



**Susana Martinez, Governor**  
**Sidonie Squier, Secretary**

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**February 3, 2013**  
**For Immediate Release**

## **First Month of Crisis Hotline Successful**

**SANTA FE** – Last month, Governor Susana Martinez announced a new statewide mental health crisis hotline to help New Mexicans receive access to local help and resources during a mental health crisis. The month of February, the first full month of operation, was a success, fielding more than 115 calls from throughout the state.

The New Mexico Crisis and Access Line (NMCAL) is staffed by mental health professionals who can respond to a crisis 24 hours per day and 7 days per week. The line is available statewide and toll free at 1-855-NMCRISIS (1-855-662-7474).

“New Mexicans can now call a hotline staffed by professionals who can provide important assistance and resources to individuals in crisis 24 hours per day and 7 days per week. For more than 115 of our neighbors, family, and friends, NMCAL has provided a helping hand to them in their darkest hour,” said Governor Susana Martinez. “By providing this easy access we can now help our fellow New Mexicans on the road to recovery.”

NMCAL fielded 50 routine, 59 urgent, and 6 emergent phone calls. While not always the initial problem, concerns related to suicidal thoughts were reported on 49% of clinical calls. Concerns related to drug or alcohol abuse were reported on 40% of clinical calls. A majority of these calls were able to be referred to a clinician or referred to community resources, while more serious callers were immediately directed to a local hospital or transferred to 911 dispatch due to immediate danger.

“The NMCAL is recognition by the state that we must provide coordinated services to those New Mexicans most in need,” said Human Services Department Secretary Sidonie Squier, who also serves as Co-Chair of the Behavioral Health Collaborative. “The crisis line is ensuring that people are receiving the right care, at the right time, in the right place so they can reach recovery.”

The State is working in collaboration with OptumHealth New Mexico and Protocall to bring the line to New Mexico. OptumHealth New Mexico is the statewide entity that currently contracts with the state in order to provide behavioral health services to New Mexicans.

NMCAL staff will help stabilize the person experiencing a crisis. After the situation is under control, the mental health specialist will refer the individual to the appropriate community mental health resources.

The NMCAL coordinates with local provider agencies, respite, warm lines, emergency rooms, law enforcement agencies and correctional facilities.

Currently, Core Service Agencies are contracted to provide after-hours crisis lines to their limited population in a specific geographic location. The NMCAL complements these services by providing local resources for all New Mexicans around-the-clock. The goal is to close any existing gaps in access to crisis help when New Mexicans need it most.

**About the New Mexico Behavioral Health Collaborative**

The 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 the Governor's office.

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