



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Oct. 27, 2016

CONTACT:

Thomas J. Peterson

Cell phone: (951) 538-6791

tomjpeterson@rcmhd.org

**NEW MENTAL HEALTH URGENT CARE
OPENS DOORS TO ADULTS IN CRISIS**

PALM SPRINGS, Ca. -- A mental health urgent care opened its doors on Thursday to begin providing around-the-clock assessment, psychiatric support, medication management and customized services to adults who are voluntarily seeking assistance in crisis situations.

Desert Crisis Walk-In Center is located in a remodeled storefront at **2500 North Palm Canyon Drive, Suite A4, Palm Springs**. The center **will remain open 24 hours a day throughout the year**. RI, International, a private provider of behavioral health programs, is operating the center under a contract with Riverside University Health System (RUHS).

Guests may walk in to the urgent care at any time of the day or night. Guests also may be referred to the walk-in center by mobile crisis teams or law enforcement for crisis and assessment services. All visits and stays are voluntary. Length of stays cannot exceed 23 hours.

During that time, guests will participate in the development of individualized care plans that include recovery education, peer-to-peer support, mental health services, nutritional counseling, coordination and referral to community-based services.

Steve Steinberg, the director of RUHS Behavioral Health, said the center will help relieve pressure on local emergency departments that get overwhelmed by individuals brought in by law enforcement on involuntary psychiatric admissions known as a 5150.

“Our goal is to provide timely support before a situation becomes so volatile that people are involuntarily held in hospital emergency rooms,” Steinberg said. “We are providing an environment and a level of services that engage people in their recovery.”

Riverside County Supervisor John J. Benoit, whose district includes the Coachella Valley, said he is working closely with RUHS - Behavioral Health and other stakeholders to implement an array of solutions that will meet the mental health needs of residents and communities throughout eastern Riverside County.

“This is an important piece of a large puzzle,” Benoit said of the urgent care. “It’s the kind of program we want to see replicated as we fill other gaps in our mental health services.”

Telecare Riverside County Psychiatric Health Facility in Indio provides round the clock emergency services for adults and youth experiencing crisis related to a mental health condition. RI, International operates a mental health urgent care in Riverside.

Peggy Wiley, administrator at the crisis walk-in center in Palm Springs, said the relaxing atmosphere and the peer-to-peer support are an important component of the program. Guests may have visitors and use the phone during their stay.

“Our site quite often is the appropriate alternative to holding people involuntarily in an emergency room,” Wiley said. “It’s a location that promotes healing and individual participation.”

For more information visit www.ruhealth.org.