



SUSANA MARTINEZ, GOVERNOR
BRENT EARNEST, SECRETARY

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Governor Susana Martinez Announces Expansion of Statewide Mental Health Crisis Hotline

*Additional Funding, Certified Peer Counselors Improve Access to Services
for New Mexicans in Need of Treatment and Care*

SANTA FE, N.M. — Today, Governor Susana Martinez announced the expansion of the state's mental health crisis hotline, a phone line established in 2013 that provides New Mexicans access to local assistance and resources during a mental health crisis. The expansion of the New Mexico Crisis Line (NMCAL) includes additional funding and certified peer counselors, which will help improve access to treatment and care to New Mexicans or their loved ones experiencing mental health or behavioral health crises.

"We should provide every resource we can to help New Mexicans who are in need of mental health services, especially during times of crisis," Governor Martinez said. "Offering a helping hand can save lives, and that is exactly what this hotline aims to do. By expanding it, we are now able to provide more New Mexicans and their family members the help they need."

First announced by Governor Martinez in January of 2013, NMCAL is staffed by mental health professionals 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. In addition to the trained mental health professionals currently staffing the line, with today's expansion, NMCAL will now be able to connect callers in need with peer counselors, certified by the Human Services Department (HSD), to use their own experiences to help. Through a partnership with the New Mexico Peer2Peer Warmline, these counselors will offer confidential, non-judgmental support to callers in need.

This expansion will be supported by \$500,000 in additional funding secured by Governor Martinez over the last two fiscal years, bringing NMCAL's total budget to \$1.3 million. Since its inception, NMCAL has helped more than 30,000 callers from throughout New Mexico. Calls to NMCAL have increased dramatically since its 2013 launch, with counselors last month answering 1,500 calls, compared to 160 calls in the first month of operation. Last year alone, NMCAL counselors were able to support and create safety plans for 92 percent of the more than 2,000 people who called to report that they — or a loved one — was considering suicide. ProtoCall

Inc. operates the crisis line with 80 clinicians to provide patient-centered, best practice clinical services.

“Our crisis line is quickly proving to be an important tool and resource, one that is becoming more widely used,” said HSD Secretary Brent Earnest. “Last year alone, we saw an 84 percent increase in the number of New Mexicans receiving behavioral health services statewide. The work that NMCAL is doing is invaluable to providing support for all New Mexicans, and we are thankful for their support of our community.”

NMCAL staff is professionally trained to help support a person experiencing a crisis and establish a safety plan that includes referral to the appropriate behavioral health resources in their community. The NMCAL coordinates with local provider agencies, respite, warm lines, emergency rooms, law enforcement agencies, and correctional facilities.

“The New Mexico Crisis and Access Line is helping to ensure that New Mexicans have access to quick and compassionate care 24 hours a day,” said Wendy Linebrink-Allison, Program Manager for NMCAL. “We are pleased that Governor Martinez is supporting this important resource for the community and look forward to continuing our work together as we expand in the coming months.”

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