



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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BOARD APPROVAL SENDS MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ACT PLAN TO STATE

Plan Includes Funds for Seriously Mentally Ill Adults, Older Adults, Seriously Emotionally Disturbed Children

The Board of Supervisors today approved a plan for new mental health services offered by the San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency (HHS), Mental Health Services.

This plan outlines how \$25.4 million in new mental health services will reach unserved and underserved clients. The funding comes from the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), a voter-approved initiative to bolster and continue to transform the delivery of mental health services across the state.

The plan was developed over the past year with community stakeholders and community members, including clients, youth and family members. Workgroups considered needs, issues, and MHSA requirements to make recommendations that were synthesized into a draft plan reviewed by the public. "This is a real opportunity to continue to build a mental health system that responds to the many needs of our diverse communities," said Alfredo Aguirre, Acting Mental Health Director.

The MHSA new programs include: a North County walk-in assessment center, \$2 million in expanded outpatient services for schoolchildren, and almost \$7 million in intensive case management services for young adults, adults and older adults with serious mental illness, many of whom may be homeless. The full range of programs includes wraparound services for children with serious emotional disturbance and their families, client/family-run peer services, supports for child dependents and wards of the courts, and integrated mental health and primary care health services. The plan is one of six components of the MHSA; additional funding for other components including Capital Facilities/Technology, Prevention/Intervention and Innovation will be available next year.

With the Board of Supervisors approval, the County will send the plan to the California Department of Mental Health for review. Once approved, funding will be released to increase mental health services according to the plan. The County expects to start new programs from April to August 2006. The final plan is available for review at www.sandiego.networkofcare.org/mh.

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