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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**PLANNING GRANT TO MEET CHALLENGES OF OPIOID DEPENDENCY RECEIVED BY
HEALTH PLAN OF SAN JOAQUIN (HPSJ)
FROM CALIFORNIA HEALTHCARE FOUNDATION (CHCF)**

Opioid overuse has been a long-standing, major problem, both nationally and in California. According to the CDC * (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), 14,000 Americans died in 2014 as a result of prescription opioid overdose. In 2015, Health Plan of San Joaquin implemented several safety measures to prevent overuse and promote appropriate use of opioid medications among HPSJ members.

* CDC: www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/index.html

(French Camp, CA) – Health Plan of San Joaquin (HPSJ) has received a \$50,000 California Healthcare Foundation (CHCF) planning grant to help meet the challenges of a nationwide epidemic of opioid dependency. For this planning grant, now underway, HPSJ is collaborating with San Joaquin General Hospital (SJGH) and Community Medical Centers (CMC).

HPSJ Director of Pharmacy and Clinical Analytics Johnathan Yeh, Pharm.D. said that Medi-Cal plans such as HPSJ have become increasingly concerned by the high percentage of patients who are becoming dependent on prescription opioids and other substances. Yeh noted that many of these cases are new members who come to HPSJ already with a high opioid burden, adding a layer of complexity to early identification and successful treatment.

“As a Medi-Cal managed care plan, we believe CHCF’s strategy to foster partnerships between Medi-Cal plans and local care provider organizations bodes well for the ultimate success of efforts around the developing opioid dependency dilemma,” Yeh said. “Our joint goal is to develop sustainable, integrated care models aimed at appropriate treatment, decreasing overuse, reducing dependence, and improving outcomes for patients utilizing opioids.”

Yeh is a leader of HPSJ’s participation, which includes HPSJ’s pharmacy department staff, as part of CHCF’s statewide, collaborative planning initiative that has eight-teams, each pairing a Medi-Cal plan and local care provider organizations. At the end of the six-month grant period, each of the plan/provider teams will present their detailed pilot project. Each team’s proposed pilot project solution will identify: target populations, strategies for outreach and engagement, a care model and staffing, promotion of safe prescribing practices, and expanding access to medication-assisted treatment.

About HPSJ

(more)

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HPSJ, a not-for-profit health plan, has been serving members and the community since 1996. Located in the heart of California's multicultural Central Valley, HPSJ is the leading Medi-Cal Managed Care provider in San Joaquin and Stanislaus counties. HPSJ offers a broad network of providers and works closely with physicians to develop programs and services to ensure quality health care for over 330,000 members.

HPSJ is one of only 12 health plans in California with NCQA Accreditation for a managed care Medi-Cal program. Medicaid is known as Medi-Cal in California. Only 160 Medicaid/HMO plans in the U.S. had this NCQA seal at the time of HPSJ's 2015 Accreditation.



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Photo: Johnathan Yeh, HPSJ Director of Pharmacy and Clinical Analytics (photo credit: HPSJ, 11/15)

Download at: <http://www.hpsj.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/JohnathanYeh-lowres.zip>

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