

CONNECTING OUR COMMUNITY

March 2022



LOS ANGELES COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF
MENTAL HEALTH
hope. recovery. wellbeing.

Dr. Sherin Speaks at the Ron Beasley Wellness Center Grand Opening



Message from the Director

Dear DMH family,

Now that the county is opening up again during our collective recovery from this pandemic, I am able to more frequently attend celebratory groundbreaking and grand opening events, such as last week's ribbon-cutting ceremony of the new Ron Beasley Wellness Center in the heart of Skid Row. Operated by The People Concern with mental health services provided through an agreement with DMH, the new location will be able to accommodate more people and meet clients where they are. The Ron Beasley Wellness Center is an example of what partnerships among care providers, philanthropy, and local government can accomplish for the greater good. I am particularly proud of [our DMH employees](#), who deserve the highest praise for their dedication to our most vulnerable clients and perseverance in moving a system so often hindered by bureaucracy.

Earlier this month, housing projects broke ground in the MacArthur

Park/Westlake and Lincoln Heights areas of L.A. County, just two of the most recent for which DMH has made substantial financial investments. To date, DMH's capital investments with Mental Health Services Act dollars have created 1,236 permanent supportive housing (PSH) units that are currently providing permanent housing for DMH clients. Another 2,558 PSH units are in various stages of development. When these properties are built, they will provide affordable housing with supportive services—including DMH mental health services—for populations such as transition age youth, families with children, adults, older adults, and veterans.

Our capital investments in permanent housing and expansion of services to help more people are ways in which DMH assists people who otherwise might face barriers to care and housing. As you've heard me say many times, every person deserves a chance to have people to love, places to live and recreate, and purpose in life. To this end, DMH is making tangible strides toward connecting people to places where they can live, obtain support and feel a sense of belonging.

Heart forward,

Jon

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



LACDMH Prepares for “Hollywood 2.0” to Support the Community’s Most Vulnerable Individuals

In alignment with its mission of “optimizing the hope, wellbeing and life trajectory of Los Angeles County’s most vulnerable” individuals and communities, LACDMH has begun planning the “Hollywood 2.0” pilot project to provide comprehensive, community-based care and services to people experiencing mental illness and homelessness in the Hollywood community. Since receiving the L.A. County Board of Supervisors’ [unanimous approval](#) in November 2021, LACDMH has worked diligently to lay the foundation to prepare for a robust stakeholder engagement process alongside an expansion of clinical and field services in the neighborhood.

This innovative format of service delivery is inspired by the mental health care system in Trieste, Italy, which is recognized for its human-centered and hospitality-oriented approach to meeting wellbeing needs while fostering a sense of autonomy and purpose to support personal recovery. With this pilot, LACDMH hopes to transform the Hollywood community – which has one of the highest concentrations of individuals experiencing homelessness and mental illness – into a new model of care and engagement that continuously engages with Hollywood residents to identify their wellbeing needs and find ways to meet them.

To support this transformative care model, LACDMH will be increasing its clinical and field-based staff – particularly in its Full-Service Partnership (FSP), Homeless Outreach and Mobile Engagement (HOME), and peer service programs – so there will be more opportunities to interact with current and potential clients in the clinic and on the field.

“Peer workers are particularly well-equipped to do outreach and engagement work because they can apply their lived experiences to help connect with those affected by mental illness,” said LACDMH Chief Medical Officer Curley Bonds, M.D.

[Learn more about Hollywood 2.0.](#)



Therapeutic Transportation Pilot Program Rolls Out Throughout L.A. County

LACDMH mental health teams and specialized vans are now embedded at L.A. City Fire Station No. 4 (Downtown L.A.) and No. 59 (West Los Angeles) and actively participating in emergency response calls that come into 911 or to the L.A. City Police or Fire Department as part of the LACDMH **Therapeutic Transportation Pilot Program** (TTP). Mental health teams respond to a call for someone in crisis in specially designed vans, allowing the client's healing and recovery to begin from the first moment of contact. All vans are staffed with a psychiatric technician, a peer support specialist, and a clinical driver.

TTP is available at Fire Stations No. 4 and No. 59 seven days a week, 24 hours a day, to provide therapeutic support, de-escalate situations, and ensure safe transit to a mental health center. In the coming months, TTP will become operational in three more L.A. City Fire Stations: No. 40 (San Pedro), No. 77 (Sun Valley), and No. 94 (South Los Angeles). When fully launched, TTP will be operational in at least one L.A. City Fire Station in each L.A. County Supervisorial District.

[Get the facts on this pilot program.](#)



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We Want to Hear from You About Our MHSA Annual Update

LACDMH recently posted its [annual update](#) for Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) programs and expenditures for FY 2022/2023, giving L.A. County residents and stakeholders an opportunity to review current MHSA services and provide feedback. The public is invited to review this [plan](#) and provide feedback by filling out our [online survey](#) by April 6, 2022.

In his Director's Message for this update, Dr. Sherin emphasized the importance of community engagement and highlighted several key expansions and improvements that were informed with public input, such as launching our [Community Ambassador Network](#), expanding our [Homeless Outreach and Mobile Engagement \(HOME\)](#) program, and redesigning our [Full Service Partnership \(FSP\)](#) program.

[Read more about the update.](#)

LACDMH in the NEWS



Our ongoing efforts to promote mental health awareness and assist the most vulnerable among us continue to receive positive attention in the media. In case you missed it, check out some highlights of the excellent stories and representation by our experts:

- [Los Angeles Times](#), [Los Angeles Magazine](#) and [NBC 4](#) highlighted the launch of LACDMH's Therapeutic Transportation Program in collaboration with the City of Los Angeles.
- [Los Angeles Times](#) and [FOX 11 LA](#) covered the opening of the Ron Beasley Wellness Center, which will provide mental health services to people with low-income and/or experiencing homelessness in and around the Skid Row neighborhood.
- [La Opinion](#) published a story about the Community Schools Initiative, our partnership with the Los Angeles County Office of Education to improve student wellbeing to optimize their study, work, and life skills.
- Chief Medical Officer Dr. Curley Bonds was a guest on the [Unapologetically Black Unicorns](#) podcast, where he talked about his experiences as a psychiatrist, what led him to pursue this career path, and how to motivate persons of color to become psychiatrists.
- [Antelope Valley Press](#) highlighted James Mumma being honored for his outreach work to veterans experiencing homelessness as part of the Veteran Peer Access Network.



Message from DMH-ARDI

Our department's Anti-Racism, Diversity, and Inclusion (DMH-ARDI) Division is raising awareness and appreciation for multiple, month-long commemorations taking place this and next month.

We encourage you to check out the below articles on our [Cultural Traditions & Connections](#) space to engage with some of the diversity awareness themes being observed this month.

- [Celebrating Sexual and Gender Diversity in March](#)
- [Capitol Crawl to Access for All](#)

Please also take a few minutes and join us in lifting up our collective voices by supporting, learning from, and celebrating these cultures and communities being recognized this month:

[Click to continue reading.](#)

Let's get social @LACDMH!



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. Visit dmh.lacounty.gov for more resources.

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

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