Jennifer Kent, Director

Department of Health Care Services

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March 22, 2019

As a pediatrician practicing at a Community Health Center for 27 years, I feel compelled to submit public comment on Prop 56/AB 340 Trauma Screenings.

At The Children’s Clinic, Serving Children and Their Families, we have been deeply involved in the effects of trauma since 2013.  We became a Trauma Informed organization through the National Council of Behavioral Health early on and have done countless trainings of other agencies.

We trained all our staff, then began screening, identifying, risk stratifying and referring for services.

We have learned the importance of many parts of the implementation in order to complete the process in the most empathetic way for both staff and patients and would like to share those learnings.

Below are my personal comments:

**1) provider training, resources, and guidance:**

Because staff administering these screenings likely have experienced trauma themselves, it is imperative that they receive training on how to respond to their own reactions/retraumatization and seek help prior to screening and responding to others.

Since even introducing the screening tool to patients may be retraumatizing, “scripts” should be in place first to “normalize” it at introduction and second for initial response should the screen be positive for trauma or cause the patient to elicit symptoms in reaction to it.

**3) provider supplemental payment for ACEs**

Although we are happy to see reimbursement in the proposal, it will only benefit Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC) if the payment is received in addition to the Prospective Payment System (PPS) payment as an incentive or bonus for completing the screenings outside of capitation payments.

I am encouraged that trauma screening is being mandated but want to make sure that protections are in place to avoid retraumatization of both patients and staff and that FQHCs receive meaningful reimbursement to their bottom line.

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*"It's the right cause when you know you're feeling fed in your heart, and then you need to stay with it."* *Abigail Disney.*