

MEMORANDUM
PLACER COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Adult System of Care

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors

FROM: Jeffrey S. Brown, M.P.H., M.S.W., Director of Health and Human Services
Maureen F. Bauman, Director of Adult System of Care

DATE: May 20, 2014

SUBJECT: A Proclamation Declaring May 2014 as Mental Health Month

ACTION REQUESTED:

1. Approve a Proclamation to promote mental health awareness by declaring May 2014 as Mental Health Month in Placer County.

BACKGROUND:

We all know about the importance about taking care of our health — eating right, getting enough sleep, exercising. Healthy habits positively influence how a person feels and how their body functions. But good health involves not only caring for our body, but also our mind. The fact is, our mental health is integral to our overall health. Far too many Americans ignore this critical element, yet overall health and wellness are not possible without it.

What is mental health? Mental health is the ability to cope with daily life and the challenges it brings. When a person has “good” mental health, they deal better with what comes their way. By contrast, “poor” mental health, such as feeling overwhelmed by stress, can make even day-to-day life difficult.

Nearly one in five Americans over age 18 (61,000 residents of Placer County) will experience a diagnosable mental health disorder in a given year and nearly half (40,000 in Placer County) will experience a mental health disorder in their lifetime. In addition, approximately 70 percent of Americans experience physical and non-physical symptoms of stress, but only 37 percent think they are doing very well at managing stress.

Stress has a huge impact on our lives. Research shows that stress is closely linked to high blood pressure, heart disease and obesity. It also shows that people who feel depressed or chronically stressed may have a greater risk of physical illnesses.

The good news is there are many healthy choices and steps that individuals can adopt to promote and strengthen mental health resulting in improved overall health and well-being. A healthy lifestyle can help to prevent the onset or worsening of depression, anxiety and other mental health conditions, as well as heart disease, diabetes, obesity and other chronic health problems. It can also help people recover from these conditions.

For this year’s Mental Health Month, Placer County is raising awareness of the role mental health plays in our lives and providing tips and resources so anyone can take steps to promote good mental health. Focusing on this year’s theme, “Mind Your Health,” these include building social support, eating with your mental health in mind, recognizing the signs of stress, and knowing when to reach out for help. The local Auburn community billboard on Hwy 80 last week encouraged people to know the signs of suicide and this week reminds us that this disease affects us all and that likely we or someone we know may be suffering from mental illness.

Placer County service providers and volunteers played a critical part in the second annual regional conference on post partum depression that occurred May 6. This conference was designed to provide education that clinical depression is a real problem for many new mothers and we must do more to raise awareness and provide interventions to assist parents and children impacted by this problem.

We continue to provide training to many of our residents through the very successful Mental Health First Aid program. This program not only teaches people how to provide mental health first aid in situations where they recognize that a friend or loved one is having challenges with their mental health but also provides a great deal of information to de-mystify mental illness with lots of information and education so people can help themselves and others to stay healthy.

We are educating people about mental health and mental illness by having real people in Placer County tell their stories of recovery. Last year, an insert called "There is Hope" was distributed through all of our local newspapers and continues to be distributed at fairs and events. In addition, our very successful Placer County Speaker's Bureau, sponsored by Mental Health America, provides trained speakers who have experienced both mental illness and recovery. These speakers educate people by sharing their experiences, strength and hope in multiple venues in Placer County.

Just as Americans have learned there are things they can do to reduce their risk of heart disease and other illnesses, Placer County wants to help people learn what they can do both to protect their mental health in tough times and also to improve their mental well-being throughout their lives.

We are asking the Board to raise awareness about mental health by proclaiming May is Mental Health Month in Placer County and encouraging all of our residents to pay attention to their mental health.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact as a result of this action.

Before the Board of Supervisors County of Placer, State of California

IN THE MATTER OF A PROCLAMATION declaring May 2014 as Mental Health Awareness Month in Placer County.

The following PROCLAMATION was duly passed by the Board of Supervisors of Placer County at a regular meeting held, _____.

WHEREAS, good physical health and good mental health are both equally essential to a person's overall well-being; and

WHEREAS, like any physical ailment, mental health conditions may require urgent and sensitive care; and

WHEREAS, all Americans experience times of difficulty and stress in their lives; and

WHEREAS, mental health conditions are real and prevalent in our nation with the National Institute of Mental Health reporting that one in four adults and one in five older adults (approximately 57.7 million Americans) experience a mental health disorder in a given year and one in seventeen Americans live with a serious mental illness; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Surgeon General reports that one in 10 individuals under the age of 18 suffer from serious emotional and mental health conditions that cause significant impairment in their day-to-day lives at home, in school and with peers; and

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization reports that four of the 10 causes for disability in the United States are related to mental health conditions and by 2020 Major Depressive illnesses will be the leading cause of disability in the world for women and children; and

WHEREAS, with early intervention and effective treatment, those individuals with mental health conditions can recover and lead full, productive lives and 70 to 90 percent of individuals with serious mental health conditions can experience a reduction of symptoms, and improved quality of life; and

WHEREAS, reducing stigma and ensuring access to treatment and recovery supports that are proven effective, recovery is accelerated and the further harm related to the course of illness is minimize; and

WHEREAS, there is a strong body of research that supports user-friendly tools that all American's can access to better handle challenges, and protect their well-being; and

WHEREAS, each business, school, government agency, healthcare provider, organization and citizen shares the burden of mental health problems and has a responsibility to promote mental wellness and support prevention efforts.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED that the Board of Supervisors of Placer County, State of California, hereby proclaims, the month of May 2014 as Mental Health Month. As members of the Board of Supervisors for Placer County, we call upon the citizens, government agencies, public and private institutions, businesses and schools in Placer County to recommit our community to increasing awareness and understanding of mental health, the steps our citizens can take to protect their mental health, and the need for appropriate and accessible services for all people with mental health conditions.

Jack Duran
Supervisor District 1, 2014 Chair

Robert M. Weygandt, Supervisor District 2
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