



Times-Standard

State provides \$1.7 million to county mental health

The Times-Standard

Posted: 02/04/2009 01:16:02 AM PST

The Humboldt County Department of Health and Human Services received word late last week that it will receive nearly \$1.7 million over the next two years for mental health-related prevention and early intervention programs and services.

"PEI will focus on suicide prevention, stigma and discrimination reduction and an innovative partnership designed to support and strengthen young adults as they transition from foster care," according to the department's announcement.

The funds will be used to educate the community on the early signs of suicide and to get the word out on the support and services currently available, said Barbara LaHaie, Department of Health and Human Services assistant director of programs.

Hand-in-hand with that effort, she said, is the county's plan to work to reduce the stigma and discrimination surrounding mental illness. The county is also focusing on providing services to foster youth who've aged out of the system. Providing mental health intervention for those in the 18- to 20-year age range can result in a much better prognosis for many of these individuals.

The funding comes from the 2004 Proposition 63, now known as the Mental Health Services Act.

"MHSA levies a tax on 1 percent of personal income in excess of \$1 million a year, with funds used to support a broad range of prevention, early intervention and other service needs, along with the infrastructure, technology and training necessary to

sustain them," according to the announcement.

While the funds have been specifically set aside for Humboldt County, it's not a given that a county's plans for those dollars will be approved. Often, counties have to revise their plans.

"We are very proud to have our plans approved," LaHaie said.

It's unknown at this point, she said, exactly when the funds will be in hand. The fiscal year 2008-2009 allotment of \$613,853 and the 2009-2010 allotment of \$1,055,500 are in place. While additional funding is expected for a third year, the amount will depend upon a not-yet-determined allocation from the tax revenues.

One of the points in the county's favor was the process of involving the community in the implementation of those plans. Over a three-month period, input on the plans was solicited from 258 stakeholders who attended 22 meetings.

The Mental Health Services Act Oversight and Accountability Commission commended the county for its "inclusive and engaging" community planning process that resulted in the plans.

"The department is pleased that the Oversight and Accountability Commission approved Humboldt County's plan so quickly, reflecting the critical nature of the work to be done and the quality of the

Advertisement



SAVE up to 64%

Plus, get
3 FREE Gifts



Special Code: 45069ZWN

To Order: Omaha Steaks, 1-800-471-4711 or 1-877-596-4455

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

Times-Standard

proposals submitted," DHHS Director Phillip Crandall said.

Advertisement

Help people in need.

Donate your car, boat or RV


Free Towing ■ Tax Deductible



FREE
3 day vacation to over
80 destinations.

Call Toll-Free

1-877-225-9297

 **Heritage**
for the PEOPLE

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™