

# THE FUTURE OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS

## A CALIFORNIA 100 ISSUE ROADMAP FROM RESEARCH TO ACTION

April 2022

California is a bellwether for the U.S. healthcare system, providing instructive lessons about the successes and major challenges in aiming to achieve health equity for a diverse population. Healthcare researchers, policymakers, and practitioners now understand that the social and structural determinants of health—or the external realities of an individual's or a community's socioeconomic and political position in society—are critical to health and wellness. These determinants include the factors or conditions in the places where people live, learn, work, and play. A focus on the social and structural determinants of health requires a focus on improving the systems and deeply embedded structures that marginalize whole communities and regions, making it difficult to achieve good health for all.

California's health care delivery system has largely been successful in providing coverage and access to care compared to other states in the U.S. However, important challenges remain for California to achieve health equity, given that nearly 8 percent of Californians remain uninsured, and wide disparities persist in health outcomes across socioeconomic groups, racial and ethnic populations, and regions of California. These disparities suggest that a healthcare system can only do so much to achieve wellness in society. Creating an environment in which all Californians can thrive requires moving beyond simply treating sickness and actively moving towards an integrated health system that also tackles social and structural barriers and needs for all.

### FROM RESEARCH TO ACTION

What will these changes mean for current and future generations of Californians, and how can we make sure that California's future in health and wellness remains innovative, resilient, inclusive, sustainable, and equitable?

In April 2022, the California 100 Initiative released a policy and future scenarios report on health and wellness, developed by researchers at the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research. The team conducted extensive primary and secondary research, and spoke with a wide array of experts in the public and private sectors to examine possible scenarios and policy options for future-focused action.

"There are positive signs that California is ready to tackle social and structural social determinants to achieve better health and wellbeing in the state," said **Ninez A. Ponce, PhD, MPP, professor in the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health's Department of Health Policy and Management and is the Director of the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research.** "California's initiatives on aging and Medi-Cal, the state's Medicaid program, signal the beginning of a shift away from the current 'sickness system,' and towards a more integrated approach to health and wellness for a diverse range of Californians."



## FUTURE SCENARIOS

Other key takeaways from the California 100 report include a consideration of policy options that improve health and wellness under **four future scenarios** that center around whether or not health and wellness are narrowly construed or widely construed (i.e., primarily related to clinical care, or also including social determinants of health such as racism, housing, education, employment, and crime), and whether systems of health care have a high degree or low degree of interoperability.

In a context where health and wellness are broadly construed, the scenarios range from highly coordinated care across a variety of health and social service systems that include public providers as well as private-sector providers in health, education, and social services, to a patchwork of coordinated care in certain localities or in certain public systems. In a context where health and wellness are narrowly construed, the scenarios range from uncoordinated systems that focus on specialized clinical care and place more emphasis on individual responsibility to more coordinated systems that retain the focus on clinical care and fail to address community-level health disparities.

Whatever the scenario, the research commissioned by California 100 indicates that we should refrain from “doing nothing” as a default or fall-back option. In order for California to perform better under these various scenarios, the state will need to investigate, deliberate over, and enact innovative solutions that advance **resilience** (such as enabling individuals, families, and communities recover from hardship and trauma), **inclusion** (by valuing the expertise of lived experience and community voices), **sustainability** (including addressing environmental, economic, and human sustainability goals), and **equity** (by eliminating disparities by race, income, gender, and other markers of social disadvantage).



Artist rendering of future scenarios in health and wellness  
Source: California 100



## THE CALIFORNIA 100 ROADMAP

The California 100 report on policies and future scenarios is the first step in a multi-stage process that is designed to inspire and engage Californians—from a variety of sectors and all walks of life—to build a stronger future for current and future generations. In the summer of 2022, our expert and intergenerational Commission will conduct a series of listening sessions throughout the state, to solicit feedback on the ideas generated by our research and to generate additional big and bold ideas for consideration by public and private agencies, as well as by everyday Californians. We will also be generating insights from our policy innovation projects throughout the state that cover a variety of topics, and our deep engagement on questions of science and technology as they relate to a variety of issues, including health and wellness.

In early 2023, we will take these various policy ideas and scenarios, and engage in a process of deliberative democracy featuring a representative cross-section of California residents. The goal of this deliberative exercise is to understand the conditions under which Californians from various walks of life can come to agreement on the long-term challenges facing the state and, importantly, the kind of bold and visionary solutions we need to put the state on a stronger trajectory for the next century.

California 100 will also be engaging intentionally with young Californians, who have the most to gain or lose in the coming century. Our team members will engage young people throughout the state, including in high school and college settings, and will organize a statewide youth summit that will produce a manifesto for the future of California.

Finally, in Winter and Spring 2023, our intergenerational Commission will draft a vision and strategy document for the future of California, based on briefing materials that build on insights from the various streams of work. California 100 will then launch a culminating event in early summer 2023 that serves as the formal launch of the vision and strategy document and, importantly, also brings together leaders and partners from our various streams of work and prior engagement.

Our culminating event in the summer of 2023 will:

1. Showcase the pressing need for California to prioritize long-term futures,
2. Build an ambitious yet achievable vision and strategy that are grounded in rigorous research and community engagement, and
3. Inspire others to do the same, providing tools that a variety of partners (including policymakers, government agency officials, business leaders, activists, researchers, and next-gen leaders from various sectors) can use to build their own aspirational visions and strategies for California's long-term success.

## **ABOUT CALIFORNIA 100**

The California 100 Initiative envisions a future that is innovative, sustainable, and equitable for all. Our mission is to strengthen California's ability to collectively solve problems and shape our long-term future over the next 100 years. California 100 is organized around 15 policy domains and driven by interrelated stages of work: research, policy innovation and engagement with Californians. California 100's work is guided by an expert and intergenerational Commission. Through various projects and activities, California 100 seeks to move California towards an aspirational vision—changing policies and practices, attitudes and mind-sets, to inspire a more vibrant future.

California 100 staff members compiled this roadmap document, drawing on research in two publications—a Policies and Future Scenarios Report and a Facts-Origins-Trends Report—by authors from the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research. The two health-related publications are part of California 100's larger research stream of work, built in partnership with 20 research institutions across the state.

California 100 sponsored grants for data-driven and future-oriented research focused on understanding today and planning for tomorrow. This research, anchored in California 100's 15 core policy domains, forms the foundation for the initiative's subsequent work by considering how California has gotten to where it is and by exploring scenarios and policy alternatives for what California can become over the next 100 years.

The California 100 Initiative is incubated through the University of California and Stanford.

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### **READ MORE**

To learn more about the future of health and wellness in California, visit the California 100 website at [California100.org](https://California100.org), where you will find our detailed reports on the topic, and more information about our research partners.

