



SERVING THE COMMUNITY IN CHANGING TIMES

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Leadership Transitions

By Marilyn Townsend, Staff Services Administrator, HHS Administration

As we all know, the current economy has brought about great change in many sectors of society. Human service organizations are challenged to remain sustainable in the face of revenue shortfalls, and consequent staffing and service reductions, both of which make it more difficult to respond to greater demands for those very services. However, it's good to be reminded that change also brings with it opportunities for new leadership and new ways of approaching the challenges facing us.

As a County, Mendocino has experienced some of this change in its Executive Office. In September 2009, former Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) Director Carmel Angelo was appointed to the position of Assistant Chief Executive Officer, taking the place of Alison Glassey. In early February, CEO Tom Mitchell announced his resignation effective March 9. In recognition of her fiscal track record and experience in health-care and government administration, most recently in the integration and management of the HHS, the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors announced their appointment of Ms. Angelo as CEO, effective March 10. Agency leadership wish her well with the challenging task of guiding the County budget process, and appreciate her knowledge of the complex funding streams and mandates of HHS.

The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency has also been experiencing a series of leadership transitions. With Ms. Angelo's departure in September 2009, Assistant Director Susana Wilson stepped up

to the role of HHS Interim Director. The Assistant Director position was not filled until February of this year, when Community Health Services Branch Director Stacey Cryer accepted that responsibility. Ms. Cryer's administrative experience and fiscal knowledge with the Agency will provide essential continuity for the organization when Ms. Wilson retires at the end of March. Recruitment for a new Agency Director is underway (<http://www.co.mendocino.ca.us/hr/cgi-bin/openings.pl>), and until that position is filled, Ms. Cryer will be handling day to day management of the Agency with the assistance of an experienced leadership team.

Additional changes to the Community Health Branch include the resignation of long time Public Health Officer Dr. Marvin Trotter. Dr. Craig McMillan, a former Mendocino County Health Officer, has been appointed as Interim Public Health Officer. His duties include assessing the roles and responsibilities of that position and overseeing the recruitment of a permanent Health Officer. Ms. Cryer will continue to work with Dr. McMillan to provide oversight to all Community Health Services programs.

As HHS faces unprecedented budget challenges, and must remain focused on sustaining services to clients, Agency leadership has reluctantly decided to suspend regular publication of this newsletter. We will continue to post information on our website (<http://www.co.mendocino.ca.us/hhsa/>), including meeting information for various boards and committees. ❧



LEADERSHIP TEAM

Susana Wilson
Interim Director
472-2332

Stacey Cryer
Assistant Director
Director of Community
Health Services
472-2799

Mary Elliott
Director, Children & Family
System of Care
463-4346

Susan Era
Director, Adult & Older Adult
System of Care
463-7902

Doug Gherkin
Chief Financial Officer
472-2338

Pat Meek
Manager, Staff Resources
472-2339

Marilyn Townsend
Staff Services Administrator
472-2345

Leatha Andersen
Administrative Secretary
472-2336

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"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, concerned citizens can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has" — Margaret Mead

Director's Corner



SUSANA WILSON,
HHS Interim Director

Greetings,

As many of you know, I am retiring on March 30th after almost 33 years with Mendocino County Social Services and Health & Human Services. It has been a privilege and an honor to work with talented and inspiring staff, both in the Agency and our community, and to be part of such a significant and vital program delivery system.

The County is conducting a recruitment to fill the HHS Director position; both the flyer and job application are available on the Human Resources page of the County website: <http://www.co.mendocino.ca.us/hr/cgi-bin/openings.pl>. Our newly appointed Assistant Director, Stacey Cryer, along with the assistance of our Agency Leadership Team, will manage the day-to-day affairs until a permanent appointment is made. Stacey will provide a continuity of leadership along with substantial financial knowledge and expertise.

I'm sure we can all agree these are extremely challenging economic times for everyone in the County. I have experienced challenging fiscal times during my tenure, and I know that collectively, our Agency has the talents and tenacity to weather this demanding period.

Susana

COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES

County and Community Working Together to Bring A Million Dollars to Mendocino County

By Megan Van Sant, Program Administrator, Community Health Services

Food For All Mendocino (FFAM), a coalition of Mendocino County Eligibility and Family Assistance (EFAS) staff and community groups, has recently launched the Bring A Million campaign to increase participation in the Food Stamp Program. Local communities are losing millions of dollars each year in food stamp benefits that are not being used by eligible participants who are not enrolled. But even more importantly, thousands of families in our community are struggling to pay their bills and keep nutritional food on the table. The campaign is a community-wide effort to increase access to healthy food for low-income families while bringing additional funds into our community for local spending at grocery stores, farmers' markets and other businesses. If Food Stamp Program enrollment countywide increases by just 10%, an additional million dollars in federal funding is brought into our community annually.

Approximately 30% of low-income households in Mendocino County have reported they have gone hungry in the past year because they couldn't afford enough food. But in spite of pervasive hunger in our communities, an estimated 9,500 people in Mendocino County are potentially eligible for food stamps but not enrolled in the program. The experience of Mendocino County is part of a larger statewide trend. California is ranked second to last in the country for participation in the

Food Stamp Program; only 50% of eligible participants in the state are enrolled in the program.

"During this economic recession, hundreds of families are accessing food stamp benefits for the first time, and they may feel uncomfortable or ashamed of the circumstances that have brought them to the food stamp office," says Program Administrator Megan Van Sant. "Through a countywide social marketing campaign, our coalition is working to reduce the stigma that clients may feel about applying for food stamps. We are also working with partners and advocates in the more remote regions of our county to make sure clients are able to apply for food stamps in a location that is convenient to them." In spite of the significant financial challenges facing the County, Eligibility Workers and other EFAS staff are meeting the needs of our community by taking on greater case-loads than ever and working hard to process applications as efficiently as possible.

FFAM works in close partnership with the Family Resource Center Network of Mendocino County, UC Cooperative Extension, Plowshares Community Dining Room, FIRST 5 Mendocino, Ukiah Community Center and Food Bank, school districts, and other community organizations. For more information about the Bring A Million campaign, call Food For All at 46-BREAD (462-7323). ☘

ADULT & OLDER ADULT SYSTEM OF CARE

Mental Health Community Forums

By Susan Era, Director, Adult and Older Adult System of Care

At the request of the Board of Supervisors, four Mental Health Community Forums were conducted in December 2009 – in Willits, Fort Bragg, Calpella and Gualala. The purpose of the forums was to solicit community input on the delivery of mental health services in Mendocino County.

In attendance were more than 90 individuals, representing city government, hospitals, clinics, law enforcement, the medical community, mental health service providers, community-based organizations, consumers, family members, and other stakeholders.

The first part of each forum included a report of the budget shortfalls impacting mental health services, steps being taken to mitigate the financial deficit, as well as information on mandated mental health services. Most of each forum was spent hearing from partner agency and community members regarding issues, concerns and needs, as well as brainstorming other solutions for supporting the recovery of mental health clients in the community.

Among the biggest issues identified during the forums were out-of-county hospitalization of mental health clients, and the

(continued on page 3)

CHILDREN & FAMILY SYSTEM OF CARE

CALOCUS: A New Tool for Clinicians

By Zoy Kazan, Deputy Director, Mental Health Clinical Services

For the past year Mental Health staff in the Children and Family System of Care has been participating in a Performance Improvement Project. The State requires us to look at all of the children and adolescents who receive over \$3,000 in any one or two months of service and ensure the services are appropriate and meet the criteria of being medically necessary. One of the tools we have introduced to help us with this task is CALOCUS, which stands for "Child and Adolescent Level of Care Utilization System."

CALOCUS was developed by the American Association of Community Psychiatrists about 14 years ago, as a tool which could help keep the costs of treatment down and ensure that appropriate levels of treatment went to those with serious mental illness. It translates the clinical needs of the clients into a score which then allows

the clinician to estimate the appropriate level of service intensity the client will need. There are seven scales scored from 1 – 5; the higher the score, the greater the impairment. The CALOCUS system helps to assess if we are providing services appropriately to those with the highest need.

The seven dimensions that CALOCUS examines are: Risk of Harm, Functional Status, Co-Morbidity, Recovery Environment Stress, Recovery Environment Support, Resiliency and Treatment History, Treatment Acceptance and Engagement (for the child or adolescent), Treatment Acceptance and Engagement (for the Parent or Primary Caretaker). The completed score sheet provides a numerical score for each client, which translates to a specific level of care. Levels 1 – 4 indicate outpatient treatment. Level 5 indicates partial hospitalization, or more intense services

such as day treatment or wrap-around services. Level 6 indicates inpatient hospitalization or residential treatment monitored by a child psychiatrist.

In our system we have over one hundred children that have received high levels of services. We will be using CALOCUS to compare the recommended levels with the actual amount of services provided over a 6 month period. Where there is a discrepancy between CALOCUS recommendations and actual services provided, case conferences will be held every 6 months and clinical chart reviews performed as needed. If results of such reviews determine the level of services authorized does not meet medical necessity, we may be reducing the amount of services authorized. In this way, the use of CALOCUS assists in balancing the gap between Mental Health needs and resources. ❧

Mental Health Community Forums (continued from page 2)

lack of local crisis housing options and other crisis stabilization services (e.g., a warm line). Additionally, participants expressed concerns regarding closure of the Psychiatric Health Facility and the limited crisis response and on-call staff currently in place, especially for after-hours crisis response.

A variety of ideas and suggestions were also generated during the forums: developing local crisis beds; increasing crisis response services to reduce the burden on law enforcement, jail and emergency rooms; creating a Crisis Intervention Team—a pre-booking process to triage mental health clients to other services and avoid incarceration; and integrating Public Health and Mental Health

services to include mental health as part of the "normal" continuum of health services.

All of the input provided at the forums—issues as well as suggestions—will be further discussed and evaluated by the Mental Health Services Act work groups and next steps will then be determined. The complete, written report of the forums is available at www.co.mendocino.ca.us/hhsa.

On behalf of the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors and the Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency, a heartfelt "thank you" is extended to all of the forum participants. ❧

US CENSUS 2010

MARCH: Census form will arrive in your mail. Fill it out and send it back right away or:

APRIL: Census workers will visit people that do not return forms to take a count in person. If you prefer to not be visited, return the form as quickly as possible.

EASY!

**10 QUESTIONS
10 MINUTES**



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2010**

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- You could get better health care and insurance choices?
- You or your family members could benefit from more senior services?
- Your.... children could learn in better schools or child-care centers?
- Your.... drive to work was safer with better roads/public transportation?
- Your.... chances of getting a job were better?
- Your.... neighborhood was safer?
- Your.... whole community had food and housing?

CENSUS INFORMATION HELPS DECIDE THE AMOUNT OF FEDERAL MONEY GIVEN TO YOUR COUNTY!

Take part in the census and create a better future for you and those important to you!



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www.211mendocino.org or call 2 1 1

HHS MAIN NUMBERS

UKIAH

WILLITS

FORT BRAGG

Adult & Older Adult System of Care	(707) 463-7900 (Social Services) (707) 463-4303 (Mental Health) (707) 472-2637 (AOD)	(707) 456-3740 (Social Services) (707) 456-3850 (Mental Health)	(707) 962-1100 (Social Services) (707) 964-4747 (Mental Health) (707) 961-2522 (AOD)
Community Health Services	(707) 472-2700 (707) 472-2611 (AOD Prevention) (707) 463-4038 (Environ. Health)	(707) 456-3800	(707) 964-4713 (707) 961-2519 (AOD Prevention) (707) 961-2720 (Environ. Health)
Children & Family System of Care	(707) 463-7990 (Social Services) (707) 463-4303 (Mental Health)	(707) 456-3700 (Social Services) (707) 456-3850 (Mental Health)	(707) 962-1100 (Social Services) (707) 964-4747 (Mental Health)
Employment & Family Assistance Services	(707) 463-2437 (877) 327-1711 (toll free)	(707) 456-3700 (800) 771-2453 (toll free)	(707) 962-1000 (877) 327-1677 (toll free)
Veteran's Services	(707) 463-4226	(707) 456-3792	(707) 964-5823

Web Address: <http://www.co.mendocino.ca.us/hhsa>



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