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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**CALOPTIMA PARTNERS WITH LOCAL AGENCIES  
TO HOST BEHAVIORAL HEALTH FORUMS**

*Providers to receive information to help clients access and retain services*

**ORANGE, Calif. (January 12, 2015)** — CalOptima is partnering with county and community agencies to host a series of no-cost, education and awareness forums on behavioral health services in Orange County. The forums will benefit providers, community-based organizations and other agencies that serve CalOptima members, including hard-to-reach and isolated populations. Attendees will learn how to access resources for their clients and how to reduce the stigma of mental illness through cultural competency and sensitivity. Attendees will also get an update about the new Medi-Cal renewal process, so clients can keep their coverage.

Due to Medi-Cal expansion under the Affordable Care Act, CalOptima is now serving more adults, many of whom can benefit from behavioral health services. Fortunately, services for mild to moderate behavioral health conditions were expanded at the same time, but the community needs to better understand how to support members with mental health needs.

“People with mental illness face an increased risk of having chronic medical conditions, so it’s important for CalOptima to inform the community that behavior health services are more widely available due to the expanded Medi-Cal benefits,” said Michael Schrader, CalOptima Chief Executive Officer. “We are pleased to be working with our county and community partners to share this valuable information so we can better serve our members.”

In partnership with Access California Services (AccessCal) and the Refugee Forum of Orange County, the first forum will be Thursday, January 15, 2015, at AccessCal, 631 S. Brookhurst St., Suite 107, Anaheim, CA 92804. Additional sessions will be hosted at community venues throughout Orange County from January through April 2015. Check our website [here](#) for event dates and locations.

“We are thankful for this model of a partnership with CalOptima and the Refugee Forum of Orange County,” said Nahla Kayali, AccessCal Founder and Executive Director. “Such a noble initiative ensures all recent refugee and immigrant communities in Orange County have culturally and linguistically competent organizations by their side, understanding them, supporting them, and helping them meet behavioral health needs.”

For more information about or to attend a behavioral health forum, please contact Cristina Martinez at 714-246-8736 or [cmartinez@caloptima.org](mailto:cmartinez@caloptima.org).

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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 more than 700,000 members with a network of more than 7,000 primary care doctors and specialists, as well as 30 hospitals.