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For Immediate Release

Consumers of Behavioral Health Services Have Opportunity to ask Questions About Upcoming Changes to Services

Santa Fe, July 15, 2004 – Human Services Department Secretary Pamela Hyde is holding a special consumer meeting to help answer questions that may be looming about changes in services as the new Interdepartmental Behavioral Health Purchasing Collaborative unfolds. “It is very important to hear from those who use behavioral health services in our state as we begin implementing the Purchasing Collaborative,” said Hyde. “The input we receive during Friday’s consumer meeting will be very helpful as we continue our process in streamlining behavioral health services across the state.”

House Bill 271, which created the Purchasing Collaborative was signed by Governor Richardson and sponsored by Representative Edward Sandoval. The Purchasing Collaborative represents 17 different state agencies that will work together in providing mental health and substance abuse services to New Mexicans. The streamlining of services is aimed at providing better services, better access, and better use of taxpayer dollars. “It is our hope that children, families and adults will be better served through a consolidated behavioral health system,” said Ken Martinez, State Children’s Behavioral Health Director, Children, Youth and Families Department.

While many public meetings about the Purchasing Collaborative have been held across the state, this meeting is different because it will focus directly on those who will be affected by the changes, consumers and their families. “Since the goal of the Purchasing Collaborative is aimed toward improving services for the consumers of Behavioral Health, we feel it is important to hear from them at this time as we are moving toward implementing changes by July 1, 2005,” said Leslie Tremaine, Behavioral Health Director, Human Services Department.

The consumer meeting is open to all consumers and/or family members that wish to make their voice heard or to learn more about the new system. “We want to create a system that will function into the future. A system where everyone has a voice,” said Pam Martin, Director of Behavioral Health Services Division at the Department of Health. “This is an good opportunity for that to occur.”

The Behavioral Health consumer meeting will take place on Friday, July 23 from 1:30 to 4:30pm at the West Mesa High School Performing Arts Center located at 6701 Fortuna Blvd. NW. (West of Coors Blvd.)

American Sign Language and Spanish interpreters will be available to assist those who need translation during the meeting.

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