

CENTER FOR MENTAL HEALTH COMPLETES THE FINAL STAGE IN OFFERING COMPREHENSIVE MENTAL HEALTH IN MONTROSE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Montrose, CO – September 16th, 2019 – The Center for Mental Health will open its state-of-the-art Crisis Walk-In Center (CWC) to the public on September 16th. Located in Montrose, it will provide essential crisis behavioral healthcare services to the six counties of Delta, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Montrose, Ouray, and San Miguel. Currently, those services are not available or available only on a limited scale. All crisis services will be available every day, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with walk-in availability.

“We have been working on funding, planning, building, and staffing this facility for two years at this point. We are thrilled to have crossed the finish line and be 100% ready to serve those in our community who need crisis behavioral services,” said Shelly J. Spalding, Chief Executive Officer. “The final details and approvals from those agencies overseeing our Crisis Walk-in Center gave us a bright, green light to open today.”

The new Crisis Walk-In Center is a critical resource on the Western Slope for those experiencing behavioral health crises. For example, last year, CMH responded to nearly 3,500 crisis situations across the region, largely through its mobile crisis support services. These may include everything from a community member experiencing a severe depressive episode to an overdose to a suicide attempt. “Although our mobile services were effective in the treatment of those in need of mental health triage, a mobile service certainly cannot meet the current demand effectively,” added Spalding. “The Western Slope community was in dire need of a resource offering urgent behavioral healthcare, close to home. Often these folks may end up in an emergency room, or even jail, before getting the treatment they really need. This facility will ensure people can get the right care, faster. This has the potential to save lives and get people into recovery more quickly and with less trauma.”

Approximately 10,000 square miles, the six-county region has limited access to urgent behavioral health services. Clients in need of mental health and substance-abuse emergency services oftentimes travel hundreds of miles to Grand Junction, Durango, or Denver to access care. “In many cases, patients from our area travel four to six hours to get the urgent care they need,” said Amanda Jones, Chief Clinical Officer. “That’s simply not acceptable and our residents deserve better.” In addition to putting lives at risk, this distance makes it nearly impossible for families to visit and support their loved ones during recovery. The new facility will save lives in our community and promote recovery and healing by ensuring people can access the critical support they need close to home.



The CWC provides both mental health and substance abuse services. An on-site, no-appointment-needed Walk-In Clinic will offer rapid response care and then refer clients for outpatient services once the crisis is stabilized. “We expect to manage 96 percent of all regional behavioral health episodes in Montrose at the CWC,” said Spalding. “For anyone who must leave this region for inpatient care elsewhere, the care we offer in Montrose will serve as a pivotal step from hospitalization to living and recovering at home with familial and friend support.

The integrated planning team has worked diligently to ensure that everyone in the community will have access to this care if needed. “Our goal is to treat anyone needing care regardless of their ability to pay,” said Kjersten Davis, President of the Board for The Center. “When a person is faced with a behavioral health crisis, that isn’t the time to turn them away because they may not be able to pay. We are working closely with our third-party payers to ensure most insurance providers will support their care.” This location will provide services to any one in our six-county region. In addition, those from anywhere in the state will also be able to come to our facility in an emergency.

Serving all ages, the new Crisis Walk-In Center will treat children and adolescents as well; currently, these services are nonexistent on the Western Slope. Often, adolescents who need inpatient care are sent to the Front Range for evaluation and care. This creates a significant burden for parents, friends, and extended family members who want to offer support, resulting in extra stress and trauma for everyone involved.

Substance withdrawal management is also provided. Currently, there are limited bed-based detox services on the Western Slope. Individuals needing to detox safely may come to the CWC for assessment. If the on-site medical providers determine that hospitalization isn’t warranted, outpatient detox therapies will be administered on-site where family members and friends are a welcome part of the treatment process.

The opening of the Crisis Walk-In Center will help law enforcement and first responders by giving them a valuable local resource. Currently, when first responders come across an individual exhibiting unusual behavior, they often have to choose between going to the emergency department or jail. Neither may be the appropriate location when someone is in crisis. “The staff has taken great strides in bridging the gap in immediate care and response for our citizens,” said detective Phil Rosty of the Montrose Police Department. “We are currently partnering police officers across the region with mental health professionals to ensure we provide the best service to those in need. As first responders, this resource provides a specialized and valuable resource for our responding officers when helping those in crisis.”



The CWC employs about 30 people. It has crisis stabilization and observation beds and can treat approximately 14-16 people at any given time. “After extensive due diligence, we discovered a need for a facility of this kind was dire,” said Kjersten Davis. “After we raised more than \$3 million through public and private funding, we were able to create a place where our citizens can access quality behavioral health services available for people of all ages and walks of life, void of barriers, physical, cultural, or financial. We are thankful that the final stage is complete.”

The Center for Mental Health is a nonprofit organization seeking to promote mental health and well-being. It provides behavioral healthcare services through more than ten facilities across 10,000 square miles including Delta, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Montrose, Ouray, and San Miguel Counties. Visit www.centermh.org to learn more.

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