



Draft Plan Emerges To Reduce Disparities in Mental Health Care

by David Gorn

Wednesday, January 14, 2015

The California Department of Public Health this week released a draft of its **strategic plan** to cut down on the disparities in mental health care for minorities and other groups.

A consumer advocacy organization, the California Pan-Ethnic Health Network, is holding a series of community forums to discuss the plan. The first of the five town hall meetings over three weeks kicks off Jan. 26 in Fresno, with others planned in Eureka, Los Angeles, Oakland and San Diego.

The \$60 million project is based on the supposition that ethnicity, race and sexual orientation have affected access to mental health services for many Californians. The state wanted to identify culturally appropriate strategies to improve access to those services, raise the quality of care and improve health outcomes for people in those groups.

CDPH officials seek stakeholder engagement in five broad categories:

- African American;
- Asian Pacific Islander;
- Latino;
- Native American; and
- The lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender population.

CDPH officials and representatives of CPEHN called for public comment on the plan.

"Ultimately, the end goal for everyone involved is to improve health outcomes and quality of care within vulnerable communities through action and increased awareness," said Jahmal Miller, deputy director of the Office of Health Equity at CDPH.

