



DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE
Bruce Goldberg, M.D.



May 9, 2008

[DHS Director's messages on the web](#)

To: All DHS employees

From: Bruce Goldberg, M.D., director

*"There are two ways of exerting one's strength: one is pushing down, the other is pulling up."
~Booker T. Washington*



Medford community forum

This past week we continued our series of community meetings seeking input to help in the development of our 2009-2011 budget. Wednesday we were in Lincoln City for a meeting with community members and then a separate meeting with health and human services leaders from Oregon's nine Tribal governments. Yesterday I was in Pendleton to host a simultaneous videoconference with sites in Baker City, Burns, Hermiston, John Day, La Grande and Ontario. These ongoing

community forums have generated many comments about the need for mental health and addictions treatment in Oregon. These comments are particularly timely because May is Mental Health Month in Oregon, and DHS is working hard to provide greater access to local mental health and addictions services in communities throughout the state. Mental health disorders affect Oregonians of every age and walk of life. Each year approximately 110,000 of our friends, neighbors and family members receive treatment and find support for recovery from mental illness, and one in five of us will receive mental health care at some point in our lives.



Lincoln City community forum



Eugene community forum

People are better served when they can receive treatment near where they live, and outcomes are better when people can get help early. These two aspects of treatment -- local delivery and a focus on prevention -- form the foundation for restructuring the delivery of mental health and addiction services throughout Oregon.

prevention saves lives and money in the long-run. They see the waits for local services because there are too few local providers. And they see the harm caused to people who cannot access the services they need.

And, clearly, based on what I've been hearing at our community forums these past few weeks, many people understand and support this approach. They realize

I am very heartened by the level of concern I've heard from so many members of the public. They understand that we need to provide a full continuum of services and supports that are recovery-focused, family-driven and youth-guided, and that will allow people to be healthy and live safely in their communities, be productive in employment and educational endeavors, and develop their own natural supports.

This month -- Mental Health Month -- is a good time to think about how we can work together to create this new kind of mental health care system.

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