

# CONNECTING OUR COMMUNITY

August 2024



## Welcome the L.A. County Help Line for Mental Health and Substance Use Services

Under the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) initiative, California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM), counties must consolidate their 24/7 helplines for mental health and substance use assistance. Effective July 9, 2024, the Department of Mental Health and the Department of Public Health's Substance Abuse Prevention and Control (SAPC) have merged these functions into one call center at 510 S. Vermont Ave. This is part of an ongoing effort to integrate 11 administrative functions across substance use and mental health over the next few years.

Callers to the substance abuse line at (844) 804-7500 will be automatically redirected to the new line. For both mental health and substance use resources, callers can dial (800) 854-7771. Additionally, the main 24/7 Access line (800-854-7771, option 1) will no longer handle ambulance and bed management requests. DMH providers needing an ambulance or assistance with 24/7 facility placement should use the DMH Provider Line at (800) 801-7886. Field Intervention Teams

(FIT), including PMRT and MCOT, should follow existing protocols for such requests. Directly operated or contracted providers with questions can contact the Quality Assurance Policy and Technical Development team at [QAPolicy@dmh.lacounty.gov](mailto:QAPolicy@dmh.lacounty.gov).

[Learn more about the new calling options.](#)



## LACDMH Changes Lives with San Pedro's Beacon Landing

Beacon Landing, San Pedro's newest supportive housing complex, hosted its grand opening on Thursday, July 18. Mental Health Program Manager IV Carrie Esparza attended the event and delivered inspiring remarks to the dozens of collaborators and residents who gathered in the courtyard.

The event's highlight was Beacon Landing resident Katherine Hove, who spoke candidly about her experience surviving homelessness. She shared how a drug and alcohol addiction drove her to the streets. As her physical health and hygiene deteriorated, her mental health did as well. She spoke of how she frequently considered ending her life.

Despite these challenges, Hove has put them behind her and has spoken in-depth about how moving into Beacon Landing changed her

life.

[Continue reading about Beacon Landing.](#)



### **Meet New LACDMH Chief Deputy Director, Rimmi Hundal, M.A.**

Please join us in welcoming Rimmi Hundal, M.A., the new Chief Deputy Director for LACDMH, where she oversees the implementation and ongoing operation of all administrative programs and processes for the department.

Ms. Hundal is a fiercely dedicated mental health, equity, and social justice advocate, and comes to the Department with tremendous experience in the public mental health space. Since May 2022 she has served as the Executive Director of Tri-City Mental Health Authority, serving the cities of Pomona, La Verne, and Claremont. Ms. Hundal was responsible for policy development, program planning, fiscal management, administration and operation of all Authority programs, services, and activities.

[Read more about Ms. Hundal here.](#)

Community Planning Team (CPT)  
Stakeholder Meetings



*Join us virtually for the*  
**Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA)  
Informational Sessions**

Learn more about the Behavioral Health Service Act (BHSA) at the next informational session. Click here to see the flyer in [English](#) or [Spanish](#).



[School Wellbeing Resources](#)

With the new school year underway, it's the perfect time to focus on wellbeing! Check out these essential tips to ensure a healthy and successful start. Click links below for more information:

- [School Wellbeing Toolkit](#)
- [Recognizing and Managing Anxiety in the Classroom](#)
- [High School Student-Athlete Mental Health](#)



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 subject matter experts:

- Chief Medical Officer Dr. Curley Bonds was quoted in a [Los Angeles Times](#) article about the transition of outpatient mental health services from L.A. General Medical Center to LACDMH providers.
- LA Daily News and [LAist](#) ran stories about L.A. County Board of Supervisors' approval to build a 96-bed mental health treatment center at the L.A. General Medical Center as part of its Restorative Care Village project.
- [Magnet Magazine](#) published a Q&A with musician Jason Karaban, who talked about his experience with homelessness and mental illness and how LACDMH supported his recovery.

- [Fox 11 News](#) and [SCV News](#) featured L.A. County's "Who Do I Call For Help?" campaign to educate the public on the best phone numbers to call to request services and resources.
- [City News Service](#) covered LACDMH's Help Line update to integrate mental health and substance use disorder services.

### Let's get social @LACDMH!



Thank you for taking the time to read and engage with this issue of **"Connecting Our Community,"** a bi-monthly online publication focused on the latest information and news from the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health. Visit [dmh.lacounty.gov](http://dmh.lacounty.gov) for more resources.

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