



# News Release



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Health Leaders Invite Innovation to Improve California's Health**

SACRAMENTO – Health leaders are challenging communities statewide to find creative, innovative ways to improve the health of all Californians.

The California Health and Human Services Agency (CHHS) and California Department of Public Health (CDPH) today announced the second annual Innovation Challenge from Let's Get Healthy California, a statewide collaborative effort to improve the health of every Californian. Innovation Challenge 2.0 encourages community and health advocates across the state to share ideas and projects they are working on that will help achieve this goal.

“California is known for setting the pace, spurring innovation, and improving health,” said CHHS Secretary Diana S. Dooley. “Through this Innovation Challenge, Let's Get Healthy California encourages all of us—state policymakers to local communities to individuals—to find groundbreaking ways that will help make California the healthiest state in the nation.”

Let's Get Healthy California invites community, health, and human services advocates, health care and human services providers, community and faith-based organizations, non-profits, civic data enthusiasts and visionary practitioners to participate and share their solutions and ideas for Innovation Challenge 2.0.

Submissions for Innovation Challenge 2.0 begin September 14, 2016. To submit an innovation, or for more information, visit the [Let's Get Healthy California](http://Let's Get Healthy California) website or email [LGHC@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:LGHC@cdph.ca.gov). The deadline for submissions is October 12, 2016.

This year's Challenge is focused on what are called the “social determinants of health,” defined as the conditions in which people are born and live. Some of these social determinants include safe housing, hunger, poverty, quality of education, lack of jobs or job training, public safety, discrimination, racism, exposure to toxic substances, and exposure to crime and violence.

“Every year, we learn more about how profoundly the conditions in which we begin our lives and where and how we live those lives affect our health,” said CDPH Director and State Public Health Officer Dr. Karen Smith. “Health begins in our homes, schools, workplaces, neighborhoods and communities. To have healthy people and healthy communities, we have to create the social and physical environments that give every Californian the opportunities we need to be healthy.”

Last year, Innovation Challenge 1.0 received nearly 100 innovations. One of last year's Innovation finalists was "Ending Hunger in Orange County," submitted by the Waste Not OC Coalition.

"Since last year's Innovation Challenge, we've collected more than 280 tons of food," says Dr. Eric Handler, Orange County public health officer. "Instead of restaurants and grocery stores simply throwing away their unused food, Waste Not OC collects that food and distributes it to feed the hungry. With this one simple idea, I believe we will end hunger in Orange County."

Finalists will be selected and announced this fall and will be highlighted at the statewide Innovation Conference 2.0 in early 2017. Selected submissions will also be featured on the [Let's Get Healthy California](#) website.

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