Sacramento’s Creating Community Solutions Network

**Background**

In response to President Obama’s call for a National Dialogue on Mental Health, to increase understanding of and awareness about mental health, Sacramento held the first local *Creating Community Solutions* Day of Dialogue in the nation. The event collected input on ways to address mental health and well-being from more than 300 community members, 30% of whom represented youth age 14 to 24. After the community event, a planning committee developed the Sacramento Mental Health Action Plan: *Breaking Through Barriers on Mental Health* to address the identified issues.

Three goals shaped the Day of Dialogue and the resulting action plan:
- Talk about mental health to break down barriers and promote recovery and healthy communities;
- Find innovative community-based solutions to mental health needs, with a focus on young people;
- Develop clear steps to move forward in a way that complements existing local initiatives and activities.

**Implementing Sacramento’s Mental Health Action Plan**

The broad goals of the Mental Health Action Plan are to take collective action to combat stigma, educate communities, and increase access to mental health treatment in Sacramento County. While the Action Plan recognizes the array of efforts already under way to address mental health issues, it seek, to address barriers and challenges raised during Sacramento’s Day of Dialogue, with a particular emphasis on school-age and transition-age youth. Moving forward to address mental health concerns and needs requires addressing these barriers by continuing the conversation, addressing the underlying issues and supporting a continuum of care. The Action Plan focuses attention on addressing the needs of young people related to prevention and early intervention, the treatment gap, and access/affordability of mental health services by including strategies that:
- Create new avenues for early identification and referral
- Provide a clearer map about how to navigate services
- Identify the gaps in resources for specific types of services
- Develop deeper linkages with the Affordable Care Act, Covered California, the Mental Health Services Act, health insurers, and mental health providers

**Leadership and Funding Partners**

Local leaders of the collaborative effort to sponsor the Day of Dialogue and implement the Action Plan include Sacramento Mayor Kevin Johnson, Congresswoman Doris Matsui, Senate President pro Tempore Darrell Steinberg, Sacramento County Behavioral Health Services and Sierra Health Foundation.

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