

## THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA INTEGRATED HEALTH AND LIVING PROJECT: A Collaborative Effort To Support People as They Move Into The Community

The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) recently announced that the state proposes to close one more State Developmental Center, the Lanterman Developmental Center in Pomona, California, over the next couple of years. This is in keeping with a longtime state and national movement, to enable individuals with developmental disabilities to live and be supported in the community, rather than in large institutional settings.

DDS Director Terri Delgadillo recommended to a legislative committee that no firm date be set for this closure, "until everyone has moved to appropriate places."

Supporting this move requires the continued development of specialized resources within our communities. That is where the regional centers and the Southern California Integrated Health and Living Project play an important role. The ten Southern California Regional Centers involved in this Project are: Harbor, Inland, Lanterman, North Los Angeles County, Orange County, San Gabriel/Pomona, San Diego, South Central Los Angeles, Tri-Counties, and Westside.

The Project was formed by these ten regional centers in early 2006, to create permanent living options and individualized supports for individuals who live in a developmental center or other large congregate care setting. This project recognized that through a concentrated and well-coordinated regional effort pooling the efforts and resources of ten centers, we could more quickly create necessary resources for people moving into the community.

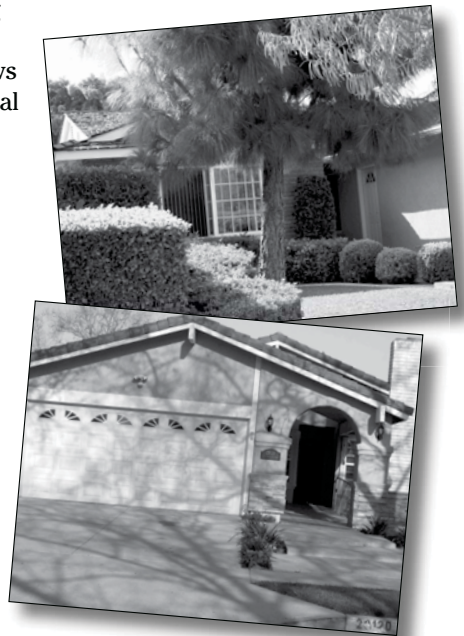
Each regional center is already engaged in continuous resource development efforts to meet individuals' needs in its own service area. Acting separately though, it was sometimes difficult to develop resources to meet the more exceptional and challenging needs of some individuals, from the developmental centers as well as the community. Therefore sharing resources has long been a part of our shared history. There are currently no residents at Lanterman

Developmental Center who are clients of Harbor Regional Center, but through the Project, HRC will be offering newly developed resources to be accessed by clients of other regional centers who may need them. In turn, other regional centers will offer the same for our clients when needed.

"Our boundaries for serving people are somewhat invisible. This project really allows us to move beyond traditional service boundaries and collectively serve people," said Claudia DeMarco, Associate Director of Harbor Regional Center.

The project works with several partners, including the referring regional center, staff at the State Developmental Center and Regional Resource Development Projects (RRDP), and of course families. Their activities include: identification of the individuals' needs, and identification of resources in existence or that must be developed to meet those needs; transition planning to assure that all necessary services and supports are in place and ready for an individual's move (e.g., a place to live, modifications, training, establishing relationships with community health care providers, etc.) and follow-up for as long as necessary as the regional center takes over ongoing service coordination.

The project also facilitates the acquisition of housing, working with individual regional centers and associated nonprofit housing organizations, such as HOPE in the HRC area, and is committed to increasing the number of permanent housing options. The project has plans currently to develop 26 new homes for three to four people each. With at least six of these homes expected to open by early 2011, this collaborative effort is well on its way to supporting many more individuals in their successful transition into the community. ■



*The 10 regional centers involved in the Southern California Integrated Project collaborate to create living options like these, and individualized supports for individuals in the community.*