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For Immediate Release

Changes in State Behavioral Health Services -- Discussion Coming to Las Cruces June 10

Santa Fe, May 28, 2004 – The Secretary of the Human Services Department (HSD) will detail changes in the way state Behavioral Health Services will be handled in the future, during a public meeting scheduled for Thursday, June 10 in Las Cruces.

Earlier this year Governor Richardson signed into law HB 271, the Interagency Behavioral Health Purchasing Collaborative (Purchasing Collaborative), which will benefit New Mexicans in the way their behavioral health services are provided. This was one of the governor's "first steps" in his health care agenda.

In establishing the Purchasing Collaborative, the state will streamline services currently being offered by nine different state agencies by creating one oversight agency. "By consolidating and coordinating services, we will provide better services, enable better access and make better use of taxpayer dollars," said Pamela Hyde, HSD Secretary.

Hyde and co-chair Patricia Montoya, Department of Health Secretary, are taking the lead on this innovative effort for New Mexico. "The goal of the Purchasing Collaborative is to create a common behavioral health plan and purchasing process that promotes recovery and resiliency for individuals and their families with mental health or substance abuse needs," said Hyde.

A written concept paper describing these changes is now available on the HSD website www.state.nm.us/hsd or by calling HSD at (505) 827-7750

Secretary Hyde will detail the work that has already begun to design this new plan and purchasing process during the public meeting on June 10. Persons interested in behavioral health services are encouraged to attend the meeting.

The public meeting will be held from 12 to 4 pm on June 10, at the Dona Ana County Human Services Department and the County Health Council (formerly the old Sheriff's Office), located at 125 W. Boutz in Las Cruces.

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