

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 13, 2010

Contact: Robyn Thaw (650) 573-3935

San Mateo County Health System

Suicide is the Leading Cause of Fatal Injuries in San Mateo County*Public invited to forum addressing suicide prevention in our community*

SAN MATEO, Calif. — Each year, an average of 59 San Mateo County residents are lost to suicide. In the last decade, suicides accounted for more deaths than any other fatal injuries in the County. Suicide deaths are preventable, but because the subject can be taboo, there is often a lack of knowledge on recognizing warning signs as well as a lack of coordinated services. On January 20, community members and San Mateo County public health professionals will come together to discuss ways to coordinate resources and activities to help improve and expand suicide prevention in the community.

The Behavioral Health and Recovery Services Division of San Mateo County Health System will host “Starting the Conversation and Making the Connections: Addressing Suicide in Our Community.” The goal is to raise awareness and spark dialogue on suicide prevention and intervention strategies.

“To be effective, suicide prevention has to be a community-wide effort with a multi-faceted approach,” said Dr. Celia Moreno, Behavioral Health and Recovery Services Medical Director. “We hope to engage forum participants into new collaborative efforts.”

The forum is free and will take place from 4-7 p.m. on January 20 in Room 100 at San Mateo County Health System, located at 225 37th Avenue in San Mateo. Speakers will include Behavioral Health and Recovery Services clinicians and a panel of community members from organizations working with high-risk populations such as youth, older adults, immigrant populations and the LGBTQI community.

Rev. Susan G. Turley, who lost her son, Pfc. Keith Jesse Moore in Iraq to suicide in 2006, will share her story and the documentary she produced, "Broken Hearts Lifted Spirits: Mothers of the Fallen Speak Their Truth."

To RSVP, contact Kathy Rae Brown: Kbrown@co.sanmateo.ca.us, or call 650-372-8543. Community members, healthcare providers and County employees are encouraged to attend. Healthy snacks and drinks will be provided. For more information, visit www.co.sanmateo.ca.us/Attachments/health/pdfs/bhrs/TrainingCalendar/AddressingSuicide0109.pdf

###