



PRESS RELEASE

Acting Governor to Proclaim May as Mental Health Awareness Month: Wear a Green Ribbon for Support!

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Governor

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Lieutenant Governor

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Director

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Deputy Director

Acting Governor Micheal W. Cruz will be proclaiming May as Mental Health Awareness Month on Monday, May 11, 2009 at the Governor's Office in Adelup. The event kicks off mental health month activities including Operation Re-dedication efforts.

The Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse has taken steps to rebuild the overall image of the department through "Operation Re-dedication." Dedicated staff and consumers have worked hard in beautifying the lawns and cleaning up all areas to restore a sense of pride within the department.

In anticipation of this month's activities, DMHSA Director Dr. David L.G. Shimizu extends a public invitation to those who wish to join the agency's employees in honoring their continued work and service to our island community.

"I ask our family, friends, and public, private and military partners to join our management and staff as we take part in reaffirming our commitment to helping our fellow citizens who require mental health and substance abuse treatment services. I believe that it is through the work we do, with the support of our entire community, where those who seek our help may find hope. We must never lose sight of the small, but important, part we have in helping others help themselves," said DMHSA Director David L.G. Shimizu of his perspectives on Operation Re-dedication and Mental Health Awareness Month.

The department will be celebrating the following Mental Health Awareness Month Activities:

- May 11, 2009- Proclamation signing at 2 p.m., Governor's Large Conference room, Adelup
- May 19-21, 2009- Consumer Voices Workshop, DMHSA's Main facility, Day Treatment Program, call 647-5411 for more information.
- May 22, 2009- St. Dymphna Celebration. Mass starts at 10 a.m. followed by lunch reception at the lower level of DMHSA's main facility, Tamuning. Includes open house, groundbreaking for Dymphna Memorial Garden and tree planning ceremony for DMHSA Fruit Tree Garden.
- May 29, 2009- Healing Hearts Grand Opening at 11 a.m., 215 Duenas Drive, Tamuning (between Guam Memorial Hospital and Archbishop Flores Loop –Tamuning/Tumon). Call Healing Hearts at 647-5351 for more information.

This year's National Mental Health Month Theme is Live Your Life Well. According to the Mental Health America's website (www.nmha.org) more and more Americans are suffering due to the increasing economic troubles piled on by stress or work and family demands. The website provides people with research-based

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tools that can combat stress and promote health and well-being from relaxation techniques to simple ways to get better sleep and improving eating habits. According to the National Mental Health Anti-Stigma Campaign, people with mental illnesses are often stigmatized by others who think it's an uncommon condition. The truth is, mental illness can happen to anybody regardless of age, culture, race, gender, ethnicity, economic status or location. Social acceptance is key to Mental Health Recovery.

Locally, DMHSA representatives encourage the community to get involved in mental health month activities by wearing green ribbons to support this month's events. Residents that might be dealing with emotional stress or need psychological help can call DMHSA's 24- hour Crisis Hotline at (671) 647-8833.

For more information, please call the Department of Mental Health at (671) 647-5330 or visit www.peaceguam.org for a complete list of local activities.

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