

CUSTOM CONTENT

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MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

Reinventing Mental Health Services in a Pandemic



The COVID-19 crisis has impacted the mental health of our entire community. It's hard to find anyone who does not feel some degree of anxiety and unease. But for those dealing with mental health concerns before the crisis, and those most vulnerable and at risk, there are special challenges to meet the need.

Mental Health America of Los Angeles (MHALA), one of LA County's largest and most comprehensive mental health agencies, reimagined ways of providing services during the pandemic. In the last two months, the agency:

- Created food pantries to feed participants in partnership with local organizations and restaurants.
- Partnered with local businesses for much-needed supplies for participants, including hygiene kits, masks and water.
- Facilitated mobile phones for those they serve so that

they can continue to receive therapy, case management and an array of services.

- Provided virtual field trips and group meetings.
- Provided health and medical information to assist participants to remain safe.
- Continued assisting hundreds of people living on the street to move into housing.
- Helped participants obtain newly created jobs.
- Partnered with the LA County Department of Health Services to identify and triage those with medical needs.

Using social distancing guidelines, technology and protective equipment, all services have continued uninterrupted. In March alone, MHALA served more than 6,400 individuals, including 3,567 people living on the street.

MHALA will soon launch Project Resilience, an effort to assist the community cope with trauma and its impact.

"We want to help people manage their own response to trauma and to be able to help others cope with trauma," said Dr. Christina Miller, MHALA's President and CEO. "Anyone can learn ways to bolster their own resilience."

Initially the program will outreach to students, first responders, the medical community and faith-based groups.

Project Resilience, and others of its kind, will be instrumental as we recover from this unusual moment in history. As the long-term impact of the pandemic remains to be seen, mental health services at MHALA will continue to adapt to the community's needs.

For more information about Mental Health America of Los Angeles, please visit mhala.org.