’s why this project means so much to us; we get to work with a variety of leaders from many different sectors to implement a plan that will work to improve the lives of many in our region.”

To date, considerable work has gone into the development of Sacramento’s action plan, and in supporting the follow-up work from the July 20, 2013 *Creating Community Solutions* event. As outlined in the action plan, eight strategies have been selected for implementation, including:

1. Capitalizing on the momentum from the dialogue to build leadership and support for mental health.
2. Continuing the mental health conversations through use of media and materials from the day of dialogue in community centers, schools and nonprofit organizations.
3. Creating a broad-based effort to identify the early signs and symptoms of mental health problems through schools and related community programs.
4. Developing a youth-based social media campaign to encourage youth to get involved in addressing mental health issues.
5. Integrating behavioral and mental health more directly into primary health care services at health care clinics, schools and colleges.
6. Establishing reliable and up-to-date systems to navigate access to mental and behavioral health services.
7. Developing a more focused system of care for transition-aged youth, ages 18 to 24, and ensuring greater linkage to the employment and training system.
8. Ensuring all services meet standards for cultural and language competencies.

Sacramento’s action plan implementation process is funded through a partnership of The California Endowment, Blue Shield of California Foundation and Sierra Health Foundation. These partners, along with The California Wellness Foundation, joined together to fund the planning and delivery of the National Dialogue on Mental Health in Sacramento, and the development of the resulting action plan. The Center for Health Program Management manages the project.

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About the Center for Health Program Management

The Center for Health Program Management works to reduce health disparities in underserved communities. With commitment, creativity and collaboration, we promote efforts to eradicate health inequities across the state. Please visit www.shfcenter.org.