



Mental Health News

May 2017



LACDMH OPENS PEER RESOURCE CENTER AT HEADQUARTERS

By H. Chung So, Public Information Officer II

The Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health kicked off Mental Health Awareness Month on May 1st with the opening of a walk-in peer resource center on the first floor of LACDMH headquarters, located at 550 S. Vermont Ave.

The grand opening included a ribbon-cutting ceremony and congratulatory remarks from LACDMH leadership and the Honorable Mark Ridley Thomas, Chairman of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, along with moving speeches from

LACDMH clients and peers, who talked about their own mental health challenges and the healing impact of connecting with others.

"When you talk to people out there, you tell your story [as a peer] and they relax a bit," said volunteer Joseph Cuervas, who co-emceed the grand opening event.

The center is the first of its kind in the county, and is primarily staffed by volunteers and paraprofessionals who

have lived experiences with mental illness, homelessness and other issues. These experiences allow the resource center workers to sincerely empathize and engage with visitors and loved ones in need of help or support.

"One of the strengths of this particular program is that we are using peers to help those in need to connect in a way that's welcoming and non-threatening," said LACDMH Director Jonathan E. Sherin, M.D., Ph.D.

The center's visitors can be connected to a variety of resources, including current information on mental health issues and wellness, referrals to mental health programs and even assistance in setting up an appointment. Extra attention is paid to help unserved or underserved populations, such as non-English speakers or those facing homelessness, who often face additional barriers to access for these services.

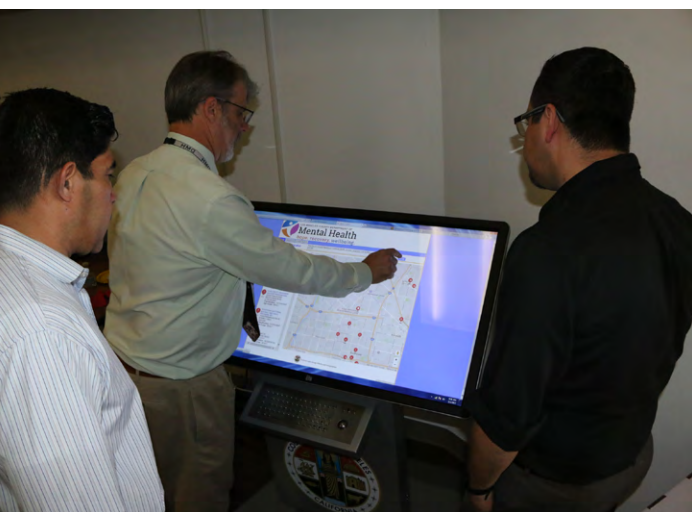


For urgent situations, professional staff from LACDMH's Outreach and Triage Bureau will be on-hand to provide mental health evaluation and crisis interventions.

In addition to mental health resources, visitors can also get linked to other public assistance and social service programs, such as housing support, signing up for benefits, job training, legal aid and volunteer opportunities.

The goal is for all visitors to have a warm, positive experience at the center and to "always leave with something," Sherin said.

The LACDMH peer resource center is open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on weekdays. For more information about the center, please call 213-951-1934 ♦





REFLECTIONS

Creator, I humbly pray and thank you for the many blessings, healings and lessons that will be given to us, as we work with each other.

*- Aho Mitakuye Oyasin
(to all our relations)*

A blessing, stated at the American Indian Counseling Center community garden groundbreaking ceremony by Iva Maes, Assiniboine/Gros Ventre/ San Felipe Pueblo WOW Volunteer at American Indian Counseling Center in Cerritos, CA.

We welcome submissions of inspirational quotes, poems or passages from LACDMH employees for future editions of Mental Health News. Please send yours to pio@dmh.lacounty.gov.

MENTAL HEALTH BLOSSOMS IN MAY

By Kathleen Piché, Public Affairs Director



Asian Pacific Islander heritage month celebration on May 17, 2017

May is known nationally as Mental Health Awareness Month, a time designated to raise awareness about mental health and related issues. Since the U.S. Surgeon General identified stigma as the number one barrier to getting help almost twenty years ago, attitudes appear to be changing around the stigma and discrimination associated with mental illness. Negative attitudes have existed since the late 1940's, when the first National Mental Health Awareness Week was launched and it wasn't until the 1960's that the campaign was extended to the entire month of May. This month, we are encouraged to take responsibility for preventing mental illness by making positive lifestyle choices in thought and action before problems manifest.

LACDMH programs have been very busy during the past weeks spreading the word on how to optimize and support hope, well-being and recovery for clients, families and communities in Los Angeles County. Here are some of the events LACDMH has sponsored and/or participated in:

May 1: Peer Resource Walk-In Center Grand Opening, 550 S. Vermont (LACDMH Headquarters)

May 2: "Day of Dialog," events across LA County to engage, educate, share and inspire. Activities brought county partners, non-profit friends, celebrity champions – and everyday citizens – together for special events across Los Angeles County.

May 3: Global Summit on Mental Health Culture Change/Campaign to Change Direction: Conference at LACMA around nationwide campaign identifying 5 healthy living habits, and 5 signs of mental distress and what to do about it.

16th Annual Mental Health and Spirituality Conference: "Renaissance of the Whole Person" at the Center at Cathedral Plaza.

May 11: Service Area 3 Advisory Committee Open House, East San Gabriel Mental Health Center.

May 17: Transition Age Youth Conference, "You Matter, Make

Your Voice Heard," at the California Endowment.

Asian Pacific Islander heritage month celebration: "Ready Set Recover, Make Your Voice Heard," Long Beach Mental Health Center.

American Indian Counseling Center hosts "Day of Healing," in South Gate Park.

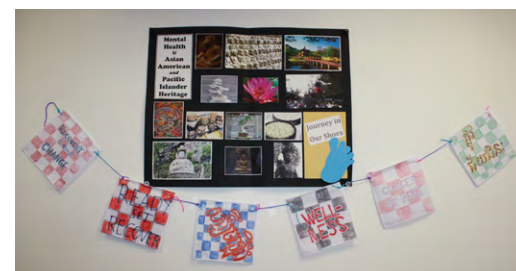
May 19: Second Annual HOPE (Homeless Outreach Partnership Event) collaborative services event featuring multiple providers, in Lancaster.

May 20: "The Power of Play, Children and Families Growing Together," featuring PCIT and collaborative services for children at Ted Watkins Memorial Park.

May 23: SB-82 Mobile Triage Team at LA Central Library, downtown. Resources on housing, and spiritual, physical and mental health were provided.

May 24: San Pedro MHC sponsored the Sixth Annual Mental Health Awareness Month Resource Fair, resources from multiple service providers, county agencies and vendors were provided.

Remember, you can always check the LACDMH Calendar for upcoming events and participate in all our social media messaging on Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and Instagram. ♦





Change Direction Board of Supervisors Recognition, May 3, 2017



Change Direction Day of Dialogue, May 3, 2017



Change Direction Global Summit at LACMA, May 3, 2017

▶ American Indian Counseling Center May Is Mental Health Celebration May 17, 2017



TAY Conference May 17, 2017



◀ 2nd Annual HOPE Event May 19, 2017



San Pedro Mental Health Celebration ◆ Downtown Mental Health Center, May 24, 2017



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