



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

News Release

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For Immediate Release: April 22, 2009

09-026

STATE LAUNCHES NEW NETWORK OF CARE FOR MENTAL HEALTH

HONOLULU – The State today launched an exciting easy-to-use web-based resource for individuals, families and agencies concerned with mental and emotional wellness. The ***Hawaii Network of Care for Behavioral/Mental Health*** at <http://hawaii.networkofcare.org> is the first online information place or portal that provides extensive information, communication, and advocacy tools with a single point of entry. The website creates the first comprehensive and up-to-date collection of all existing resources statewide for individuals seeking support for mental illness, mental retardation or substance abuse issues.

"The *Network of Care* is an invaluable resource for people with mental illness in Hawai'i," said said Health Director Chiyome Fukino, M.D. "This website provides a tremendous service to our citizens by helping people find the resources they need quickly without spending a lot of time searching. It also provides important assistance to service providers, by helping them to navigate a sometimes fragmented system. With the launching of *The Network of Care*, Hawai'i leads the way in empowering people with mental illness to lead independent lives.

"The launch of the *Hawai'i Network of Care* is very timely. As we face tough economic times, it is vitally important that we increase access and knowledge of existing services. The website will also enable more people to connect with each other and communicate about their interests and concerns related to mental health," Dr. Fukino added.

(more)

The *Hawai'i Network of Care for Behavioral/Mental Health* provides a comprehensive directory of the service providers in all four counties. The *Network of Care* also provides easy-to-search libraries and vital information about specific disorders; pending legislation and advocacy; as well as daily news articles from around the world concerning behavioral health, mental retardation and substance abuse. The site also features a personal folder for individuals, to store medical information or articles of interest.

To increase accessibility and accommodate users, the Network of Care's innovative technology provides near-universal access, regardless of literacy or income level, to web-based services through a text-only version of the site and other adaptive technologies. The site is fully ADA-compliant and Bobby-approved. The Network of Care also is available in multiple languages.

Service providers can share challenges and ideas, as well as create powerful new mechanisms to better serve people with mental illness, mental retardation and substance abuse, by embracing the Network of Care's communication tools such as message boards and community calendars. Service providers can even build their own free websites in the "For Providers" section.

Hawai'i is one of 19 states that will use the Network of Care technology created, developed and maintained by Trilogy Integrated Resources LLC of San Rafael, Calif. The Network of Care project was begun with an innovation grant from the State of California. Hawai'i's Network of Care for Behavioral/Mental Health, developed in partnership with the Department of Health, is a pilot program funded by the State's Mental Health Transformation State Incentive Grant.

The Network of Care (www.Hawaii.networkofcare.org) empowers people with mental illness, mental retardation or substance abuse issues, their families and service providers by providing online access to comprehensive services available for the State of Hawai'i. It ensures there is "No Wrong Door" for those navigating the system of behavioral health services, those working to avoid the need for formal services, and those ready to transition out of the behavioral health system.

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