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Senior Reach to Expand its Behavioral Health Care Services

Reaching Out & Meeting Needs

About Older Adults

- An estimated 15 to 30% of adults age 65 years and over experience depressive symptoms on any given day.
- Older adults are particularly vulnerable to prescription drug abuse and misuse given that they comprise about 13% of the population yet are prescribed 1/3 of all medications in the US.
- A substantial number of older adults who die by suicide contact their PCP very close to the time of the suicide: 20% on the same day, 40% within one week and 70% within one month of the suicide.
- In 2010, 25% of Senior Reach clients 60+ reported an alcohol or substance abuse problem.

ARVADA, Colorado — March 13 , 2012— Jefferson Center for Mental Health and its partner agencies Seniors' Resource Center and Mental Health Partners announced today that the Senior Reach program will expand its services after receiving a Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) collaborative grant award. The \$356,344 eighteen month grant, which began in October 2011, is designed to identify and provide treatment to older adults who may be at risk of suicide, experiencing depression, and/ or prescription drug misuse or abuse, through expanded collaborations with four primary care practices. Senior Reach is an award-winning, evidence-based, collaborative program that provides behavioral health care to older adults (60 years and better) with mental health needs in a five county area of Colorado (Jefferson, Gilpin, Clear Creek, Boulder, and Broomfield Counties). Senior Reach partner agencies include Jefferson Center, Seniors' Resource Center and Mental Health Partners.

"Seniors' Resource Center is excited about the opportunity to expand the Senior Reach program," said John Zabawa, President and Chief Executive Officer of Seniors' Resource Center (SRC). "It has proven to be a very effective collaborative approach to identifying, assessing and treating older adults with mental health issues. As our population continues to age and depression and isolation are on the rise, Senior Reach provides a valuable cost effective solution."

Four primary care practices in five locations (Wheat Ridge Internal Medicine; Metro Community Provider Network in Lakewood and Arvada; Mountain Family Health Center; and Boulder Medical Center Senior Medicine, Coco Dughi MD) across the five county region have agreed to collaborate with Senior Reach in order to screen and refer older adults in their practices who may be at risk for depression and/or prescription drug abuse or misuse (including illicit drugs and alcohol). These primary care physician offices will be trained in how to refer seniors who have positive screenings to the program. Senior Reach will expand its services to include a Depression Care Management model allowing Collaborative Care Coordinators to follow-up with seniors via telephone who have been referred via their primary care physician. These Care Coordinators will provide further assessment for depression

and substance abuse/misuse, in addition to educating seniors about depression and various treatment options. Ongoing support will reflect efforts to work with seniors in setting self-management goals, overcoming barriers to wellness, and monitoring treatment adherence and medication side effects.

“Behavioral disorders in seniors are very commonly missed and community resources for treatment are limited. The ready availability of skilled behavioral providers both heightens the awareness by medical providers of this forgotten problem and provides quick access to treatment,” observed Dr. Mark Sanazaro, MD, Medical Director Mountain Family Health Centers.

“Mental Health Partners is pleased to be a partner in the Senior Reach program. The Senior Reach model has a history of proven success in identifying and providing services to a frequently underserved aging population experiencing depression, anxiety, isolation and other mental health related issues. This grant from SAMHSA will help us expand the program and reach more seniors in our communities”, said Barbara Ryan Ph.D., Chief Executive Officer from Mental Health Partners. “It is a good day when an effective program is given the chance to reach even more people. As the aging population increases, the need for the Senior Reach program continues to grow as well. We are grateful for this additional funding from SAMHSA.”

Outreach, treatment and prevention are all key components of an effective direct delivery system, and as part of the grant the following components will be developed:

1. Increase community capacity to identify and respond to suicide risk among older adults age 60 years and over.
2. Increase community capacity to identify and reduce prescription drug misuse and abuse among older adults.
3. Decrease depression among older adults.
4. Increase access to care for seniors and acceptance of treatment.
5. Increase collaboration and integration with Primary Care Practices in order to identify and refer older adults in need of behavioral health and substance abuse treatment.

Harriet Hall, Ph.D., CEO of Jefferson Center for Mental Health, is thrilled about this expansion of the Senior Reach concept. "Senior Reach has provided an invaluable service identifying at risk community members and linking them with services. This program enhancement builds on the original concept to help support the well-being, independence and dignity of older seniors of our community."

Jefferson Center for Mental Health (Jefferson Center) is the private not-for-profit community mental health center serving Jefferson, Clear Creek and Gilpin counties. Since 1958, Jefferson Center has provided quality mental health care and innovative programs to children and families, adolescents, adults, seniors, and individuals with serious mental illness. www.jcmh.org.

The Seniors' Resource Center provides community based services that allow older adults independence and dignity. www.srcaging.org

Mental Health Partners is a private, non-profit corporation in Boulder and Broomfield Counties offering mental health to people of all ages -- children, teens, adults and the elderly. www.mhp.org