

NMSU COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS CLINIC

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Regional Need for Accessible, Low- Cost Services

- Recent statistics demonstrate need for mental health services in the Las Cruces area:
 - 23% of employed individuals have no coverage.
 - 53% of unemployed individuals have no coverage.
 - 22% of individuals who are disabled or retired have no coverage.
 - 23% of households are below the federal poverty baseline.
- Current enrollment of clients in area mental health organizations often exceeds capacity.
 - May be put on waiting list for 6 months or more.

Substance Abuse

- Substance use in New Mexico exceeds national levels
 - Alcohol-related injury and death is 1.8 times the national average.
 - The economic cost to the state is \$2.8 billion per year.
 - Rates for abuse of other substances are among the highest in the nation.
- Substance abuse is the primary pathway to other mental health disorders or occurs with these disorders.

Family Problems

- Teen pregnancy rates are 1.5 times the national average.
 - Mental health difficulties in the lives of teens and their families is a primary underlying cause.
- Family violence rates are decreasing, but are still high.
 - Only 43% of New Mexicans affected by family violence have access to mental health services.
 - Those affected are predominately women and children.
- Early intervention can decrease rates of family problems:
 - Trauma counseling and family therapy are effective.
 - The major impediment continues to be accessible care.

Mental and Behavioral Health Conditions

- 7% of individuals aged 12 and older in New Mexico suffer from mental health disorders, compared to 5% nationally.
- The rate of depression is higher than the national average, and New Mexico ranks 48th in suicide deaths related to depression.
- Depression and other mental health conditions are treatable with counseling/therapy.
- Rural communities in southern New Mexico are most at-risk.
 - Significantly fewer providers leads to a far wider gap in services.

Culturally Competent Treatment

- The people of southern New Mexico are diverse:
 - 66% identify as Hispanic/Latino.
 - 2% identify as American Indian.
 - 2% identify as African American.
- Barriers to care are widely documented:
 - Socioeconomic disparities.
 - Lack of rural and border-area providers.
 - Lack of adequate cultural training.
 - Low rates of bilingual service providers.
 - Culturally-based approaches are often discounted.

The CLINIC | NMSU Community Mental Health and Wellness Clinic

- **The CLINIC** is a joint venture between two Colleges at NMSU:
 - College of Agricultural, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences (ACES).
 - College of Education (EDUC).
- Family and Consumer Sciences in ACES trains master's students in marriage and family therapy.
- Counseling and Educational Psychology in EDUC trains master's and doctoral students in counseling, school counseling, and counseling psychology.
- Future plans include collaboration with Social Work students from the College of Health and Social Services.

The CLINIC | NMSU Community Mental Health and Wellness Clinic

- Each department has a separate clinic on campus to give trainees the opportunity to practice their skills on student clients.
- Benefits of a joint clinic serving community clients:
 - Meet unmet mental health needs in the community.
 - Expand training experiences for students.
 - Increase students' knowledge of theories and techniques from other mental health disciplines.
 - Enhance opportunities for interdisciplinary research and collaboration between faculty and students.

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- **The CLINIC** is currently located in a 4-bedroom unit in Student Family Housing.
- Trainees have the opportunity to experience setting up a facility and developing its policies and procedures.
- Funding:
 - Deans and Provost are paying for rent and salary of licensed supervisor.
 - Department heads are paying for operating costs, including furniture, equipment, utilities, and supplies.
 - Will need funding for a larger space in the future.

The **CLINIC** | NMSU Community Mental Health and Wellness Clinic

The CLINIC assists individuals, families, and couples in the community who are affected by life difficulties, relationship stress, and significant mental health problems.

Key goals for clients include :

- Increasing contentment and coping skills.
- Decreasing stress and its negative effects.
- Defining and reaching positive goals.
- Living fulfilling, productive lives.

Broader goals include:

- Fostering connections between NMSU and the community.
- Working cooperatively with local mental health agencies.
- Delivering helpful treatment in culturally aware and respectful ways.

The CLINIC as a Service Organization and Training Facility

- Our students are trained in a variety of disciplines:
 - Counseling Psychology (PhD).
 - Marriage and Family Therapy (MS).
 - Counseling (MA).
 - School Psychology (EdS).
 - Social Work trainees and Prescribing Psychologists will be included in the future.
- Trainees are rigorously supervised, and immediate consultation with licensed professionals is always available.
- Accountability and ethical standards are emphasized, as well as cultural awareness and skill.

Accessibility, Flexibility, and Structure

- Procedures for accessing services are clear and direct.
- Formal testing, traditional healing, and multiple modalities of service are offered.
- Appropriate referrals are provided, with case follow-up to assure continuity of care.
- Outcome measures assessing the effectiveness and specific dynamics of treatment are administered to all clients.
- Future directions include providing services under Medicaid.

Improving the Community by Joining the Community

- Clients have praised the services of **The CLINIC**:
 - Lack of a waiting list.
 - Dedication of our professionals-in-training.
 - Use of helpful, empirically-supported interventions.

- Trainees have also voiced satisfaction:
 - Ability to advocate for their clients.
 - Opportunity to work with under-served populations.

- The ability to enable positive community change from within NMSU has helped to dispel a notion of 'us and them.'

The CLINIC | NMSU Community Mental Health and Wellness Clinic

Monday – Thursday, 9am-7pm | Friday, 9am-5pm

575-646-5365

email: theclinic@nmsu.edu

web: communitymentalhealthclinic.nmsu.edu

NMSU Locations:

O'Donnell Hall | Room 047
Cervantes Village | Unit C14
Cervantes Village, C100 | Family Resource Center

