



September 17, 2021

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
State Capitol, First Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 428 (Hurtado) Health care coverage: adverse childhood experiences screenings— REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE

Dear Governor Newsom,

On behalf of the California State Association of Psychiatrists, I respectfully request your signature on SB 428 (Hurtado), which would require a health care service plan contract or health insurance policy issued, amended, or renewed on or after January 1, 2022, that provides coverage for adverse childhood experiences screenings (ACEs). The bill would authorize each department to adopt guidance to implement this provision.

An American Journal of Preventive Medicine study demonstrated that a child's exposure to traumatic events substantially impacts his or her long-term health. The findings make identifying a child's exposure to abuse, neglect, discrimination, violence, and other adverse experiences—and connecting children and families to early intervention services that can help families heal from trauma or slow or reverse the expected negative health outcomes—a core component of healthcare.

Currently, the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) reimburses physicians who take specific DHCS training and provide ACEs screenings to Medi-Cal beneficiaries. However, there is no requirement for commercial payers to cover these services. Without expanding this screening benefit into the commercial market, California will continue to limit the ability for all individuals with ACEs to receive targeted interventions that can reduce the risk of chronic disease later in life.

1415 L Street, Suite 1000
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 446-4656

SB 428 allows providers to screen patients for ACEs and provide necessary services early. Many experts have warned that the current COVID-19 pandemic is a traumatic stressor—so expanding ACEs coverage now will enable doctors to mitigate what would otherwise become a compounding trauma in the future.

For all these reasons, the California State Association of Psychiatrists is pleased to support SB 428 and requests your signature on this measure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Yoder", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Paul J. Yoder
Legislative Advocate

CC: Senator Melissa Hurtado