



“Public Health is for Everyone, Everywhere & Everyday”

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Southwest Pathways Project Update

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Recommended Reading

“Changing Trends in Drug Overdose Deaths: New Mexico, 2006-2007” by Nina Shah in *New Mexico Epidemiology* September 26, 2008. To view this article go to

<http://www.healthynm.org/> and in QuickLinks select Downloads.

Internet Resources

HBO Addiction Series

<http://addictionaction.org/watch/>

Suboxone Webinars

<http://www.suboxone.com/hcp/opioiddependence/webinars.aspx>

This is our inaugural edition of the *Borderland Buprenorphine Bulletin* (BBB). This newsletter about public health addiction services in Las Cruces is done as part our contribution to the *National Alcohol & Drug Addiction Recovery Month* for this September. We hope to prepare and share the *BBB* on a regular basis at least every other month. Our intended audience is both consumers and providers of services for substance use disorders, persons with a special interest and/or expertise in the field, and other stakeholders related to behavioral health services in southern New Mexico. We welcome your comments and suggestions about the content and format of this material and how to better serve persons who are dependent on heroin and/or prescribed painkillers.

The Southwest Pathways Project (SPP) in NM Public Health Region 5 began in October 2004 when Region 5 in Las Cruces be-



came a Central Intake Unit for the federally funded Access to Recovery Project along with other sites in Albuquerque and Santa Fe. After two years the CIU function was transferred to another organization as behavioral health services with Medicaid were reorganized through a single contracted management entity for the entire state. Staff continued to actively participate in the Dona

Ana County Health Council (Alliance) and Local Collaborative 3 related to mental health and substance abuse issues. In July 2007 Region 5 started its opiate replacement program with buprenorphine / Suboxone, and as of this month has approximately 130 patients in medication assisted therapy. Region 5 collaborates closely with the University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center in Project ECHO for telehealth sessions in an Integrated Addiction & Psychiatry (IAP) Clinic. Since July 2008, Region 5 has also been supported with external grant funding from Dona Ana County to provide short-term intensive case management to persons with substance use disorders during and post incarceration in the county jail.

Did You Know?

In 1997 the New Mexico Harm Reduction Act was passed, authorizing the Department of Health to establish and maintain a syringe exchange program. New Mexico was the first state to have this statewide policy implemented in statute. Later legislation made overdose prevention with Narcan (naloxone) and syringes without a prescription in retail pharmacies part of harm reduction activities. Opiate replacement therapy (ORT) is part of this harm reduction philosophy.



In October of this year the patent on Suboxone (the trade name for buprenorphine and naloxone) expires for the parent company *Reckitt Benckiser Pharmaceuticals*.



Project Partner



The UNMHSC *Integrated Addiction & Psychiatry TeleECHO Clinic* (<http://echo.unm.edu/>) was cre-

ated to expand access to high-quality and effective treatment for addiction in rural and underserved communities. Dr. Miriam Komaromy is the Medical Director for the program which focuses on both the medical and behavioral treatment of addiction, and addresses psychiatric problems that frequently occur with addiction. The program has trained and obtained certification for more than 100 physicians to use the medication buprenorphine for treatment of opiate addiction, and weekly tele-video conferences provides ongoing training to clinicians at all levels that treat addiction. The clinic supports primary care clinicians by presenting them with a knowledge network that is necessary to identify and treat addiction and psychiatric illnesses in their patients, and supplies the groundwork that is essential to the use of buprenorphine and other medications. Through didactic presentations, on-site training of office staff, production of educational DVD's, and provision of funding that allows indigent patients to be treated with buprenorphine, Project ECHO takes a multifaceted approach to presenting addiction treatment. For more information you may contact Bonnie Kraybill, RN-BC, Nurse Manager (505 272-8440, bkraybill@salud.unm.edu).

Calendar of Events:

Suboxone Information Class

Every Thursday 10am
Las Cruces Public Health Office

"What's Going On With Addictions?" Forum

October 9th, Sunland Park, NM
Call Naomi Fahenkrug 575-528-5151

Tips, Techniques & Tools

Financial support for medication assisted therapy with buprenorphine/Suboxone may be available from the NM State Coverage Insurance (SCI). SCI offers affordable health care coverage to low-income working adults primarily through an employer-based system. You may enroll through your employer group or as an individual. SCI is available to uninsured, low-income adults, ages 19 through 64, with countable family incomes of up to 200% of federal poverty level and who are not eligible for certain government health insurance benefits, such as Medicaid (Title XIX), Medicare, private health insurance, CHAMPUS, and other public or private health insurance programs. There are no asset requirements required for eligibility or preexisting condition limitations. PHR5 staff can help you to apply for SCI. For more information online go to: <http://www.insurenewmexico.state.nm.us/SCIHome.htm>.



Smart Recovery™ Meetings

Every Monday 6:30pm Juniper Room
Memorial Medical Center (west Annex entrance)

Statewide Harm Reduction Meeting

October 23rd, Albuquerque NM
Contact Dave Daniels 575-528-5097

Project Spotlight

The Southwest Pathways Project is carried out by a multi-disciplinary team of professionals in the Public Health Region 5 main office in Las Cruces. The SPP is an inter-program initiative between the Disease Prevention Program and the Community Wellness Program. These two programs provide family nurse practitioners, psychiatric nurse practitioners or clinical nurse specialists, registered nurses, registered dietitian/nutritionists, health educators, and clerks for project services. Persons often have co-occurring infectious and/or chronic diseases complicated by behavioral health disorders, especially substance abuse and

depression. The SPP has the involvement of two public health physicians and a volunteer physician from another local non-profit, community-based organization who have the DEA waiver to prescribe Suboxone (buprenorphine/naloxone). Another partner in the Southwest Pathways Project is NAVA Counseling of Las Cruces. NAVA has a grant to collaborate with Region 5 in a jail reentry to community project that offers screening, assessment, interventions, treatment, and support to persons with substance use disorders while in jail and when returning to the community.

What Others Are Saying

Ray Stewart, Public Health Region 5 Director: "Our association with Dr. Sanjeev Arora of Project ECHO at UNMHSC in Albuquerque has been wonderfully beneficial for our border area residents. Our collaboration, which started in June 2003 with hepatitis C and then addiction services in July 2007, has brought the best of specialty academic medicine to southern New Mexico."

Travis C. Leyva, Region 5 Disease Prevention Program Manager: "Medication assisted therapy (MAT) with Suboxone is another harm reduction option we can offer high-risk clients along with syringe exchange and overdose prevention. The obvious programmatic connection between infectious diseases with substance use disorders is one we focus on in our clinic services and community outreach."

"Prescription for Health" Radio Talk Show

Every 3rd Wednesday 4:30pm
KSNM AM 570

International Drug Policy Conference

November 12-14, Albuquerque NM
www.reformconference.org for Registration

For More Information:

Visit our Website at www.healthnym.org and in "Quick Links" select *Buprenorphine/Suboxone Clinic*

Come into the Public Health Resource Center, 1170 N. Solano Suite N, Las Cruces NM

Call us at 575-525-5063 or 888-668-0882

To make suggestions or comments email us at region5.info@state.nm.us