



NAMI California

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**Press Release**

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**Governor Newsom Announces Dr. Tom Insel as “Mental Health Czar of California”**

Sacramento, 21 May 2019 – California Governor Gavin Newsom today announced the appointment of Dr. Tom Insel to the newly created position of “Mental Health Czar” for California.

Jessica Cruz, NAMI California Chief Executive Officer said: “Having a key statewide leader in a position reimagine the behavioral health delivery system, with families and individuals living with mental illness driving the conversation will make our entire state stronger and give severe mental illness the focus it deserves in California at the local, regional and statewide levels.”

Thomas R. Insel, MD, a psychiatrist and neuroscientist, is a co-founder and President of Mindstrong Health. From 2002-2015, Dr. Insel served as Director of the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), the component of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) committed to research on mental disorders.

Governor Newsom said of Dr. Insel, “(he) will help us reorganize, soup to nuts, the entire delivery system, working with Mark Ghaly from a county-by-county perspective. Mark was the LA County Health Director, so his is all integration – substance abuse, mental health – bringing that mindset to bear at a statewide level, working with Tom in a collaborative way to completely reorganize our delivery system.”

NAMI California is a grassroots organization of families and individuals whose lives have been affected by serious mental illness. We advocate for lives of quality and respect, without discrimination and stigma, for all our constituents. We provide leadership in advocacy, legislation, policy development, education and support throughout California.

