



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
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By

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HB 1322 HD1 SD1 – RELATING TO TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in **support** of HB 1322 HD1 SD1 which establishes a trauma-informed care task force within the Department of Health (DOH) to make recommendations of trauma-informed care in Hawai'i. The John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) appreciates the opportunity to participate on the task force. We suggest a minor amendment as to the JABSOM representative on page 4, lines 5-6 as follows:

(7) A faculty member from the John A. Burns school of medicine[~~department of native Hawaiian health~~];

This amendment would enable any faculty member from JABSOM with expertise in the field of trauma-informed care to serve on the task force instead of limiting representation to faculty from the Department of Native Hawaiian Health. JABSOM has a wide range of expertise that could complement the task force members, and we welcome the opportunity to work with DOH to form a strong task force with multiple viewpoints ranging from care delivery settings, educational settings and socio-economic situations.

Adverse childhood experiences are traumatic experiences that occur during childhood, including physical, emotional, or sexual abuse; physical and emotional neglect; household dysfunction, including substance abuse, untreated mental illness, or incarceration of a household member; domestic violence; and separation or divorce involving household members. These experiences can have a profound effect on a child's developing brain and body and, if not treated properly, can increase a person's risk for disease and other poor health conditions through adulthood. These issues are highly prevalent in native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (NHPI) groups, and affect their ability to access health care as well as leads to problems that stem from the lack of proper medical treatment.

A trauma-informed approach to care acknowledges that health care organizations and care teams need to have a complete picture of a patient's life situation — past and present — in order to provide effective health care services with a healing orientation. Adopting trauma-informed practices can potentially improve patient engagement, treatment adherence, and health outcomes, as well as provider and staff wellness. It can also help reduce avoidable care and excess costs for both the health care and social service sectors. Involvement of not only private health care providers, but entities at the state and county levels to examine all aspects of trauma and its causes will lead to a clearer understanding of the causes of trauma and its effect on individuals' lives. A comprehensive approach to trauma-informed care can lead to positive health outcomes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.