

## **Questions and Answers about Mental Health Services in Multnomah County and Cascadia Behavioral Healthcare**

### **How can people who need mental health services find out more about the services that are available and how to get help?**

Multnomah County's Mental Health Call Center is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at 503-988-4888.

### **What is Multnomah County's role in Mental Health?**

Multnomah County is designated by the State of Oregon as the Local Mental Health Authority and has the responsibility to certify mental health service providers. Multnomah County is responsible for many mental health services including crisis intervention, assessment and referral, protective services, involuntary commitment, complaint investigation and monitoring the quality of mental health care. Most services are delivered by non-profit organizations that contract with the county.

Multnomah County is also responsible for managing the care for most clients who are Oregon Health Plan members in the county through Verity Integrated Behavioral Health Systems.

Verity receives federal Medicaid funds through the Oregon Health Plan (OHP) and pays providers for serving OHP members.

### **What is Cascadia's role in Multnomah County's mental health system?**

Cascadia Behavioral Healthcare is the county's largest mental health contractor. It delivers a wide range of mental health and addiction treatment services and operates several residential facilities for people with mental illness. Cascadia is a non-profit organization that receives more than 85% of its budget from government sources. Multnomah County and the State of Oregon are the majority funders of Cascadia. Multnomah County has eleven separate contracts with Cascadia for mental health and addictions treatment.

### **What are the problems that Cascadia is facing?**

Cascadia's budget shortfall is a result of its expenditures exceeding income and lack of funds to pay off outstanding loans. In addition, Cascadia's Medicaid billing was audited by the state last year. As a result, the agency has been assessed a \$1.8 million payback that is pending appeal.

### **Is there money available to provide continued mental health services to people in Multnomah County?**

Yes. Multnomah County's priority is to ensure uninterrupted services for consumers. No federal, state or county funds for treatment have been lost as a result of Cascadia's problems.

### **Are there other mental health providers besides Cascadia?**

Yes. There are more than a dozen different non-profits that are currently providing mental health and addiction treatment services under contract to Multnomah County and the State of Oregon. Information and referral to other providers can be obtained by calling the Multnomah County's 24 Hour Mental Health Call Center at 503-988-4888.

### **What is Multnomah County doing to maintain mental health services?**

Multnomah County and the State of Oregon are working collaboratively with Cascadia's new leadership to ensure uninterrupted care. Multnomah County is closely monitoring the daily operations of Cascadia services and developing alternative strategies for maintaining services if Cascadia should be unable to

continue. Over the past two weeks, Multnomah County and the State of Oregon made accelerated payments of approximately \$1.5 million and loans to Cascadia up to \$2.5 million to stabilize operations until transition plans are finalized.

**What is the future of Cascadia?**

Multnomah County, the State of Oregon, Cascadia and other counties are assessing the financial status of Cascadia's crisis, residential and outpatient services to ensure that people will continue to receive care without interruption. Mental health officials and financial experts are considering a variety of options, including maintaining some core services at Cascadia and having other community agencies assume management of staff and programs. No final decisions have been made.

**I am a client at Cascadia. Will I still be able to receive treatment at a Cascadia clinic?**

Yes. If you are a client currently receiving services at one of Cascadia's sites, you should continue to see your provider as you normally would.

**I live in Cascadia housing. Am I in danger of losing my housing?**

No. Multnomah County is working with its many partners in the community to ensure that Cascadia's housing programs continue to operate.

**My medicines are prescribed by a doctor at Cascadia. Will I still be able to get my medicine?**

If you are currently in services at Cascadia you should continue to go your appointments as you normally would, including those with your doctor.

**If Cascadia closes or if I choose to go to another agency will my chart transfer with me?**

Yes. Your chart will be transferred with you wherever you decide to receive treatment.

**If the Cascadia clinic I go to now closes how far will I have to travel to see a new therapist?**

The staff at the Multnomah County Mental Health Call Center will work with you to find a treatment provider that meets your needs at a location that is as convenient as possible.

**I am a Cascadia client but would like to find a therapist at a new agency. What should I do?**

If you are an Oregon Health Plan member enrolled in Verity, call Verity Member Services at 503-988-5887 and we will help you find another Verity provider. If you are not enrolled in Oregon Health Plan but would like help finding a new provider call the Multnomah County Mental Health Call Center at 503-988-4888. Someone is available at both numbers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.