

# Pacific Clinics

FALL 2016 | [www.pacificclinics.org](http://www.pacificclinics.org)  
*News for Friends of Pacific Clinics*

## ADVANCES



▶ **More than a Helping Hand:  
A Comprehensive Approach  
to Homelessness**

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**Health Navigation**

*USC Study Shows Improved  
Health Outcomes for Consumers*

# A MESSAGE FROM THE *President and CEO*



James J. Balla, MBA  
*President & CEO*

This year marks a major milestone for Pacific Clinics as we celebrate 90 years of providing culturally-diverse, responsive mental health programs and services to individuals and families of all ages. Our commitment to serve the most vulnerable and at-risk in our communities has driven us to expand to over 70 program locations across four counties in Southern California. Most of our licensed direct service staff are trained in evidence-based practices to enhance the quality provided to our consumers and empower them to live fulfilling, healthy lives.

Included in this issue of *Advances* are examples of Pacific Clinics' ground breaking work and our unwavering focus on person-centered care.

For anyone who has spent time in Los Angeles County, the scale of the homeless population – 254,000 according to recent estimates – is immediately evident. On the following pages, you will read about Pacific Clinics' efforts to connect and align services – including housing, mental health, physical health and case management – on behalf of chronically homeless mentally-ill population.

Moreover, you will learn about promising practices like Health Navigation – a model co-developed by Pacific Clinics and the USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work to train peer partners and case managers to support consumers in self-managing their healthcare.

Also, we share with you Pacific Clinics' decades-long commitment to bridge the gaps in understanding and training between law enforcement and mental health professionals through the MILES (Mental Illness and Law Enforcement Systems) coalition and conference.

Most importantly, you will read the personal story of Thao, who, with the support of her family and staff at Pacific Clinics, was able to overcome challenges with her mental illness in turning her life around.

Looking forward, Pacific Clinics remains committed to serving the most vulnerable populations in our communities. On behalf of Pacific Clinics' Board and Staff, we thank you for your continued partnership and support.



# DOING OUR PART TO HELP THE HOMELESS

*Pacific Clinics offers its clients hope so that they can rebuild their lives.*

As one of the largest non-profit providers of mental health services in Los Angeles County, Pacific Clinics recognized the opportunity to reach out to serve the mentally ill homeless population. Now in our 11th year of providing supportive housing services, we ensure that nearly 1,000 individuals have a warm, safe place to live while accessing our specialized programs to address their chronic conditions and mental illness.

On any given night, an estimated 25 to 33 percent of the nearly 254,000 homeless individuals in Los Angeles County are suffering from a mental illness; often, they are also battling a substance use disorder. Once in our housing, our mental health professionals correctly diagnose their mental illness – such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, severe depression or PTSD – and work closely with consumers to

*Continued to next page* ►

manage their condition and co-created treatment through medication, therapy and support.

“Without treatment, obtaining and maintain housing is nearly impossible,” said David Garcia, Corporate Director of Housing. “Without housing, accessing treatment becomes nearly impossible. It’s the very definition of a vicious cycle, one that can lead to people struggling to survive on the streets for years.”

Pacific Clinics supports mentally ill homeless individuals break this cycle. By offering a coordinated housing approach, we are able to support them in their recovery and help them find permanent housing solutions. Since launching our housing services in 2005, we have secured several government contracts to provide both emergency placements and permanent housing. Our partners include the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health, the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority, the Housing Authority of County of Los Angeles and the city of Pasadena. In addition, through “master leases”—in which Pacific Clinics pays for rent up front — we are able to operate residences that accommodate persons of various age groups, gender and family status. Pacific Clinics has also established strong working relationships with more than 200 landlords, property management companies, and realtors to educate them about the agency’s role and long-term relationships with their potential renters.

“You cannot just put someone living on the street in a house,” said Garcia. “In order for them to be successful, you must give them the supportive services they need. This includes providing mental health services, but also teaching them about things like living indoors, hygiene, shopping and budgeting. If you help homeless persons find a place to live and then support them, you can aid them in securing a good life.”

Every consumer in the Pacific Clinics Housing Department is assigned to a Housing Specialist who assists them in the development of an Individualized Services Plan (ISP). This plan establishes goals across multiple areas, including medical care, mental health, substance abuse, employment, education and benefits establishment. Individuals are linked to internal Pacific Clinics resources such as Benefits Counselors and Employment Specialists, as well as external resources such as community clinics, food banks and job centers. Housing Specialists provide consumers with ongoing coaching and support with independent living skills including lease compliance,

## Did You **KNOW?**

# 254,000

people in Los Angeles County experience homelessness at some point during each year.

# 959

individuals received supportive housing services from Pacific Clinics last year.

# 100



100% of Pacific Clinics' consumers are low income, putting them at higher risk to experience homelessness.

Source: Institute for the Study of Homelessness and Poverty at the Weingart Center; Pacific Clinics.

money management, housekeeping and cooking.

Pacific Clinics also operates a street outreach program that engages homeless mentally ill individuals by providing integrated treatment services for their mental illnesses and co-occurring substance use or other medical issues, as well as linkages to needed housing and income resources.



In addition to our own services, Pacific Clinics partners with public and private agencies at all levels to improve housing and services to those living on the streets.

The city of Los Angeles budgeted approximately \$18 million this year for short-term housing for nearly 2,500 people, and hopes to create about 500 housing units for veterans in refurbished hotels by the end of 2017. At the county level, the Los Angeles Board of Supervisors has approved a comprehensive plan to address homelessness which contains 48 different strategies and requires a minimum investment of approximately \$1.4 billion. These strategies will be partly funded by existing county revenues, but the Board of Supervisors is expected to consider placing dedicated funding streams on the March 2017 ballot for voter consideration.

Regardless of what happens at the city and county levels, Pacific Clinics will continue to help consumers turn their lives around by providing the services they need. With mental healthcare and the correct supportive services, consumers get better – and they stay better.

Miguel is just one example. He became homeless after the death of his mother and the loss of a job. He suffered from depression, which worsened after

*Now that Miguel has a safe place to live, he will also receive mental healthcare and employment services.*

living on the street. Miguel vividly remembers the day he met David Garcia in the Pacific Clinics homeless outreach van. The van passed by him in the alley where he was sleeping, and David stopped to ask if he needed help.

"It was a miracle that he stopped to help me," said Miguel. He received the help he needed and a Housing Specialist successfully found a one bedroom apartment for him. The day Miguel got his keys, he could not stop smiling.

"You just can't imagine what it's like to be on the street. I am so blessed to have a roof over my head. Now I am going to work hard to get a job," he said.

Now that Miguel has a safe place to live, Pacific Clinics will continue to help him with employment services, ensure that he keeps his apartment, and to provide him with the support he needs to reach his goals.

**For more information about Pacific Clinics' Housing Department and to support this life-changing work, contact David Garcia, Corporate Director of Housing, at [dgarcia@pacificclinics.org](mailto:dgarcia@pacificclinics.org).** ■



# MILES

MENTAL ILLNESS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT SYSTEMS

Working Together To Improve Services To People With Mental Illness And Their Families



## MILES Conference Celebrates 25 Years of Partnership between Law Enforcement and Mental Health Professionals

After two police shootings involving mentally ill individuals in 1991, Pacific Clinics formed a collaboration of law enforcement and mental health professionals. The collaboration, MILES (Mental Illness and Law Enforcement Systems), addresses the challenges that law enforcement officers experience when engaging mentally ill persons in the performance of their duties. This year, MILES celebrates 25 years of collaboration, reflecting on both communities' growth and looking ahead to continue facilitating positive interactions between law enforcement and mentally ill individuals.

"I've thought a lot about what is different today," said Dr. Susan Mandel, Pacific Clinics President Emeritus and MILES co-founder. "The difference is now we talk to one another. Back then we used to talk different languages. We didn't understand each other until we sat down and learned to respect each other's position."

MILES members include the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department, San Gabriel Valley Police Officers' Association and Pacific Clinics. Through this collaboration, thousands of law enforcement officers and mental health professionals have received education on topics such as "Crisis Calls: Police and Psychiatric Responses to Emergencies" and "Mental Health 101 for First Responders." The MILES coalition members were also strong advocates for the development of Mental Evaluations Teams which pair police officers with mental health clinicians when engaging individuals

in the field. Last year Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey announced that she is designing a training program for law enforcement after seeing the good work achieved through the MILES conference.

"The MILES coalition and others have offered agencies tasked with these difficult challenges, the opportunity to talk with one another. Now the conversation has reached higher levels – the District Attorney, State, and Federal levels are paying attention to the ongoing need for mental health funding," said Joe Santoro, Retired Police Chief of Monrovia, and MILES co-founder. "I think MILES helped build a stronger coalition and added voices to champion the need for mental health services."

This year, MILES celebrated 25 years of improving community relations at its October conference. District Attorney Lacey presented the James B. Strait MILES Leadership Award to MILES co-founders Dr. Susan Mandel and Joseph Santoro.

Additional MILES Awards were presented to the Long Beach Police Department's Quality of Life Unit and the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health's Mobile Triage Team located at the Arcadia Wellness Center serving the San Gabriel Valley. Featured speakers Tony Beliz, PhD, and Elaine Miller-Karas, LCSW, discussed "Targeted Violence and the Resulting Trauma." ■



*MILES Chair Chief Jim Smith, Monterey Park, Pacific Clinic President Emeritus Susan Mandel, Los Angeles District Attorney Jackie Lacey, retired Police Chief Joseph Santoro, Monrovia, and Pacific Clinics President and CEO James J. Balla*



*The Long Beach Police Department's Quality of Life Unit.*



*Speakers Dr. Tony Beliz and Speaker Elaine Miller-Karas, LCSW*



*Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health's Mobile Triage Team located at the Arcadia Wellness Center serving the San Gabriel Valley.*



# HEALTH NAVIGATION

## USC Study Shows Improved Health Outcomes for Consumers who Receive Health Navigation

Alarmed by the preventable early mortality rate among individuals suffering from severe mental health illness, Pacific Clinics and the

University of Southern California (USC) Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work teamed up in 2008 to create an effective, scalable intervention: Health Navigation. This innovative intervention empowers mental health service consumers to self-manage their health care through a step-down coaching approach in real-world settings. A 2015 USC study showing that Health Navigation leads to healthier lives for mental health consumers supports similar findings from earlier studies.

### What is Health Navigation?

The Health Navigation program trains mental health professionals, managers and peer partners to coach consumers in developing the skill sets to better address their physical health issues and access needed medical services. After intensive training, role playing, and mastering the curriculum, trained Health Navigators engage consumers in improving health-seeking behaviors through several modalities: discussions and groups, making and traveling with consumers to appointments, filling out paperwork, understanding lab tests, following-up on issues, and more. During this extensive skills-development process, the Health Navigator first models the behavior, coaches the consumer to implement the skills by themselves, and steps away once the consumer has gained the motivation and skills to manage their medical issues on their own.

Health Navigation is an effective solution to the many known challenges in accessing regular physical health care, including mental illness, lack of income or insurance, cultural beliefs and language barriers. Serious depression, fear, paranoia, and confusion from hearing voices are all reasons why people with mental illness may avoid doctors. For those who have been homeless or without safe shelter, physical healthcare usually means frequent visits to emergency rooms.

## 151 CONSUMERS PARTICIPATED IN A 1-YEAR STUDY

### Consumers who received Health Navigation reported:

- A decrease in risky behaviors, such as avoiding health services or using urgent/emergency care, while increasing positive behaviors by seeking preventative care at primary care clinics
- Improved detection of chronic health conditions
- Reduction in pain
- Increased health screenings
- Increased consumer confidence in self-management of healthcare

### Six months after the intervention ended, consumers showed:

- Maintained improvements in health and health-seeking behaviors
- Decreased use of urgent/emergency services
- Increased ability to self-manage health care



### The Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) Study

The first Health Navigation study was completed in 2008 at Pacific Clinics' Portals site in Los Angeles with 24 consumers and one Health Navigator. The successful study demonstrated strong outcomes, leading Pacific Clinics to expand the program to an additional 11 sites.

In 2015, ready to elevate the promising program into an evidence-based program, Pacific Clinics and USC applied for and received a large grant from the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) to fund a study on Health Navigation.

The PCORI study engaged 151 consumers with serious mental illness at Pacific Clinics' El Camino site. Half received Health Navigation services immediately, while the other half received Health Navigation in a delayed trial. When comparing the two groups six months after the start of the intervention, the data clearly showed improved health and health-seeking behaviors in the consumers receiving Health Navigation, as compared to the control group. The consumers who received Health Navigation now accessed primary care physicians (rather than urgent/emergency care), experienced improved detection of chronic health conditions, increased self-management and increased health screenings. After 12 months, the group continued to show a



*Leading the Health Navigation team are Laura Pancake, Pacific Clinics Vice President of Wellness, Recovery, Integrated Care and Training; Dr. John Brekke Professor at USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work; and Lou Mallory, Pacific Clinics Lead Health Navigator.*

decreased use of emergency and urgent care systems and showed greater self-management behaviors

In addition to Health Navigation's immediate effectiveness, the program is cost-effective and yields significant behavioral improvements with minimal resources. This means that organizations who invest in Health Navigators can efficiently and effectively "treat" several consumers at once. After an average of 5 in-person interactions and 6 follow-up calls, consumers already show vast improvements.

Overall, the study proved that Health Navigation is a promising peer-delivered intervention to address the physical health of individuals with serious mental illness. Pacific Clinics plans to continue to expand this excellent intervention.

**Visit [www.healthnavigation.org](http://www.healthnavigation.org) to learn more about Health Navigation outcomes and training. ■**



# A CLIENT'S STORY

## THAO DREAMS BIG

After overcoming her own lifelong mental illness, a Pacific Clinics consumer gives back. Thao channels her experience being afraid and looked down upon because of her mental illness into helping those who are hurting. This holiday season, Thao will hand out socks and sandwiches to the homeless and will listen to their stories and struggles.

As a young child Thao was angry and out of control. Her desperate parents didn't know how to handle her. Despite these behavioral challenges during her adolescence, Thao graduated and enrolled in a pharmaceutical technician course and earned her license. She landed a good job at a pharmacy, but never seemed to be able to focus or enjoy life.

"I didn't know what depression was," said Thao. "I always felt like there was this big cloud in my head, a big bubble. Then it started getting worse."

Thao was diagnosed with schizophrenia and bipolar disorder and began receiving treatment and taking medication. But it was short lived. Once Thao began feeling better, she stopped treatment and medication. She experienced severe episodes of mania and hallucinations. "I was in denial. I never accepted I had a mental illness," said Thao. She remembers wandering around in her pajamas, her hair unkempt, holding her teddy bear, dancing and singing. Thao was hospitalized after severe episodes.

Thao was then referred to Pacific Clinics' Irwindale site. Every week a Pacific Clinic social worker, case manager and psychiatrist came to Thao's home. "They saw me fragile and they saw me as I was," said Thao.

Thao's mental wellbeing improved dramatically. Soon she moved on from the intensive weekly treatment to the support of Pacific Clinics' Wellness Center and peer counseling program.

"Because of Pacific Clinics' support and treatment, I am able to hold a job and work 40 plus hours a week," said Thao. "Pacific Clinics is not only a clinic that treats mental illness, they want to help find a solution. They want to see each patient succeed, to spread their wings and fly. They helped me become what I am today." ■

### Pacific Clinics Success Stories Honored

Thao, whose story you can read on this page, was honored at the Association of Community Human Service Agencies (ACHSA) Annual Luncheon on Nov. 30. Thao was a finalist for the Consumer Award, which honors the accomplishments and success of those in recovery.

ACHSA represents more than 85 nonprofit community agencies that provide a wide range of child welfare, mental health, and juvenile justice services for vulnerable individuals and families in Los Angeles County.



Thao, left, was honored as a finalist for the Consumer Awards by Emily Williams, Assistant Senior Deputy for Human Services, Child Welfare, and Education for Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas.



*Chief Deputy for the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health Robin Kay, PhD, left, and Lead Health Navigator Lou Mallory*

### **Pacific Clinics Specialist Honored**

Lou Mallory, Lead Health Navigator, was presented with a certificate by Robin Kay, PhD, Chief Deputy Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health at the “Moving Recovery Forward Through Employment” Conference. The annual conference is hosted by the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health and the Los Angeles County Mental Health Commission.

The conference was attended by 300 clinicians, providers and consumers who all share one goal – the importance of work in mental health recovery.



*Salvation Army Pasadena Tabernacle Captain Terry Masango and Pacific Clinics President and CEO James Balla at Homeless Connect Day.*

### **October Homeless Connect Day Receives Gift from Wells Fargo Foundation**

Pacific Clinics received a generous \$5,000 gift from the Wells Fargo Foundation in support of the 2016 Homeless Connect Day held in October. The annual event provides a wide array of services to homeless individuals and families living in the greater Pasadena area.

### **Senior Program Receives Funding from Pasadena Community Foundation**

Pacific Clinics received a generous gift of \$10,000 from the Pasadena Community Foundation to provide emergency needs to the low-income older adults the agency serves in Pasadena. The funds enable the agency's Older Adult Services programs to purchase much needed items like eyeglasses, dental care and nutritional items for its clients.

### **Kaiser Foundation Hospitals Grants Support Pacific Clinics' Substance Use Disorder Services**

Pacific Clinics has received two generous grants from regional Kaiser Foundation Hospitals locations in support of the agency's Substance Use Disorder Prevention and Treatment services for youth programs. A \$10,000 gift was awarded to support at-risk youth at Soledad Enrichment Action (SEA) Soto and Fetterly Charter Schools in Boyle Heights, SEA Montebello Charter School in East Los Angeles and Pacific Clinics' school-based services in Pasadena. A \$5,000 gift was also received from Baldwin Park Kaiser Foundation Hospitals in support of the agency's Pasadena area programs.

### **The Edmund A. & Marguerite L.A. Burke Foundation's Annual Gift Supports Comprehensive Services**

Each year, Pacific Clinics receives a generous gift of \$4,000 from The Edmund A. & Marguerite L.A. Burke Foundation to support the agency's comprehensive services. This generous gift to our general fund enables us to continue to provide outpatient services through our Pasadena area programs serving adults and older adults.



**Pacific Clinics**  
ADVANCING BEHAVIORAL HEALTHCARE

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Advances is produced by the Public Affairs Department. If you have any questions contact Jennifer Errico at jerrico@pacificclinics.org

Pacific Clinics, a non-profit agency, has been providing mental health care and substance abuse services to individuals and families since 1926. Today the agency has locations in Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino and Ventura counties, and serves children, adults, older adults and families.

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## Latino Mental Healthcare: Professionals Discuss Disparities

Pacific Clinics and the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health partnered to present “Gaps, Barriers, and Solutions for Reducing Mental Health Disparities for Latinos.” More than 500 professionals attended the day of education and discussion in October. Thank you to our partner agencies Kaiser Permanente, Foothill Family, Child and Family Guidance Center, D’veal, Didi Hirsch, Alma Family Services, Spirit Family Services and National Alliance Mental Illness.

*Special Guests included (From left) James Balla, Pacific Clinics President and CEO; Hilda Solis, Los Angeles County Supervisor; Dr. Robin Kay, Chief Deputy County of Los Angeles - Department of Mental Health; Alfredo Larios, Department of Mental Health District Chief; Michael Antonovich, Former Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors; and Dr. Luis Garcia, Pacific Clinics Vice President of Quality Care, Cultural Diversity and Outcomes.*

