



## Message from the Director

Dear DMH family,

Thank you for your dedication and commitment to the County and those we serve. As we enter our second holiday season of challenges in the context of the COVID pandemic and [social unrest](#), I hope you are able to connect with your loved ones, your neighbors, and your community. Thanksgiving and these next few days are a special time to step back from the day-to-day grind in order to speak to, listen to, and take care of each other.

While we will all continue to face stressors, please be kind to yourselves and compassionate with others to speed up our healing and recovery journey together. On that note, [reach out for help](#) if you feel in need of emotional support, and be sure to support those who reach out to you as well.

I wish you and your loved ones a very healthy and happy Thanksgiving.

Heart forward,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jon".

Jonathan E. Sherin, M.D., Ph.D.  
Director



## DMH Family Gives Back to Clients and Communities for Thanksgiving

In the spirit of Thanksgiving, we appreciate our staff who have gone above and beyond to support the wellbeing of our clients and communities. Earlier this month, members of our Service Area 6 Specialized Foster Care team assembled and distributed gift boxes of food and household supplies for clients experiencing financial hardships, and additional LACDMH staff volunteered with the Dodgers for their [17<sup>th</sup> annual "Thanksgiving Turkey Giveaway"](#) to distribute holiday meals at a drive-thru event last week.

If you are interested in helping others during this holiday season, consider supporting the Department of Public Social Services' [Annual Adopt-A-Family Program](#) or our [County's COVID-19 recovery efforts](#).



## Restorative Care Village Completed at Olive View-UCLA Medical Center

Last week, we joined L.A. County Supervisor Kathryn Barger, the Department of Health Services, and the Department of Public Works in celebrating the completion of the Restorative Care Village (RCV) at the Olive View-UCLA Medical Center in Sylmar. This large-scale facility features an 80-bed mental health residential treatment program, a 48-bed residential recuperative care center, a mental health urgent care center, and outpatient wellness center with a focus on whole-person, recovery-oriented programs for medically fragile individuals who lack a place to live during their recovery period following hospital discharge

The RCV is expected to be fully operational in January 2022. For more information, read this [announcement](#).



## Join Us for the 2021 Speakers Bureau Multicultural Mental Health Community Conference

Our department's Speakers Bureau will be hosting the Multicultural Mental Health Community Conference on Dec. 1-2, 2021. The conference's theme is "Recognizing Culture as a Pathway to Hope, Equity, and Community Wellbeing Amidst Worldwide Adversity," and it will feature an array of workshops, panels, discussions, and exercises across multiple language and cultural dimensions to promote wellbeing and resilience across L.A. County's diverse communities. Topics that will be presented include:

- Addressing mental health and stigma in multiple cultural contexts
- Learning about and engaging in self-care practices
- Supporting and uplifting each another within a community and across multiple communities
- Role of faith in mental health treatment and recovery
- Identifying biases and disparities in mental health care and developing interventions to address them

For the full program and schedule, as well as to RSVP, visit the [conference's post](#) on our event calendar.



### Cultural Traditions and Connections

The following article is from [Cultural Traditions and Connections](#), a space featuring voices from LACDMH's diverse communities.



**“Military Transition”** by James Zenner, Director of our Veteran Peer Access Network (VPAN)

One of the biggest challenges for those who serve is adapting to life after the military. When in the military, there are no decisions to be made about what to wear to work, where to live or other decisions that you have to make when outside of the military. One of the biggest things you will hear veterans say they miss about the military is the camaraderie and sense of purpose they had while “wearing the uniform.” These are just a couple of examples of what our men and women who serve have to adapt from when exiting the military.

Most of us struggle to find work that provides a fraction of the meaning and camaraderie we had in the military. Veterans often struggle without having the routine and structure of the military, but often cite it as one of the reasons for leaving the service. The majority of those leaving the military don’t have a viable transition plan and some struggle with food and housing insecurity, legal issues, marital and relationship issues, as well as mental health.

The good news is, many veterans are able to have a successful transition out of the military after struggling for a little while. The likelihood of success is considerably diminished without a family or social support system, however. While the Veterans Administration does provide healthcare and benefits for many veterans, that does not constitute the lack of family, social support, and an overall sense of connectedness with the community because many come out of the military seeing themselves, others, and the world differently. It is up to us as a community to pull these men and women into our social fabric and help them feel connected again.

To learn more about the work our department is doing for this effort, visit our [VPAN webpage](#).

Thank you for taking the time to read and engage with this issue of **“Connecting Our Community,”** a monthly newsletter focused on the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health’s updates and priorities.

We welcome your comments, story ideas, and recommendations at [pio@dmh.lacounty.gov](mailto:pio@dmh.lacounty.gov) and you may adjust your subscriptions settings at this [link](#).

[dmh.lacounty.gov](http://dmh.lacounty.gov)

Let's get social @LACDMH!



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