



# COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION

October 5, 2009

CONTACT: Tom Christensen (619) 515-6535

## **ECONOMIC DOWNTURN LEAVES MANY FEELING DEPRESSED**

County Offers Free Depression Screenings, Referrals and Resources

Are you feeling sad or “empty”? Are you uninterested in daily activities? Are you experiencing difficulties sleeping or unintended weight changes? Feel fatigued or like you are in a “fog”? Or do you feel guilty about things you have no control over? Many people are living in uncertain times, and if you can answer yes to several of the questions above, you might be clinically depressed like 19 million other American adults each year.

San Diego Depression Screening Week is October 5-9 and the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency (HHS), in partnership with the Community Health Improvement Partners (CHIP), is hosting a series of no-cost depression screenings at several HHS facilities.

Trained mental health volunteers will administer depression screening tools to adults 18 years and older at ten sites around the County. At many sites, an experienced mental health clinician will be available to meet with individuals needing immediate intervention or referrals for ongoing help.

“Clinical depression is a common medical illness,” said Board of Supervisors Vice-Chairwoman Pam Slater-Price. “Like screenings for other illnesses, such as heart disease and diabetes, depression screenings should be a routine part of healthcare and provide a quick and easy way to spot the first signs of what could become a serious mental illness.”

“I encourage County residents who might be suffering in silence to come in and get screened for depression,” said HHS Director Nick Macchione. “Screenings may consist of a written screening test, a discussion of the results with a mental health professional, sharing educational information on depression, and, if necessary, a referral for additional help.

“This is a great opportunity for people to come in and get screened and have access to the services they may need,” he added.

For a complete listing of screening sites or additional mental health resources, please call 2-1-1 or visit [www.211sandiego.org](http://www.211sandiego.org). People may also call the County’s 24-hour, multilingual Access and Crisis Line at (800) 479-3339.

###

For updates, please follow the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency by clicking below on Twitter, Facebook and YouTube.

