



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 16, 2024

MEDIA CONTACT:

CAADPE: Max Geide - max@caadpe.org

CBHA: P Moreno-Gonzalez - pmoreno@cccbha.org

Melissa Santos-Martinez - msmartinez@cccbha.org

CA Alliance: Andy Rolleri - aroller@cacfs.org

Co-Sponsor Coalition Expresses Disappointment Over Governor's Veto of Assembly Bill 1470

Sacramento, CA – The California Council of Community Behavioral Health Agencies (CBHA), The California Alliance of Child and Family Services (CA Alliance), and California Association of Alcohol and Drug Program Executives (CAADPE) express deep disappointment following Governor Gavin Newsom’s veto of Assembly Bill AB 1470. This bill, championed by author **Assemblymember Sharon Quirk-Silva**, sought to simplify and standardize documentation requirements for behavioral health services provided under our State’s Medi-Cal program.

AB 1470 aimed to reduce the administrative burden on providers by requiring the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to work with stakeholders in developing standardized forms and conducting regional training to ensure efficient implementation. This effort, we believe, was vital to reducing documentation inefficiencies that negatively impact providers’ ability to spend more of their valuable time on client care.

AB 1470 garnered widespread support from behavioral health stakeholders, underscoring the urgent need for reforms that align with the goals of CalAIM and improve service delivery within the state’s behavioral health system.

“The Governor's decision to veto AB 1470 is disappointing, especially given the pressing need for standardized and streamlined documentation in the behavioral health field,” said **Christine Stoner-Mertz, CEO of CA Alliance**. “This bill was a necessary step towards

aligning our efforts with the realities faced by providers daily. We will continue to push for solutions that improve care delivery by reducing unnecessary administrative barriers.”

"Despite acknowledging CalAIM's initiatives, we find that substantial documentation hurdles continue to impede our capacity to deliver quality care," noted **Robb Layne, who serves as the Executive Director of CAADPE**. "This proposed legislation offered a chance to work together on streamlining these procedures in a manner that genuinely meets the requirements of both service providers and our state. It's clear that significant challenges in documentation will remain."

"As an organization that has been leading this effort for years, we are disappointed that the voices of providers seeking relief from administrative barriers were not heard in this decision again. AB 1470 would have allowed for a more inclusive, stakeholder-driven approach to improving the efficiency of behavioral health services," said Dr. Le Ondra Clark Harvey, **CEO of CBHA**. "While CalAIM has taken steps forward, this bill sought to address gaps that still remain in the system."

While CalAIM has identified documentation reform as a pillar of one of the behavioral health reforms, this vision has yet to be realized. This bill was more important than ever given the dramatic increase in behavioral health issues our clients are facing in the public behavioral health system. As provider associations, we will continue to work with our Administration, counties, and partners to streamline documentation requirements across counties.

About the Coalition:

The California Association of Alcohol and Drug Program Executives (CAADPE), The California Alliance of Child and Family Services, and the California Council of Community Behavioral Health Agencies (CBHA) represent a broad range of behavioral health and child welfare organizations across California. Together, we advocate for the betterment of behavioral health services, with a shared mission to improve access, quality, and effectiveness of care.