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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## CALOPTIMA CONDUCTS MOST EXTENSIVE MEMBER HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT IN ITS 22-YEAR HISTORY

*More than 6,000 CalOptima members, providers and community representatives participated*

**ORANGE, Calif. (February 2, 2018)** — CalOptima's Member Health Needs Assessment (MHNA) is the agency's most comprehensive study to date quantifying for the first time significant health care and social challenges. The MHNA provides data critical to ensuring that health care providers and the community can continue to address issues faced by CalOptima members.

In 2017, surveys, focus groups and interviews were conducted specifically with Medi-Cal members, whose health needs are at the core of CalOptima's mission. The study gathered responses from all geographic areas of Orange County, across all age groups and in 10 languages.

Additionally, the study reached new groups of members whose voices have rarely been sought out or heard before, such as young adults with autism, people with disabilities and homeless families with children.

"The assessment is another indication of CalOptima's dedication to understanding the needs of Orange County's vulnerable population," said Supervisor Andrew Do, chairman of the Orange County Board of Supervisors. "I was pleased to champion this effort, which will enable us to improve the health and wellness of our members."

The study was designed to help CalOptima identify:

- Unique needs and challenges of specific ethnic communities
- Challenges to health care access and how to address these barriers
- Member awareness of CalOptima services and resources
- Ways to leverage outreach efforts through community partnerships

"CalOptima's MHNA is an innovative collaboration that builds upon existing data-gathering efforts and takes them a step further," said Michael Schrader, CalOptima Chief Executive Officer. "The study was designed to be more inclusive using engaging methods that resulted in a more personal experience for our members and the community."

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The assessment concentrated on the underlying social determinants of health that have been recognized as factors that impact the health of individuals. The MNHA explored issues relating to child care, hunger, mental health, housing and employment status among others.

Key findings underscore how economic stress and financial insecurity impact health and well-being. The study also showed that social isolation and language barriers have a negative impact on health. Still further data uncovered a lack of knowledge and fear of stigma as key barriers to seeking mental health services.

All the findings will be shared in a final, comprehensive report to be released in the spring. The MHNA results will lead to a healthier future for CalOptima's members by driving funding allocations and community grants that expand access, programs and services which in turn promote better health outcomes.

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#### **About CalOptima**

A county organized health system, CalOptima provides publicly funded health care coverage for low-income children, adults, seniors and people with disabilities in Orange County, Calif. CalOptima's mission is to provide members with access to quality health care services delivered in a cost-effective and compassionate manner. In total, CalOptima serves nearly 800,000 members with a network of more than 7,200 primary care doctors and specialists, as well as 30 hospitals.