

# New Mexico Interagency Behavioral Health Purchasing Collaborative

*Collaboration for Recovery, Resiliency and Empowerment*



Aging and Long-Term Services Department

Administrative Office of the Courts

Children, Youth and Families Department

New Mexico Corrections Department

Department of Finance and Administration

Department of Health

Department of Workforce Solutions

Department of Transportation

Developmental Disabilities Planning Council

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

Governor's Commission on Disability

Governor's Health Policy Advisor

Health Policy Commission

Human Services Department

Indian Affairs Department

Mortgage Finance Authority

Public Education Department

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## Help Available for Holiday Season Depression

SANTA FE – Seasonal anxieties often cause millions of Americans and thousands of New Mexicans to experience depression, especially when coupled by a decrease in the amount of daylight during winter months. The New Mexico Behavioral Health Collaborative wants New Mexicans to know there is help available and urges people to get the help they need during the holiday season.

There are several resources available for New Mexicans who might be suffering from depression and/or contemplating suicide.

- A toll-free 24-hour help line to provide all New Mexicans a free resource for immediate help during a crisis – 1-866-HELP1NM or 1-866-435-7166
- The ValueOptions New Mexico customer service line – 1-888-251-7511 or their internet address at [www.valueoptions.com/newmexico](http://www.valueoptions.com/newmexico)
- School based health centers across New Mexico give more students access to free primary and behavioral health care in their schools

On average, people living with depression go for nearly a decade before receiving treatment. “Depression is one of the most common mental health conditions in America and the principle cause of suicides each year,” said Linda Roebuck, New Mexico’s Behavioral Health Czar and CEO of the Collaborative. “We want New Mexicans to know that early intervention and treatment of depression are the best ways to prevent suicide.”

A study released today by Mental Health America gives an analysis of depression across the states in an effort to stimulate action by communities, public health professionals, state policymakers and others to address depression in their populations. “The findings of the study underscores the great need to shape public policies that improve access to and availability of mental health services for those who suffer from depression and other mental illnesses,” said Roebuck. “That is exactly what the Collaborative aims to do in New Mexico.”

“Preventing suicide and the devastation it causes has to be one of our top priorities,” said Health Secretary Dr. Alfredo Vigil. “We will continue to invest in programs that can curb our high suicide rate and help our families be healthy.”

The study also found the more educated the population and the greater the percentage with health insurance, the lower the suicide rate. “This is another example of how important it is to get New Mexicans the health coverage they need,” said Human Services Department Secretary Pamela Hyde. “This will be an important message as we approach the 2008 Legislature with the Governor’s universal health coverage proposal, HealthSOLUTIONS New Mexico Plan.”

Other initiatives to improve depression and suicide rates in New Mexico include technical assistance and training to schools and communities for suicide prevention, crisis response and grief/trauma support and the implementation of a comprehensive model for diagnosis, prevention and behavioral health treatment in four communities.

(more)

The Behavioral Health Collaborative was created during the 2004 Legislature to allow most state agencies and resources involved in behavioral health treatment and recovery to work as one in an effort to improve mental health and substance abuse services in New Mexico. This cabinet-level group represents 15 agencies and Governor Bill Richardson's office.

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