



ASIAN HEALTH SERVICES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AHS will Expand Mental Health Services to Meet Community Needs

OAKLAND, Calif. –Asian Health Services (AHS), a nationally recognized model of culturally competent health care, announced today that it is increasing its capacity to deliver mental health service programs, to meet the needs of the growing Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community. The Alameda County Board of Supervisors approved \$3.6 million in funding for this expansion of services.

With funding from the county, AHS, which currently has an integrated behavioral health program available to 56,000 patients, is preparing to expand its continuum of care to unmet, specialty mental health needs in the community.

Currently, the AAPI community represents ten-percent of clients utilizing mental health services used in Alameda county, according to Alameda County Health Care Services. However, the AAPI population represents a much larger share (26%) of the Medi-Cal population in the county.

“There is a tremendous amount of stigma associated with mental health illnesses which in part leads to many AAPIs not seeking services, and a lack of awareness of the seriousness of the problem,” said Sherry Hirota, chief executive officer at AHS, adding, “We appreciate the Board of Supervisors’ understanding of the need for culturally competent services, and enabling us to continue to advance our whole person care approach.”

Based in Oakland’s Chinatown, AHS provides comprehensive and affordable primary care and dental services to over 56,000 registered patients and managed care members, the majority of whom are Asian, low-income, and limited English proficient AHS provides culturally competent care in English and 12 languages with approximately 117,000 patient visits annually.

AHS will complement its service with additional in-language outreach, prevention, wellness and treatment staffing and programs for individuals with mental illness.

About Asian Health Services

Asian Health Services, founded in 1974, is a federally qualified health center whose mission is to serve and advocate for the medically underserved, including the immigrant and refugee Asian community, and to ensure equal access to health care services regardless of

income, insurance status, language, or culture. For more information, go to www.asianhealthservices.org.

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