



## Called to Care So That **Everyone Has a Safe Space**

Called to Care is committed to supporting safe spaces in communities throughout California and working hard with community partners to prevent violence in all its forms, including domestic violence, human trafficking and sexual abuse, by addressing their complex social causes. Those who fall prey to these crimes are often society's most vulnerable and most likely to suffer acute health crises and chronic health issues as a result.

California has made progress in fighting domestic violence, but one violent action is always too many. In 2020, more than 160,000 domestic violence-related calls were made to law enforcement in the state. California also experiences high rates of human trafficking, which is exacerbated by the state's housing crisis.

While most hospitals focus on treating injuries caused by violence and abuse, California's Catholic health providers are also focused on prevention efforts. These providers work with community partners to support victims with compassionate, culturally appropriate care in safe, secure spaces, as well as to implement prevention strategies that seek to eliminate opportunities for violence.

### Providing Trauma-Informed Care

California's Catholic health care providers, along with community partners, provide compassion and dedicated programs for vulnerable populations, including those who lack insurance or cannot afford to pay. Specially trained health and social service professionals attend to the plight of victims of violence—responding with trauma-informed care, providing ongoing resources and support, and advocating on their behalf. Health care workers come in contact with an estimated 80% of human trafficking victims at some point during the course of a victim's trafficking.

Called to Care supports the approach of California's safety net health care providers, many of which are Catholic health care sites, in preventing domestic violence, human trafficking and sexual abuse; and doing everything possible to care for survivors. These organizations are uniquely positioned to serve as a hub for coordinating access to health and social services and are taking key steps to address these challenges, including:

- **Creating Safe Space for All.** As a core value and foundational principle of care and service, being mindful and attentive to those who are most vulnerable and living at society's margins; fostering an environment free of discrimination, harassment or any other emotional or physical harm.
- **Providing Trauma-Informed Care.** Dedicating specially trained health and social service professionals to provide a trauma-informed approach to care that recognizes and responds to signs, symptoms and risks of trauma to better support the health needs of patients.
- **Extending Beyond Hospitals.** Participating in and promoting community-led collaborative programs focused on preventing and responding to violence, supporting survivors and striving to eliminate social patterns and structures that contribute to this preventable public health crisis.



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## Programs Helping Victims of Violence and Human Trafficking

Guided by principles of service and compassionate care, California's Catholic health systems and Catholic-affiliated hospitals have established programs and formed partnerships dedicated to helping survivors of violence, trafficking and abuse. Key examples include:

**Dignity Health Human Trafficking Response Program**—This systemwide program supports compassionate care for victims of trafficking throughout California. Trainers educate staff to recognize and assist victims, as well as to identify patients who are at risk for abuse or trafficking. The program interfaces with community-based violence prevention programs to connect survivors with ongoing support and resources. Dignity Health leadership has made this training a priority for health care staff.

**Providence Partners with Napa NEWS to Support Survivors of Abuse and Violence**—Every year, Napa community organization NEWS (Nurturing Empowerment, Worth and Safety) provides shelter and services to approximately 1,200 women and children who are survivors of domestic violence and sexual abuse. Through funding and collaboration, Providence's Queen of the Valley Medical Center in Napa helps enable NEWS to provide counseling, financial assistance and safe space to survivors working to regain their health and stability.

**Dignity Health has developed a victim-centered, trauma-informed program based on actual cases because we believe that health care providers can provide a critical step in identifying and supporting trafficked persons.**

**Holly Austin Gibbs**

Director of Dignity Health's Human Trafficking Response Program

**Providing the right kind of trauma-informed support for survivors is challenging in of itself; in addition, a majority of the clients receiving specific types of assistance through NEWS in 2021 were also Spanish speaking. Providence is grateful for our partnership with this organization, which knows that providing services in a culturally appropriate way is also a priority for successful outcomes in our area.**

**Dana Codron**

Senior Director, Community Health Investment Programs, Providence  
Regional Director, Community Health Investment—Providence Northern California

## About Called to Care

Called to Care aims to improve the health of every person in our state by supporting strong connections between safety net providers—including hospitals, clinics and health care professionals—and community organizations to address California's most pressing health and social challenges.

*Called to Care is a project of the Alliance of Catholic Health Care, together with members Dignity Health and Providence.*



### Connect With Us.

Connect with Called to Care to help build stronger ties between health care providers and community organizations to address California's most pressing social challenges.  
[calledtocareforall.org/register](https://calledtocareforall.org/register)