

CALIFORNIA LAUNCHES “ACEs AWARE” INITIATIVE TO ADDRESS THE PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS OF TOXIC STRESS FROM CHILDHOOD TRAUMA

Health care providers can now access training materials and clinical protocols, and receive CME and MOC credits in advance of Jan. 1 Medi-Cal provider payments for ACEs screenings SACRAMENTO (Dec. 4, 2019) – California Surgeon General Dr. Nadine Burke Harris and Dr. Karen Mark, Medical Director at the state Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), today unveiled phase one of the ACEs Aware initiative, a first-of-its-kind statewide effort for California health care providers to screen patients for Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) that increase the likelihood of ACEs- Associated Health Conditions due to toxic stress. Beginning today, California is offering provider training to screen pediatric and adult patients for ten categories of ACEs, which include abuse, neglect, and household dysfunction. The two-hour online curriculum will be easy to access for a wide range of health care professionals and will provide continuing medical education (CME) and maintenance of certification (MOC) credits. Beginning January 1, 2020, Medi-Cal providers can be paid for ACEs screenings for Medi-Cal patients. Through the ACEs Aware initiative, Medi-Cal providers can receive training, clinical protocols, additional resources, and payment for screening children and adults for ACEs. Detecting ACEs early and connecting patients to interventions, resources, and other support can significantly improve the health and well-being of individuals and families. “The ACEs Aware initiative is harnessing and building upon the momentum and expertise that has been growing in the scientific community for more than a decade. We have set a bold goal to cut ACEs in half in a generation, and this initiative represents an historic step in tackling one of the greatest public health threats of our time,” said Dr. Burke Harris, California’s first Surgeon General. They also offered insight into the curriculum and provider training, now available at www.ACEsAware.org.