NE Delta HSA Expanding Integrative Healthcare Model to Include Faith-Based Organizations

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Addiction and mental illness is a public health and economic calamity, impacting every Louisiana resident directly or indirectly. Additionally, because addiction and mental illness cut across all socioeconomic backgrounds, racial and ethnic groups and faith traditions, Northeast Delta Human Services Authority (NE Delta HSA) has partnered with Faith Partners Inc. to help with its faith-based community work.

NE Delta HSA's Faith Partnership Initiative will provide in-depth training in four key areas: Awareness, Readiness, Development and Sustainability. This initiative will work collectively and one-on-one with faith leaders and congregations to help develop and expand ministerial capacity so that addictive and mental health disorders can be comprehensively addressed regionally. Prevention best practices will also be shared, along with NE Delta HSA's award-winning integrative healthcare model as potential solutions to our current addiction and mental health crisis.

"We can no longer afford a disconnection between houses of faith and traditional mental health and addiction practitioners," said Dr. Monteic A. Sizer, NE Delta HSA Executive Director. "As mental health and addiction challenges increase in our region, an informed clergy can play an invaluable role in both treatment and prevention."

Data from leading government and health organizations like the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Mental Health America (MHA) and Centers for

Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) all suggest that our nation's addiction and mental health crisis will get worse before it gets better. For example:

- 1 in 5 Americans (approx. 42 million citizens) have some form of mental illness. 18.2 percent of these individuals (8 million people) also have a substance-use disorder. (CDC)
- Louisiana ranks 30th in the nation for deaths due to injury from drug addiction, 30th in the prevalence of mental illness and 45th in access to mental health care. (MHA)
- 643,000 Louisiana adults live with a mental illness. (MHA)
- Every demographic group across America has experienced substantial overdose rate increases in the past year. (SAMSHA)

"As a government agency, we can effectively help our citizens meet many of their physical and behavioral health needs. However, government cannot solve complex societal problems alone," said Dr. Monteic A. Sizer. "Thus, we are calling on houses of faith to join with us as we seek to battle mental illness and addiction. When evidence-based treatment is combined with faith, our region's people will gain a greater sense of purpose, belonging and hope."

The Faith Partnership Initiative is open to all faith traditions in our 12-parish region. Interested parties may contact Wellness and Prevention Services Director, Dr. Avius Carroll, at 318-362-5230 or via email Avius.Carroll@LA.gov. Registration details will be made available in the coming days.

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About Northeast Delta Human Services Authority (NE Delta HSA)

NE Delta HSA manages the operation of community-based programs that improve the quality of life for individuals with major mental illness, developmental disabilities and addictive disorders. NE Delta HSA accomplishes this by utilizing a nationally recognized integrative approach that identifies and addresses behavioral and primary health care needs.

NE Delta HSA is devoted to delivering programs and services that encourage citizens of Northeast Louisiana to reach their full human potential. Three tenets guide these efforts: excellent customer service, greater access to services and competent, quality care. We serve Caldwell, East Carroll, West Carroll, Ouachita, Lincoln, Madison, Franklin, Morehouse, Jackson, Tensas, Richland and Union Parishes.

NE Delta HSA Media Contact:
Eddie E. Bynog, Jr.
Public Information Officer
2513 Ferrand Street
Monroe, LA 71201
Office: (318) 362-4272
Email: eddie.bynog@la.gov
NE Delta HSA Press & Media