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PRESS RELEASE

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THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AND LACDMH CELEBRATE GRAND RE-OPENING OF DOWNTOWN MENTAL HEALTH CENTER

New building will help meet the growing need for mental health services in Skid Row.

Los Angeles, CA – The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors and the Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) are pleased to announce the grand re-opening of the Downtown Mental Health Center (DMHC), located at 529 S. Maple in Los Angeles, on **Monday, September 28, 2015 at 9:00 A.M.**

“Located in the heart of Skid Row, this new facility will connect residents of Skid Row as well as the rest of downtown Los Angeles to a continuum of psychiatric services,” Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas said. “The Downtown Mental Health Center will serve as a critical access point for comprehensive, holistic and customized services to both the homeless and the formerly homeless who need continued assistance.”

Serving the Skid Row area, Downtown Mental Health Center has just completed a \$10 million renovation, financed through the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Capital Projects Fund. The new 25,000 square-foot center is designed to improve conditions and alleviate overcrowding. Using MHSA funding, LACDMH has implemented new programs in the Skid Row area to address the growing number of homeless persons with mental health needs. This much-needed renovation, which included demolition of the existing interiors, seismic upgrades of the structure, and replacement of the electrical, heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems, also includes redesigned space that will permit the hiring of additional outreach and treatment workers.

The newly built DMHC will retain Crisis Resolution and Wellness Services, and will now serve 3,000 clients through 75 staff. Other programs and services previously available at the main clinic will be provided at multiple sites throughout downtown to create greater service access to persons who need care.

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“This new facility should be seen as the next step in the County’s total commitment for finding the combination of housing, addiction, mental health and other services that aim at ending the scandal that is Skid Row,” stated LACDMH Director Marvin J. Southard, DSW.

The Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health is the largest county-operated mental health department in the United States, directly operating programs in more than 85 sites, and providing services via contract program and DMH staff at approximately 300 sites co-located with other County departments, schools, courts and other organizations. Each year, the County contracts with more than 1,000 organizations and individual practitioners to provide a variety of mental health-related services. On average, more than 250,000 County residents of all ages are served every year. The Department’s mission -- enriching lives through partnership to strengthen our community’s capacity to support recovery and resiliency – is accomplished by working with stakeholders and community partners to provide clinically competent, culturally sensitive and linguistically appropriate mental health services to clients in the least restrictive setting.

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