

AGENCY CHANGES NAME; Promotes Whole Health

Owosso, Michigan – It has been a busy and successful year for Shiawassee Health and Wellness.

The agency changed its name from Shiawassee County Community Mental Health Authority to Shiawassee Health and Wellness (SHW). This change reflects what we have known for a while; you cannot treat behavioral health in isolation from physical health. It is important to treat the whole person and focus on helping people become and stay healthy. The new name describes what SHW strives to promote through its programs and services. With the name change, SHW updated the logo and rolled out a new website: www.shiabewell.org. The website has a new look and has online mental health-screening tools accessible to the community.

SHW has a Board of Directors with Bruce Cadwallender as the Chairperson. The agency directs over \$17.5 M in resources to improve people's health in this community, while providing numerous programs for children and adults with severe mental illness and/or intellectual/developmental disabilities. Our Access Center receives over 100 calls each month from Shiawassee County citizens seeking services or information about available resources. To date, the agency has assisted over 2,000 adults and children who have serious mental illness and/or intellectual/developmental disabilities. Individualized care is provided in a confidential, person-centered environment encouraging people to reach their goals through community involvement and support.

SHW participates in the Michigan Trauma Initiative. At this time five clinicians and supervisors have become state certified in Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. SHW has one certified Parent Resource Instructor and hopes to add two additional members in the near future.

SHW received a grant award worth up to \$3.3 million over the next five years to expand programs focusing on integrative healthcare approaches; those that focus on helping people become and stay healthy. Work is already underway with local partners that will coordinate treatment more efficiently and allow providers to more effectively treat health issues such as obesity, tobacco addiction and hypertension.

Beginning in November, SHW implemented a tobacco-free policy. The purpose was to promote a safe, healthy, and comfortable environment for employees, consumers and visitors. The Tobacco-Free Campus Policy includes all tobacco products on all agency properties; buildings, grounds and vehicles.

The first Suicide Prevention Walk took place in downtown Owosso during September, which is National Suicide Prevention Month. Over 220 individuals from throughout the county gathered to attend the walk organized by Shiawassee Health & Wellness and Baker College – Owosso. The focus of the event was to bring awareness to the

community and move beyond the stigma of mental health issues, particularly depression and anxiety.

Through a partnership with Iris Telehealth, SHW added an additional psychiatrist and implemented tele-psychiatry services for mental health and substance use disorders. Dr. Ralph Saintfort came on board during September. This additional service leverages recent advancements in communications technology to make quality psychiatric care available. More specifically, it allows for increased access to these services in Shiawassee County. Dr. Saintfort will also be available to consult with other healthcare providers in the community.

SHW will continue striving to ensure individuals in the community are aware of services available and how to access care. Consumers are the center of the organization and we look forward to partnerships to ensure timely, easy access to services offered as well as providing kind, compassionate and effective treatment that is responsive to individual needs.

If you are feeling overwhelmed or depressed, do not be afraid or embarrassed to ask for help. SHW hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday on a walk-in or phone-in basis. Emergency Services are always available by calling 989.723.6791 or 800.622.4514.

The public is welcome to attend the SHW monthly board meeting to learn more about our agency, offer comments and become informed. Meetings are held the 4th Monday of each month at 5:30 p.m. at the agency located at 1555 Industrial Drive in Owosso.

From our family to yours, we hope of you have a safe and joyous holiday season.