



County Mental Health Director Appointed to State Association

Alfredo Aguirre is New President of California Mental Health Directors Association

Health and Human Services Agency's (HHSA) Mental Health Services Director, Alfredo Aguirre, mid-October was sworn in as President of the California Mental Health Directors Association (CMHDA).

"I am truly honored and humbled by this appointment," said Aguirre, who has worked in community mental health for more than 30 years. "I will advocate for equity and full inclusion of vulnerable populations and for programs that better the lives of persons living with mental illness."



Aguirre assumes the presidency after serving in various CMHDA committees. CMHDA plays a key role advising the California Department of Mental Health on policy issues and on strategies to implement mental health programming and mitigate budget impacts for the greatest benefit to counties. The Association's mission is to provide leadership, advocacy, expertise and support to California's county and city mental

health programs (and their system partners) that will assist them in serving persons with serious mental illness and serious emotional disturbance.

"We are delighted to see one of our very own appointed to such a prestigious post," said Chairwoman Dianne Jacob, County of San Diego Board of Supervisors. "Alfredo has been a key leader in the County's efforts to implement Mental Health Services Act (Prop. 63) programs locally and a strong advocate for cultural competency and suicide prevention."

Approved by California voters in 2004, the Mental Health Services Act assures state funding to counties for expanded and innovative mental health programs.

Aguirre oversees HHSA's Mental Health Services division, which provides a vast array of services including mental health assessments, individual, family and group therapy, special services for children, crisis intervention and psychiatric emergency care.

People suffering from a mental illness are encouraged to call the County's 24-hour, multi-lingual Access and Crisis Line at (800) 479-3339.