



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 2, 2009

CONTACT: Tom Christensen (619) 515-6535

FEELING "BLUE"? IT COULD BE DEPRESSION

County Offers No Cost Depression Screenings, Referrals and Resources

WHAT: The County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, in partnership with the Community Health Improvement Partners (CHIP), is hosting a series of no cost depression screenings during San Diego Depression Screening Week October 5-9. Trained mental health volunteers will host display booths and administer depression screening tools to adults 18 years and older at 10 sites around the county. At many sites, experienced mental health clinicians will be available to meet with individuals needing immediate intervention or referrals for ongoing help.

WHO: **Aaron Byzak**, Policy Advisor to Vice-Chairwoman **Pam Slater-Price**, District 3, San Diego County Board of Supervisors
Alfredo Aguirre, Mental Health Services Director, Health and Human Services Agency
Ruth Covell, M.D. and **Angela Carrillo**, Co-Chairs, Community Health Improvement Partners' Behavioral Health Work Team
Jack Farmer, Ph.D., Vice President of Administration, Community Research Foundation
Mona Freels, Chief Operating Officer, 2-1-1 San Diego

WHEN: Monday, October 5, 2009 (San Diego Depression Screening Week Kick-off)
10:00 a.m.

WHERE: HHS North Central Regional Center
5055 Ruffin Road, San Diego 92123

WHY: Clinical depression is a common medical illness affecting more than 19 million American adults each year. Depression screenings should be a routine part of healthcare, similar to routine checkups for heart disease or diabetes. This can provide a quick and easy way to spot the first signs of what could become a serious mental illness. Screenings may consist of education on depression, completion of a written screening test, a discussion of the results with a mental health professional and, if necessary, a referral for additional help.

HHS and CHIP are hosting this weeklong series of screenings in all regions of the county in recognition of National Mental Illness Awareness Week (October 5-9th). For a complete listing of screening sites or additional mental health resources, please call 2-1-1 or visit www.211sandiego.org. People may also call the County's 24-hour, multilingual Access and Crisis Line at (800) 479-3339.

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