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**DR. COLLEEN TOWNSEND OF PARTNERSHIP HEALTHPLAN OF CALIFORNIA  
WINS 2025 *MAKING A DIFFERENCE AWARD***

FAIRFIELD — The Association for Community Affiliated Plans (ACAP) today honored Dr. Colleen Townsend of Partnership HealthPlan of California with the organization's *Making a Difference Award*.

The *Making a Difference Award* recognizes an employee of a member plan who goes above and beyond their job's responsibilities to improve and fulfill needs in their communities and support underserved community members.

Dr. Townsend, regional medical director for Partnership HealthPlan of California, was recognized for her track record of dedication toward improving health care access for low-income communities. Her efforts were highlighted at the 2024 Shuttering of Maternity Care Centers in Northern California Conference, where she addressed the issue of maternity care center closures and brought experts together to discuss potential solutions.

Her achievements also include spearheading efforts at Partnership HealthPlan of California to introduce doula services as a covered benefit for Medi-Cal members in 2023. Understanding the importance of education for both members and providers, she established a network of doulas and created training programs for provider offices.

"Dr. Townsend's leadership and passion for improving health care access have truly made a difference in the lives of people we serve," said Partnership HealthPlan of California CEO Sonja Bjork. "Her work in addressing maternity care shortages, expanding vital services, and advocating for those who need it most speaks to her commitment to our mission. I am proud to work alongside someone whose dedication and impact are so far-reaching."

“Dr. Townsend’s work exemplifies the spirit of the *ACAP Making a Difference Award*, and we are thrilled to celebrate her contributions,” said Enrique Martinez-Vidal, ACAP’s vice president for quality and operations. “Tackling health care access barriers, especially in maternal health, aligns with ACAP’s core mission. Her dedication to improving care for underserved communities makes her a deserving recipient of this award.”

Outside of her role at Partnership HealthPlan of California, Dr. Townsend serves as the board vice chair for Operation Access, a Northern California organization connecting underserved patients with volunteer medical professionals. She is also actively involved in the Napa Opioid Safety Coalition, which unites health care, law enforcement, and community organizations to combat opioid misuse.

**About ACAP:**

ACAP represents 85 health plans, which collectively provide health coverage to more than 30 million people. Safety Net Health Plans serve their members through Medicaid, Medicare, the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP), the Marketplace and other publicly-sponsored health programs. For more information, visit [www.communityplans.net](http://www.communityplans.net).

**About Partnership HealthPlan of California:**

Partnership is a community-based, safety-net health care organization that contracts with the state of California to administer Medi-Cal benefits. Partnership provides quality care to over 900,000 Medi-Cal members. Starting in Solano County in 1994, Partnership now serves 24 Northern California counties – Butte, Colusa, Del Norte, Glenn, Humboldt, Lake, Lassen, Marin, Mendocino, Modoc, Napa, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Solano, Sonoma, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, Yolo, and Yuba. Learn more about Partnership at [PartnershipHP.org](http://PartnershipHP.org).