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New Mexico partners with OpenBeds to launch the New Mexico Behavioral Health Referral Network

SANTA FE – The New Mexico Department of Human Services' Behavioral Health Services Division, today announced that it has partnered with OpenBeds, a provider of a technology platform that identifies, unifies, and tracks behavioral health and social services resources to facilitate rapid digital referrals, to launch the New Mexico Behavioral Health Referral Network. The New Mexico Behavioral Health Referral Network allows New Mexico's treatment community to rapidly and effectively assess the needs of their patients, locate an appropriate facility, and digitally refer them to care.

"The potential to coordinate care quickly and accurately when our neighbors need to transition from one level of care to another can improve the quality of treatment," said Behavioral Health Services Division Director Neal A. Bowen, PhD. "It holds the promise of allowing providers, families, and patients to focus on the treatment needs of an episode of care rather than the logistical processes."

At launch, there were 69 treatment organizations, of which 28 are referring organizations, and 51 receiving treatment organizations statewide, with some doubling as both referring and receiving, listing 99 mental health and substance use disorder services. These network members represent the first stage of the project, which the Behavioral Health Services Division intends to grow to include all substance use and mental health services statewide.

In addition to enabling more efficient and effective patient placement, the OpenBeds platform captures key and essential referral process and treatment outcome information through the use of a digital referral form that is not otherwise captured through manual (phone call/fax) referral processes. The Behavioral Health Services Division will use this information to:

- Help identify gaps in care delivery;
- Inform resource allocation decisions;
- Capture best practices;
- Better pool resources; and
- Connect patients to the social services

Furthermore, Behavioral Health Services Division is extending the reach of the New Mexico Behavioral Health Referral Network with the launch of www.treatmentconnection.com, a website that enables those seeking mental health and substance use disorder treatment for themselves or others to leverage the tools and inventory of the new state referral network and anonymously evaluate the type of care they need, search for appropriate, nearby providers, and then submit confidential online referral inquiries to state-vetted treatment providers.

Now, with www.treatmentconnection.com, New Mexicans needing help for mental health and substance use disorder challenges, have self-service access to an innovative portal platform that includes:

- Decision support self-assessment tool to assist in determining the most appropriate type and level of treatment needed;
- Searchable list of trusted treatment services and providers by zip code and distance;
- Collection of resources and educational materials;
- Contact list of providers with current treatment capacity; and a
- Means to confidentially communicate with treatment providers about the next steps.

"We are pleased to have the opportunity to make a positive impact on those in need of behavioral health treatment in New Mexico," said Nishi Rawat, M.D. and Founder of OpenBeds. As a critical care physician, Dr. Rawat experienced first-hand the frustrations of using inefficient manual processes to locate the proper care for her patients whose conditions she couldn't treat in the facilities she was serving. "We thank the state of New Mexico for this innovative and forward-thinking initiative to take immediate action in this increasingly challenging time of substance abuse and mental health crisis across the U.S. – one that is adversely affecting our communities, families, friends, and neighbors today."

As the opioid epidemic continues to plague the nation, state governments, and specifically behavioral health and substance abuse departments, are working diligently to develop and implement strategies to combat these problems in their communities. One of the proven strategies making an impact on these problems is increasing access to care by leveraging technology to improve the quality and timeliness of patient care.

Today, in addition to New Mexico, the OpenBeds platform, including www.treatmentconnection.com, is helping Indiana, Alaska, and Delaware to identify gaps in care delivery and ensure that patients have the opportunity to get the appropriate type and level of care that they need.

The Human Services Department provides services and benefits to more than 1 million New Mexicans through several programs including: the Medicaid Program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Child Support Program, and several Behavioral Health Services.

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