Kaiser Permanente Announces $6 Million in New Grants in Southern California Focusing on Mental Health and Behavioral Health Services

Local Grant Funding Will Support Reducing Mental Health Disparities in the San Fernando Valley

Panorama City, Calif., – Dec. 6, 2018 – Kaiser Permanente Southern California announced a $6 million, five-year Community Mental Health and Wellness Initiative with an immediate Local Partnership Grant (LPG) grant allocation of $1.28 million to combat and improve access to mental health services. The initial grant allocation is funding a group of two-year grants to support 16 nonprofit community partners working to improve mental health and wellness in under-resourced Southern California communities.

“The prevalence of mental illness is significant and growing in Southern California and across the country,” said John Yamamoto, vice president, Community Health & Government Relations, Kaiser Foundation Hospitals/Health Plan. “For adults and youths affected by mental illness, the effects can be devastating, increasing their risk for serious medical conditions, diminished quality of life, and even suicide. These grants are designed to address the mental health needs within our most under-resourced communities by funding trusted nonprofit organizations that serve these areas and populations.”

In Kaiser Permanente’s continued efforts to improve mental health and wellness in the communities it serves, it once again identified mental and behavioral health as a top community health initiative.

The grant will award approximately $80,000 to each of the 16 nonprofit community partners to aid these organizations that are representing the clinical, social service, advocacy, public, and primary and secondary school sector in Kern, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego counties. These organizations’ efforts include:

- Improving access and connection to care to mental health services in clinical and community settings.
- Enhancing and building the current and emerging mental health workforce to meet community mental health needs.
- Reducing self, public, and institutional mental health stigma and boosting resilience in individuals, communities, and organizations.

Every day, millions of adults and youths with mental health issues struggle in silence, either because they cannot get the appropriate care or are too ashamed to seek help. Mental health disorders are among the most common health conditions faced by Americans and Californians, with nearly one in five American adults experiencing mental illness and one half of all chronic mental illness beginning by age 14.

Kaiser Permanente’s mental health and wellness initiative seeks to address these issues in communities through improving equitable access to high-quality care and reducing the effects of
mental health stigma. Some of the grantees supported by this funding have found unique ways to address mental health through a grassroots approach directly into at-risk communities. An example can be seen through one of Kaiser Permanente’s mental health grant recipients, **Tarzana Treatment Centers, Inc.**, reducing mental health disparities through workforce development of mental health professionals and community health workers aimed at improving Latinos' access to culturally and linguistically relevant mental health services thus reducing the mental health stigma.

“Tarzana Treatment Centers, Inc. commends Kaiser Permanente for their ongoing support of community based mental health initiatives that are critical and vital for our San Fernando Valley residents,” said Jose Salazar, Ph.D, Director of Program Development and Contract Compliance at Tarzana Treatment Centers.

The grant will support Latinos in the San Fernando Valley where 41% of Latinos have less than a high school diploma, 20% experience higher rates of poverty, 22% experience overcrowded housing, and 22% more food insecurity than other racial/ethnic groups. Latino adults also have less access to medical and behavioral health care, are at higher risk for major depression and are less likely to seek mental health services, support training to provide culturally and linguistically competent mental health services is important to reducing the stigma of seeking and receiving mental health services.

The complete list of all 16 community grant recipients of the Local Partnership Grant are:

1. Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science
2. San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools
3. Mental Health of America of Los Angeles (MHALA)
4. National Alliance for Mental Illness Orange County
5. Cajon Valley Union School District
6. The Achievable Foundation
7. Jewish Family Service of the Desert
8. Foothill Family Services
9. California State University, Bakersfield
10. California State University, San Bernardino
11. Family Service Association
12. Tarzana Treatment Centers, Inc.
13. Riverside University Health System Foundation
14. Mental Health of America of Los Angeles – Antelope Valley
15. Coalition for Humane Immigrants Rights of Los Angeles
16. Village Family Services (VFS)

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