

Center for Mental Health opens Telluride office

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By Sophie Stuber, Planet Contributor

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The Center for Mental Health (CMH) recently opened a new downtown facility in Telluride at 100 West Colorado Ave. With the move, CMH will be able to offer more mental health resources.

The organization — a nonprofit that focuses on mental health care and well-being — offers services throughout the 10,000 miles of the Western Slope in serving Gunnison, Hinsdale, Montrose, Ouray and San Miguel counties.

At the new center, the staff will offer mental-health assessments, medication management, family and individual therapy, support groups, suicide prevention, and grief, depression and anxiety counseling. With the new facility in Telluride, CMH will add 30 new certified behavioral health professionals.

The location will offer mental health therapy for children and adults, as well as family and individual counseling. There also will be expanded resources for substance abuse.

“We will continue to work with the mental health professionals already located in Telluride. This will simply offer the community more and expanded options,” said Shelly J. Spalding, The Center for Mental Health CEO, according to a news release.

CMH works with Dr. Rowlin Busch, the center’s lead clinician.

“He is a longtime Telluride resident and a really skilled clinician,” Laura Byard, CMH’s regional director for Montrose, Ouray and San Miguel counties for CMH, said in an interview with the Daily Planet.

Byard will be in charge of CMH operations in Telluride. Byard hopes that with the new facility, CMH will be able to offer community workshops and partner with other local services in providing access to expanded mental health resources. The box canyon can be isolating, as it can be difficult for people to find local options for mental health care along the Western Slope.

“Our mountain communities need and deserve high-quality behavioral health services close to home,” Byard said. “We are hoping to expand our services with the new location.”

Each community has different needs, she added, and with the new facility, the CMH will be able to respond more quickly and effectively in a local setting.

“Telluride is such a beautiful small community, and we really want to practice locally and support our community and neighbors,” she said.

In addition, CMH is expanding its jail-based services, as well as the supportive services that the organization offers in collaboration with local law enforcement.

“We are equally working with law enforcement in San Miguel County and Telluride around the co-responder program,” said Amanda Jones, CMH chief clinical officer.

CMH will have mental health professionals working alongside law enforcement to provide mental health support, Jones explained.

According to Byard, more people are seeking help for mental health.

“Thankfully, the taboo around mental health care is decreasing and people are seeking help. Our goal is to help our community learn about behavioral health and get the help they need to live life in Telluride to the fullest,” she said.

CMH encourages people to seek mental health care they needed, and for the community to support these initiatives.

“We are really continuing to provide education and collaboration across the community to show that mental health is just another part of health care,” Jones explained.

As part of its initiatives, CMH works to promote better education about mental health. The organization collaborates with other groups in the region such as local school districts, medical providers, Tri-County Health Network and human services.

Spalding hopes the new CMH office will be welcomed into the town of Telluride. An open house Thursday helped introduce people to the new facility. At the event, people were able to learn about the services that CMH provides. Clinicians were around as well so the community could meet the staff.

“Our goal is to continue to be part of the Telluride community and to increase our presence and the services we offer,” she said.

At the new facility in Telluride, people will be able to schedule appointments with certified clinicians. During drop-in hours, new clients can come in and set up plans to start receiving treatment. The office is located at 238 E. Colorado Ave. Suite 9, on the second floor of the U.S. Bank building.

For mental health emergencies or necessary short-term inpatient care, the Montrose CMH location offers a Crisis Walk-In Center that will be opened in mid-September. This center will provide detox services, walk-in care and crisis stabilization.

The Center for Mental Health accepts Medicare, Medicaid, most insurance, and offers a sliding fee schedule based on income. For more information, visit centermh.org.