



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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CHANGING ATTITUDES, CHANGING LIVES: TAKE THE FIRST STEP County Offers Free Depression Screenings, Referrals and Resources

One in 4 adults and 1 in 5 children in San Diego County suffer from a mental disorder or difficulty in any given year, and depression is one of the most common. Often times, people don't seek the help they need but a week-long series of depression screenings aims to make getting help more convenient and less intimidating for people.

The San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA), in partnership with Community Health Improvement Partners (CHIP), the Access and Crisis Line, Alvarado Parkway Institute and Union of Pan-Asian Communities, is hosting a series of no-cost depression screenings at several San Diego County locations during San Diego Depression Screening Week October 4-9.

Trained mental health volunteers will administer depression screening tools to adults 18 years and older at 23 sites around the County. At many sites, an experienced mental health clinician will be available to meet with individuals needing immediate intervention or referrals for ongoing help.

"We have to move beyond the stigma associated with mental illness and make sure people feel comfortable seeking help," said Supervisor Ron Roberts, District 4, San Diego County Board of Supervisors. "The County provides many different ways for people to seek help and these screenings are one way in which someone can conveniently get information on the resources that are out there.

"I encourage County residents who might be suffering in silence to come in and get screened for depression."

"People should make depression screenings a routine part of healthcare. Mental disorders are just like any other illness and need to be treated accordingly," said HHSA Director Nick Macchione. "People can come in and get whatever information they are comfortable with at these screenings – from simply picking up a brochure to being screened by a mental health professional, and, if necessary, a referral for additional help."

For a complete listing of screening sites, additional mental health resources, or for a depression screening over the phone (available during Depression Screening Week), please call the County's 24-hour Access and Crisis Line at (800) 479-3339 or visit www.Up2SD.org. You can also call 2-1-1 or visit www.211sandiego.org for a list of screening locations.

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