

October 30, 2020

Re: Healthy CA for All Environmental Analysis, October 2020

We are Partners in Care Foundation, a non-profit, community-based organization providing health and social care services in Southern California. *The Healthy California for All Commission's* report, [An Environmental Analysis of Health Care Delivery, Coverage, and Financing in California](#) offers a comprehensive look at some of the biggest challenges our state faces in terms of improving our population's health, with several appealing suggestions for how we can tackle these issues.

We would like to point out an aspect of California's health care system that did not make it into the report, but deserves consideration as you craft the future of health care policy in our state: community-based health and social services.

What is community-based care? It is a range of services, usually provided to older adults who are at risk of nursing home admission, which are meant to keep them healthy and out of institutionalized care settings. While the commission's report focuses on physician-level healthcare, community-based care is provided by a growing army of social workers, community health workers, care managers, and others who are skilled in providing these services. Less costly than a physician, these workers have the time to get to know patients on a personal level, identifying issues before they develop into problems that require costly medical interventions while motivating their clients to engage in healthy behaviors.

Community-based care is an invaluable set of tools to address social determinants of health, the non-medical factors which impact a person's ability to both avoid illness, and to recover fully when they do get sick. As we have seen with COVID, social determinants have a tangible effect on the state's overall health. It might seem obvious that poverty correlates with negative health outcomes, but personal factors like race and sexual orientation, and community factors like neighborhood walkability, digital connectivity, and access to quality grocery stores, contribute to a person's risk of getting sick.

California recognized the need for social care early on, creating Medi-Cal services like the Multipurpose Senior Services Program, the Home and Community-Based Alternatives program, Community-Based Adult Services, and the Health Homes Program. Private health plans are also ramping up hiring of social care providers, recognizing that community-based interventions keep their members healthy and

reduce the risk of costly hospital and nursing home admissions. We ask that you take these low-cost, high-benefit approaches to population health into account as you consider the state of health care in California.

We join the California Alliance for Prevention Funding in our shared belief that the report's vision for financing California's health care system must include strategic, sustained investments in community-based prevention and health equity. Just as the Affordable Care Act envisioned the Prevention and Public Health Fund, California needs to have dedicated funding for organizations to implement community-based prevention programs and policy/system/environmental change strategies that create healthier communities for all.

Sincerely,

June Simmons, CEO
Partners in Care Foundation