

COLLABORATIVE RECEIVES \$85,000 GRANT TO IMPROVE MENTAL HEALTH AND CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY CARE FOR RESIDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

GRASS VALLEY –Three nonprofit organizations have received an \$85,000 federal grant to establish an integrated program to identify, serve and provide ongoing support of residents with disabilities in need of mental health and treatment for chemical dependency in Nevada and Sierra counties.

The Sierra/Nevada County Collaborative – made up of Western Sierra Medical Center, Community Recovery Resources (CoRR) and FREED Center for Independent Living – will help address the critical issue in the two-county region, local officials say.

Western Sierra is a nonprofit community health center, Community Recovery Resources provides substance abuse treatment and prevention programs, and FREED works to eliminate barriers for persons with disabilities through programs that promote independent living.

Almost 13,000 residents have disabilities in Nevada and Sierra counties, with a significant percentage suffering from mental health or chemical dependency issues, or both. The collaborative will use the federal grant to establish a strategic plan to achieve a more efficient system, coordinate care, increase access and improve outcomes.

“Through this project, we plan to identify residents in this at-risk group and make sure they have the health care services they desperately need,” says Western Sierra Medical Center CEO Scott McFarland. “We have a natural relationship and already work on other community projects. The federal grant allows the three organizations to take our efforts to the next level and put together a plan that improves available services and outcomes to those with the greatest need.”

As part of the Health Resources and Services Administration grant, the three organizations will develop a consumer registry by sharing information to identify residents who meet the criteria for the program. Secondly, the collaborative will conduct a needs assessment for mental health treatment and chemical dependency treatment and prevention services, outlining local programs and services available and those that are needed.

“We must connect with our residents as soon as possible and determine what they need surrounding these services,” says Warren Daniels, Chief Executive Officer of Community Recovery Resources. “This is about being honest about how we can improve services and what needs to be done.”

Finally, the collaborative will develop a far-reaching strategic plan that establishes priorities, goals and objectives to improve health and wellness outcomes. The goal is an efficient network that improves health care services and coordinates care while increasing access for residents with disabilities in need of mental health and chemical dependency and treatment.

“The health care community, from local doctors to treatment centers to long-term service and support providers, will work together in addressing the issue,” says Ana Acton, Executive Director of FREED Independent Living Center. “And the community needs to know what is available to their family members, friends or even themselves. We’re all part of the solution.”

About Western Sierra Medical Center

Western Sierra Medical Center provides comprehensive medical, dental and behavioral health care in Nevada, Sierra and Yuba counties. Founded in 1975, Western Sierra emphasizes preventive care, education and empowering patients to make informed decisions. Western Sierra provides services for the HMO and private markets, and to low-income and senior citizens. Western Sierra is the largest outpatient health care provider in Nevada County, where a new full service health center is under construction to meet growing demands in the community. You can learn more about Western Sierra Medical Center at www.wsmcmed.org and on Facebook at www.facebook.com/WesternSierraMedicalCenter.