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San Mateo County Health System

County Program Receives National Recognition for Homebound Mental Health Services

The OASIS Program Recognized for Innovative Homebound Mental Health Services for Older Adults

SAN MATEO, Calif. – A San Mateo County program that provides mental health services to older adults in their homes has received national recognition.

Two leading geriatric mental health organizations awarded the Health System’s OASIS Program for its innovative, interdisciplinary and comprehensive approach to providing mental health services to homebound and vulnerable older adults.

The Geriatric Mental Health Foundation and the American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry awarded the OASIS Program with the GMHF/AAGP Deidre Johnson Award for Excellence and Innovation in Geriatric Mental Health Outreach Services. The award comes with a \$10,000 check.

For more than 20 years, San Mateo County’s Behavioral Health and Recovery Services has provided at-home mental health services to older adults. The OASIS Program, which stands for Older Adult System of Integrated Services, now serves more than 200 people.

The program includes a multi-disciplinary treatment team of psychiatrists, a community mental health nurse and case managers. They provide mental health services to older adults dealing with multiple issues, such as complex medical conditions, substance abuse problems, functional limitations and other challenges.

The broad spectrum of services includes medication management, case management, counseling and therapy, senior peer counseling and a special program for the most seriously ill and medically fragile older adults. Services are also provided to residents who speak Chinese or Spanish.

“We are proud of the fact that through our work and the work of our collaborative partners – Aging and Adult Services and the Ron Robinson Senior Care Center – we have helped individuals remain living in the community and to have the highest possible quality of life,” said OASIS Clinical Services Manager, Diane C. Dworkin, LCSW. “The work we do is critical in order for County residents to have the services and assistance they need to successfully age in place.”

Funds from this award will be presented when OASIS is recognized at the opening plenary session of the AAGP Annual Meeting on March 5 in Savannah, Georgia.

“The selection committee was delighted with the increased number of applications we received for the 2010 award, almost double from last year, and to see how many communities across the country have recognized this need and developed excellent programs for mentally ill elderly in their homes,” said Burton V. Reifler, MD, MPH, chair of the GMHF/AAGP selection committee. “We must now explore ways to disseminate information about these wonderful models.”

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