



County of San Diego

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To: Health and Human Services Agency Managers and Staff

From: Nick Macchione, Director
Health and Human Services Agency

Integration of Trauma-Informed Systems for the Health and Human Services Agency

As we move forward with our efforts to support the health, safety and well-being of our region's residents through *Live Well San Diego*, it is important to recognize that many of the people we serve, as well as those we work with, have been affected by trauma. People who have experienced the trauma of abuse, neglect, or other forms of harm often face greater challenges in achieving health and wellness, feeling safe, and thriving.

In recognizing the impact that trauma has in overall wellness, the Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) is moving toward a "trauma-informed" model in our philosophy, approach, and methods. In order for HHSA to become a fully trauma-informed organization, all members of HHSA must have an understanding of how trauma can affect individuals, families, groups, and communities. Being trauma-informed is a way to more effectively engage all people we serve, all staff, and those we encounter in conducting business and providing services. This will improve how we respond to the needs of those whose lives have been impacted by trauma, and ensure stronger coordination of care to promote wellness.

Our Behavioral Health Services team is leading efforts to help HHSA move toward a high-level trauma-informed system. Behavioral Health Services has worked with Dr. Dawn Griffin to conduct an assessment of our trauma-informed competencies, resulting in a set of recommendations that we are now beginning to implement. This will reinforce our County's health and safety strategic initiatives, along with our work in the community through *Live Well San Diego's* Building Better Health and Living Safely components. It will help us to build a better service delivery system; facilitate positive, healthy choices by staff and clients; aid in the pursuit of policies and environmental changes that support health and safety; and help continue to improve our culture from within County government.

I ask for your support and active participation as Dr. Griffin guides us in the implementation of trauma-informed systems across HHSA regions, divisions, providers, and other community partners. As an HHSA employee, you are an important part of the trauma-informed service delivery system we are developing. Thank you for your time and effort in being stewards of change, and assuring the highest quality of care for County residents.

Live Well!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Macchione".

NICK MACCHIONE
Director