



## NEWS ADVISORY

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
September 9, 2010

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**750,000 SAN DIEGANS HAVE A MENTAL ILLNESS**  
***County Launches Massive Campaign to Fight Stigma and Discrimination***

**WHAT:** County officials will launch a prevention and education campaign to reduce stigma and discrimination associated with mental illness; the main barriers that keep people from getting help.

Messages in English and Spanish will appear in television, radio, newspapers, internet, billboards, movie theaters, bus shelters and buses throughout the region.

The campaign also targets primary care physicians and encourages them to look for signs to detect a mental illness. The It'sUPtoUs website—[www.up2sd.org](http://www.up2sd.org)—offers educational materials and resources to get people on the road to recovery.

**WHO:** **Chairwoman Pam Slater-Price**, County of San Diego Board of Supervisors  
**Nick Macchione**, Director, County Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA)  
**Alfredo Aguirre**, Director, HHSA's Mental Health Services  
**Dr. Bud Beck**, Community Health Consultant and former Chief Medical Officer for Scripps Health  
**Markov Manalo** and other San Diegans on the road to recovery

**WHEN:** **MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2010 AT 11 A.M.**

**WHERE:** **Health and Human Services Agency**  
**1700 Pacific Highway**

**WHY:** One in four adults in the region will suffer from a diagnosable mental disorder and one in five children will experience some degree of emotional or behavioral difficulty in any given year. That's more than 750,000 people combined.

Because of stigma, 45 percent of San Diegans said they would feel afraid to tell people about their mental health disorder.

The fear of rejection and discrimination is one of the main barriers that prevent people with a mental disorder from accessing needed mental health services.

Forty-eight (48) percent of people feel a person with a mental illness is dangerous. The reality is that a person with a mental disorder is more likely to be a victim than a perpetrator of violence.

It is estimated that as many as 80 percent of people suffering from a mental disorder can lead productive lives if they receive appropriate treatment early.

The 5-year campaign is funded by the Mental Health Services Act—Proposition 63—, a millionaires' tax which specifically designates funds for mental health services. The measure was approved by California voters in 2004.

Help is available by calling the County's Access and Crisis Line—24 hours a day, 7 days a week—at (800) 479-3339.

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