

Staff Briefing #60

November 16, 2004

ADMHS Takes Another Step Toward Transforming Crisis Services in North County

For many years, individuals residing in northern Santa Barbara County have had to travel **70 miles or more** to Santa Barbara, Ventura, or further for acute psychiatric care. One of our major departmental goals is to **improve crisis response services**, especially in **north** Santa Barbara County, where the need is most critical.

Phase One - Increasing Inpatient services for North County residents:

The first step toward improving Crisis Services is a recently approved Board of Supervisor contract with **San Luis Obispo County** (SLO) that provides access to the SLO **Psychiatric Health Facility** (PHF).

Over the past few months besides negotiating the contract, policies and procedures were **written in close collaboration** with SLO PHF staff. Dr. Zimmer will be training Santa Maria staff on the process for admitting consumers to the SLO PHF. Dr. Davis will be available to medical staff to facilitate the use of this new **inpatient resource**; Rob Walton and the Access staff will be available for coordination and to resolve management issues with the SLO staff.

The target date for implementation was Monday, November 15, 2004. During this initial phase, **only adult Medicaid** clients should be referred for hospitalization at the SLO PHF.

The development of a contract to admit North County residents to the SLO PHF is **good news** for clients, family and staff. The addition of this acute inpatient service is a small but important step in meeting the number one departmental goal of building a more responsive Mental Health and Alcohol Drug service delivery system for the citizens of Santa Barbara County.

Next Steps:

This is the first of five major phases to transform Mental Health and Alcohol and Drug services in North County. Future staff briefings will highlight: North County after hours and weekend **crisis intervention services**, the development of a **Crisis Intervention Center** in North County; the development of a **Crisis Residential Facility** in North County, and finally the development of a **Regional Inpatient Unit** in North Santa Barbara County or in SLO.

- James L. Broderick, Ph.D., Director