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COMMUNITY UPDATE

January 2008

Notes From Bern

I hope that this and previous newsletters are proving both interesting and useful to you. Feedback is most welcome. Please contact either Karen Spungen (kspungen@swcmhc.org) or me (bheath@swcmhc.org) with any suggestions or to unsubscribe.

Beginning with this edition I thought it would be helpful to organize the newsletter by region. This edition will also follow up on the Center's plans to transform to an integrated primary care/specialty mental health model of service by region.

Archuleta County & Communities

Comings & Goings:

At our Pagosa Springs office, **Julie and John Herman** moved to Santa Fe in August. **Karen Negri** was able to take John's clinical position with no gap in service. **Annee Kuehler** replaced Julie as the Administrative/Clinical Assistant a month later.

Facts & Figures:

Program Services: For the Fiscal Year 2007 (July 2006 – June 2007), 551 Archuleta County residents were provided with mental health services through the Center. Our Pagosa Springs Office provided 3,566.5 hours of service with 47.6% of that being mental health outpatient services, 22.7% Regional Youth & Family Support services, 23.4% evenly divided between Case Management, Emergency and Medical Services, and 6.3% of services divided among Behavioral Health, Consumer and Family Affairs, Substance Abuse, Success and Vocational Services.

Emergency Services: For Calendar Year 2007, we performed 45 emergency assessments for residents of Archuleta County. These assessments resulted in 15 Acute Treatment Unit (ATU) admissions (totaling 78 bed days) and 12 inpatient hospitalizations.

Program/Service News:

Emergency Services: With the Grand Opening on January 5, Archuleta County now has a new critical access hospital, the Pagosa Mountain Hospital. This is

exciting news, and the Health Service District Board and administration can be proud of getting this project off the ground. Our Center has been meeting with the primary care physicians that will be covering emergency services to determine ways in which we can be of help for those patients presenting with mental health and/or substance abuse issues.

Facilities: We are determining the feasibility of moving our Pagosa Springs office to the Pagosa Mountain Hospital campus. Subject to a presentation to and approval by the Board of the Upper San Juan Health Service District, we would initially renovate and rent space in the old Mary Fisher Clinic building with plans to construct a new facility on the campus grounds. This move would bring revenue to the Hospital District while providing the proximity needed to support the new Emergency Department of the Hospital.

Integrated Care: We have initiated conversations with several primary care physicians regarding the integration of mental health and substance abuse services into their practices. These discussions are in their early stages but have been met with interest.

La Plata/San Juan Counties & Communities

Welcome New Staff:

In terms of Clinical staff in La Plata County, in August **Stephanie Allred** and **Amie Podolsky** joined the Center and in October, **Damon Bryan** and **Mary Borgeson** joined us.

Facts & Figures:

Program Services: For the Fiscal Year 2007 (July '06 – June '07), 3,822 La Plata/San Juan County residents were provided with mental health services in Durango. We provided 29,924.1 hours of service with 32% of that being Substance Abuse services, 21% Case Management services, 15.9% Mental Health Outpatient services, 8.8% Emergency services, 20.2% evenly divided between Medical services, Regional Youth, Success and Vocational services, and 2.1% of services divided among the rest of our service resources.

Emergency Services: For Calendar Year 2007 we provided 376 emergency assessments for residents of La Plata and San Juan Counties. We provided **Bayfield** with 13 assessments, which led to two ATU admissions and two inpatient admissions. **Durango** had 200 assessments with 73 ATU admissions and 24 inpatient hospitalizations. We had four emergency assessments of **Ignacio** residents resulting in one ATU admission and two inpatient hospitalizations. We had 10 emergency assessments for **Southern Ute Tribal members**, which led to five ATU admissions and one inpatient hospitalization, and 149 emergency assessments for **La Plata and San Juan County** residents leading to 52 ATU admissions and 23 inpatient hospitalizations.

Program/Service News:

Stepping Stone: With the establishment of the ATU, the Stepping Stone program was no longer the best or safest acute psychiatric resource. However, the Stepping Stone program continued to offer a supervised, residential, transitional resource helping clients, post crisis, to re-enter the community. While useful as a residential program, it was very costly to operate and its function could be absorbed through a combination of extending ATU stays and the establishment of a Post Crisis Transition resource. Both La Plata County and the City of Durango (thank you!) supported the transfer of Stepping Stone funds to support the Post Crisis Transition outpatient approach, which is more clinically sound and effective. Thus, the Stepping Stone Program closed effective July 3, 2007.

Integrated Dual Diagnosis Treatment (IDDT): This is a best practice model that integrates substance abuse and mental health treatment for persons with both substance abuse and mental health issues (as much as 60% of the population). An IDDT program was begun in La Plata County in October 2007. For more information about this program, please contact Tom Bonde at tbonde@swcmhc.org.

School Based Health Center. On October 1, 2007, the first school based health center in La Plata County opened its doors. Located in Durango High School, this new resource is the result of a collaboration between **Durango High School, San Juan Basin Health Department** and our Center. We currently have a 20 hour/week staff presence at the Health Center. For more information, contact Pam Wise Romero at pwise@swcmhc.org.

Integrated Care: Following the departure of Valley-Wide's primary care operation in March 2007, the Center has actively participated in the plans for a solution to the resulting La Plata County primary care crisis. With the publishing of the consultant's report, the Center has entered into discussions with Mercy Regional Medical Center (MRMC) to consider:

- ◆ Creating a new 501(c)(3) organization;

- ◆ Transitioning the MRMC Health Services Clinic to this new entity which will apply for and secure Rural Health Center (RHC) status;
- ◆ Transforming the Health Services Clinic into a fully integrated, primary care practice targeting the underserved Medicare, Medicaid (mostly adult), and un-/under-insured (if the clinic receives County and municipal support to do so).

If the Boards of both organizations agree to proceed with this plan, it will take approximately a year to secure 501(c)(3) and RHC status.

Montezuma/Dolores Counties & Communities

Comings & Goings:

At our Cortez office, **Rachel Pfothenaur** made a decision in July to move to California and was replaced by **Lynn Hill-Clark**, and we added **Josiah Forkner** part time as Community Resource Specialist and contract staff for after hours Emergency Services.

Facts & Figures:

Program Services: For the Fiscal Year 2007 (July '06 – June '07), 1,134 Montezuma or Dolores County residents were provided with mental health services through the Center. Our Cortez and Dove Creek offices provided 6,838.1 hours of service with 48% of that being mental health outpatient services, 17.5% Case Management services, 12.1% Regional Youth & Family Support services, 19.7% evenly divided between Vocational, Emergency and Medical services, and 2.7% of services divided among the other services.

Emergency Services: For Calendar Year 2007, we provided 68 emergency assessments for residents of Montezuma County and three assessments for **Dolores County** residents. Of the Montezuma County assessments, 33 were for **Cortez** residents, three for residents of the **Town of Dolores**, six for **Mancos** and 26 for residents of the County at large. These Montezuma County assessments resulted in 39 Acute Treatment Unit (ATU) admissions (20 from Cortez, two from Mancos, and 17 from the County) and 13 inpatient hospitalizations. The three Dolores County assessments resulted in three ATU admissions.

Program/Service News:

Substance Abuse Services: On October 1, we began DUI Education and Level II therapy services in Cortez in order to address the community need. For further information, please contact Tom Bonde at tbonde@swcmhc.org.

Dove Creek: The Center continues to provide services one day a week at the Health Center in **Dove Creek**. For more information on our Dove Creek services and availability, please contact the Cortez office at 565-7946.

Economic Development: Montezuma County has initiated a *Montezuma County Economic Development Stakeholders Group*. This group has been meeting for some time in order to help the County and municipalities within the County develop their economies in a planful and coordinated manner. The economic vitality of Montezuma County is critically important to the quality of life of County residents and the Center's capacity to be a valuable County resource. We have participated in the group and led an Infrastructure and Services Subcommittee to assist in this process.

Integrated Care: In response to a five FTE primary care provider shortage, Southwest Memorial Hospital has established a provider based (hospital run) clinic and is seeking Rural Health Clinic status. The Center was invited to participate in the clinic. As of November 1 we began a model of integrated behavioral health/primary care at the clinic with the addition of a Center staff person for 20 hours a week.

Center-wide Bits and Pieces

Telepsychiatry: Through the efforts of **Dr. Lori Raney**, Medical Director, and **Brent Oliver**, VP/Information Technology, we have instituted televideo psychiatric capacity throughout our system. We now have televideo access to and from our Cortez, Durango, Crossroads and Pagosa Springs offices and are using this access for tele-psychiatry services. This is particularly valuable for child psychiatric follow-ups which up to this point have required travel to Durango. It has also increased the general psychiatric time available for services, as the travel time for our medical staff has been reduced. For more information, please contact Dr. Lori Raney at lraney@swcmhc.org.

Web Site: Our web site has been remodeled. The remodel was undertaken to more evenly reflect our services to our entire area and to make it more user friendly and easier to access information. The web site includes a listing of staff e-mail addresses as well as currently open positions. If you have not visited it recently, please take a look and tell us what you think: www.swcmhc.org.

First Lady Visit and Annual Meeting: The **First Lady of Colorado, Jeannie Ritter**, has made mental health and substance abuse her priority. She first visited our region as part of this priority on September 12-13. Her second trip was to attend and keynote our Annual Dinner. If you did not attend the dinner, you missed a great event. It was a wonderful evening with close to 200 in attendance. **NAMI** and **CIT** were featured, and the keynote was passionate and well received.

Management Information System (MIS): The Center employs a management information system that includes an electronic clinical record. This system has served us well over the past four years but lacks database flexibility and capacity to be modified. As a consequence, the Center will be partnering with six other

Colorado mental health centers to purchase a new management information system, UniCare. The target for implementation is set for January 2009.

Building For Sale: With the closing of Stepping Stone and our plans to construct new office space in Pagosa Springs, we have made the decision to sell our remodeled, multilevel, six-bedroom, 3,100 square foot residential property on Richard Drive in Durango that housed the Stepping Stone program. It is being listed by Realty Executives of Durango. If you are interested, please contact Bobbie Carll at 247-5548.

Open Positions: At the time this newsletter is published, we are seeking to fill the following positions:

- ◆ VP of Residential Services (Full Time – Durango)
- ◆ Clinical Director of Residential Services (Full Time – Durango)
- ◆ VP Outpatient & Emergency Services (Full Time – Durango)
- ◆ Youth and Family Support Therapist (Full Time – Durango)
- ◆ Child/adolescent Therapist (Part Time – Cortez)
- ◆ ATU Nurse Clinician (Full Time Nights, Casual – Durango)

We also have casual positions open for an ATU Case Manager, ATU Residential Counselor, Detox Counselor and an on-call emergency services clinician in Durango.

If you are interested in any of these positions, please see our website (www.swcmhc.org) or contact Pat Roy at proy@swcmhc.org.

Coming Attractions

In future newsletters look for updates on the Center's involvement and evolving role in addressing our primary care crisis. Please let me know (bheath@swcmhc.org) if you have any other topics you would like addressed.