

BACKGROUND:

Mental Health Month

Congress has designated the month of May as National Mental Health Month. Since 1949, the activities associated with National Mental Health Month have increased the public's awareness of mental health issues and the reality of mental illness. Mental health associations, family and client advocacy groups and others across the country participate in this public awareness campaign each year. Governor Schwarzenegger has also proclaimed the month of May as Mental Health Month in California.

Accordingly, the Department of Health Services requests that the Board proclaim the month of May 2009 as Mental Health Month in Sonoma County. In press releases, voice mail greetings, letters and memos, conversations and other opportunities, the Department's staff and contract providers, as well as the Sonoma County Mental Health Board members, will be emphasizing the importance of treatment, consumer empowerment and self help, anti-stigma efforts, integrated services delivery, and similar principles underlying community mental health.

Progress Foundation

Each year, the Department selects community partners to be honored by the Board with a resolution for their contributions toward improving mental health services and the lives of those touched by mental illness. This year the Department has selected the Progress Foundation which operates the County's Crisis Residential Unit (CRU).

The Progress Foundation was founded in 1969 when the model for mental health care became one of local treatment rather than hospitalization in State psychiatric facilities. Local community treatment systems had yet to develop the programs necessary to serve individuals with mental illness, leaving patients at risk for return to State hospitals. Over the next three decades, Progress Foundation provided local treatment options with its array of programs in San Francisco, Napa and Sonoma Counties.

The Progress Foundation has been operating Sonoma County's CRU since 2006. Located in Santa Rosa, the CRU provides a home-like environment in which individuals in crisis may resolve issues and return to the community. The CRU offers a local, clinically effective alternative to inpatient hospitalization. Progress Foundation's approach in operating the CRU complements the community-based, recovery oriented services offered by the Department, and reduces the need for inpatient services county-wide.

The State and the City of Santa Rosa recently gave approval for the Progress Foundation to increase the capacity of the CRU from six to ten beds. In March 2009, the Board authorized the Department to utilize the increased capacity to allow more clients to receive local treatment in a supported community living setting.

Attachments: Resolution proclaiming May 2009 as Mental Health Month in Sonoma County; Resolution honoring the Progress Foundation.

On File With Clerk: None.

CLERK OF THE BOARD USE ONLY

Board Action (If other than "Requested")

Vote: