

Scot Lord, Crestwood San Diego, Service Coordinator

"The only difference between humility and humiliation is my ability to accept the situation."

touch

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making a difference with healthy food

The Crestwood Nutrition and Wellness Initiative was started in May of 2013 under the direction of Margaret McDonald, Crestwood's Director of Culinary and Nutritional Services. One of the initiative's first goals was to provide Crestwood facilities with new menus and recipes based on government guidelines and the latest nutrition research, using whole foods, rather than processed foods.

Crestwood is now in our eighth quarter, or three-month cycle, of menus. The menus were initially piloted in four of our facilities, Napa Valley, Sacramento Center, Eureka, and American River. The initiative has since expanded to six more facilities and is now being implemented in Solano, San Jose, Pleasant Hill, Bakersfield, Fresno, and San Diego.

In many of our Mental Health Recovery Centers (MHRCs), we have been able to greatly reduce or eliminate therapeutic diet orders because this diet is appropriate for the vast majority of our clients, including those with diabetes, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol. The diet is appropriate for diabetics because we keep each meal within a certain range of carbohydrates, and we offer very few concentrated sweets. We do most of our baking with whole wheat flour and serve real sugar in small portions. The diet is appropriate for those with high blood pressure and high cholesterol because we limit saturated fat by serving red meat only once a week and serving low-fat dairy products.

We also use very little added salt, and few processed or canned goods. Dietary Directors have reported that the costs have been about the same or a bit lower than the old diet.

We offer two fish meals per week, three vegetarian meals per week, and limit red meat to one meal a week. Other meals provide lean proteins such as turkey and chicken. The diet is high in fiber with lots of whole grains, beans, lentils, and fresh fruits and vegetables. We include many plant sources of healthy fats such as oils, trans fat free margarines, nuts, and seeds. Whenever possible, we avoid products with trans fats, high fructose corn syrup, and artificial colorings and sweeteners, and we make as much as possible from scratch. We also offer meals from a variety of cultural backgrounds in order to appeal to our diverse client population.

*clients lost
a significant
amount of
weight over
the time period*

We have been monitoring client weights, lipid profiles, and HGBA1Cs (a measure of blood sugar levels over time). In the facilities that have implemented our menus, we have seen a gradual weight loss in some of our overweight and obese clients, and an improvement in lipid profiles and a lowering of HGBA1Cs in some clients. Dr. Zhongshu Yang, M.D., PhD from the University of California, Davis was so impressed with the change in weights and lab results at Crestwood Sacramento Center, that she applied for a grant to do a research project on our diet. She and a graduate student,

Jennifer Papac B.S., recently presented a poster on our diet at UC Davis Medical School, titled "Crestwood Nutrition and Wellness Initiative in Long-Term Psychiatric Patients." They concluded that after implementing the diet, there was a reduction in the percentage of obese patients and an increase in the percentage of patients in the overweight and normal weight ranges. They also concluded that patients lost a significant amount of weight over the time period looked at, and that they showed a significant decrease in Body Mass Index (BMI) over that time period.

Lastly, we have received positive feedback from Dietary Directors, kitchen staff, and the clients themselves. Dietary Directors' comments include, "There was some resistance at first from clients and staff, but they gradually accepted the changes and are getting excited about eating healthy", "We are starting to see healthy weight loss and an overall change in clients' attitudes toward making healthier choices", and "Clients are enjoying the meals and we are getting positive feedback." Clients also have their opinions about the new diet changes and made comments such as, "It's like restaurant food", "I feel better and it's only been a week", "I feel good, not so heavy", and "I feel like I have more energy."

Going forward, Margaret plans to develop more nutrition and exercise-related groups for clients, as well as health related in-services for staff. Overall, Crestwood's ultimate goal is to continue to improve the health and wellness of both our clients and staff through educating and serving them nutritious and delicious food that will make a difference in their recovery and lives. In the words of Hippocrates, "Our food should be our medicine and our medicine should be our food."

*Contributed by: Margaret McDonald
Director of Culinary and Nutritional Services*

In June 2014 Crestwood San Diego became the organization's newest Mental Health Rehabilitation Center (MHRC). As summer was winding down and their program was up and running, they found the perfect event in which their clients and staff could participate in as a team, the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention's (AFSP) San Diego Out of The Darkness Walk. The event was held on October 18th at the Embarcadero Marina Park. The **Out of The Darkness Walk** is an annual fall event for family members, friends, and colleagues to walk 3-5 miles together in hundreds of communities across the nation to prevent suicide, raise awareness, and end the stigma that surrounds depression and other mental disorders. Every 13.7 minutes someone in the United States commits suicide, making it the 4th leading cause of death in individuals between the ages of 18 and 65.

PREVENT SUICIDE, RAISE AWARENESS AND END THE STIGMA THAT SURROUNDS DEPRESSION & OTHER MENTAL DISORDERS

Crestwood San Diego was proud to be a sponsor of the Out of The Darkness Walk and hosted a table, with staff and clients passing out brochures and treats to those attending. Five Crestwood clients participated in the walk. One client commented, "I enjoyed the walk. It was nice viewing the Embarcadero for the first time. It was nice visiting with the staff from Crestwood and visiting with my peers." After the Walk, clients were eager to share with other participants about their lives and recovery and about Crestwood San Diego's wonderful program and staff.

Stephen O'Barr, Crestwood San Diego's Director of Nursing, summed up the Walk by saying, "It was a fun event to participate in and to support such an important cause on a beautiful day. Crestwood San Diego is looking forward to attending again next year."

*Contributed by: Michael Bargagliotti, Administrator
Crestwood San Diego*

OUT OF THE DARKNESS WALK

Resiliency is the ability to recover readily from illness, depression, adversity, or the like, and is one of the cornerstones to health and recovery for individuals and communities. Trauma is an emotional and psychological result of extraordinarily stressful events that shatter a person's sense of security, making them feel helpless and vulnerable in a dangerous world.

Building Resiliency in the Treatment of Trauma

The necessity to treat and heal trauma has never been more evident than in today's environment and culture. In recovery services, treating, mitigating and preventing trauma is a primary expectation for us at Crestwood. It is the starting point for most people as they embark on their recovery paths. The ability to restore and build resiliency through a variety of trauma-informed techniques, including engagement, resourcing, spirituality and somatic work is the basis for this integrated trauma-approach to services.

The research in neuroscience provides a foundation for the understanding that neuroplasticity and neurogenesis enables the brain to reprogram and develop new pathways for survival and growth. This has led to an understanding that we can expand the resiliency skills, thus enabling people to be less vulnerable to re-trauma, prevent trauma and heal existing trauma. The premise is that if you teach a person to identify and access their resilient innate abilities, aptitudes or inner wellness tools, the individual can practice using these tools as a means to heal and prevent trauma. These tools are skill-based and use a wide-range of evidenced-based practices, promising practices and spiritual practices as the building blocks. The practices are integrated and enable the staff at Crestwood to walk with our clients, support and stand behind our clients and guide our clients when needed. The skills and practices are based on the premise that you meet the client exactly where they currently are. This methodology creates a client-centered and culturally-sensitive service model.

Recovery services now have shifted from patterns that created ongoing dependency for clients, to interventions that support resiliency, self-reliance, and prevention. This trauma-informed model of building resiliency enables our clients to become more empowered, more independent of the mental health system, and more intimately connected to their communities. As Crestwood programs seek to build resiliency in our clients, communities benefit from mitigating the trauma from occurring in the first place, reducing the likelihood of diagnosed conditions recurring, and build resiliency through the community.

Trauma-informed care approaches have been the basis of the resiliency skills building. At Crestwood we utilize these trauma-informed care approaches, along with culturally-sensitive multidisciplinary approaches and integrating spiritual practices by utilizing evidenced-based practices including Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP), Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), and Peer Providers to provide a rich source for mitigating and healing the impact of trauma for our clients. In our Crestwood programs we will continue to work with and support our clients with developing resiliency skills to create a strong foundation from which they can build from and use in their recovery.

*Contributed by: Patty Blum, PhD
Crestwood Vice President*



Life is Worth Living. Life is Joy Life is Beautiful Life is Awesome Life is Good Life is Struggle, through struggles of life you find yourself Life is Amazing Life is Interesting Life is Full of Meaning Life is Happiness Life is Wonderful Life is Difficult Life is a Cavalcade of parade Life is Crazy Life is Challenging Life is Great Life is Full of surprises Life is Family Life is Enjoyable Life is Fun Life is Living Life is Special Life is Exciting Life is Better than Death Life is Short Life is Precious Life is A Blessing Life is Just a Bowl of Cherries Life is Simple Life is Rough Life is Rewarding Life is Everything Life is Splendid Life is Important Life is Happy Life is Prison Life is to be Human Life is What you make out of it Life is A Ball Life is a Journey Life is a Bowl of Honey, the More you Touch it, the Sweeter it Gets Life is Everlasting Life is Gold Life is Full of Stress Life is Blessing from God Life is a Bowl of Roses Life is Nice Life is Hard Life is Complicated Life is an Escalator with Ups and Downs Life is Full of Choices Life is On Life is Full of Miseries Life is Bright Life is 10% What you Make it & 90% How you Take it.

Rashmi Rajadhyax, Program Director at Idylwood Care Center, got up one morning and thought, **“Life is worth living.”**

As that thought passed through her mind she decided to wonder out of curiosity what do other people think about life in general and what kind of message are people saying to themselves on a regular basis. Are those messages positive or negative? So to find out more, she surveyed 228 people at Idylwood Care Center which included residents, staff, doctors, families and visitors and asked them what life means to them. She then comprised the list of all answers.

Rashmi said that it was a fun and satisfying experience to create something so simple that would inspire so much excitement and curiosity in people. The final list was compiled and copies were handed out at the facility so everyone could share with their friends and families, and to clip on a bulletin board at work or home if they wanted to.

“What it ultimately comes down to is that life is a field of unlimited possibilities. We have choices. Life is all these quotes at one given time and life is inclusive of all,” said Rashmi. “Use them, share them, and get inspired by them. It doesn’t matter how you use them, if they make your day happy and bright.”

*Contributed by:
Rashmi Rajadhyax, Program Director
Idylwood Care Center*



“Health is wellness, health is power,” declared a resident at Crestwood Treatment Center in Fremont. This powerful statement came as a result of the facility’s first Wellness Fair that was held on March 18. In preparation for the Wellness Fair, a few small groups of residents known as the “Dream Team” spent three months exploring with staff members different wellness topics related to stress management, both through research and experiential activities. These small groups met once a week to investigate each wellness topic and prepare a related presentation. After three months of creative collaboration, they selected the topics of Aromatherapy, Exercise, Music Appreciation, Guided Imagery, and Assertive Communication to feature at their Wellness Fair.

CELEBRATING WELLNESS

With Crestwood Treatment Center’s Dream Team

The Dream Team residents then prepared and distributed invitations to facility residents and staff, and announcement banners were hung throughout the facility. The conference room and adjoining outdoor Zen Garden were transformed into a presentation hall, with five separate stations, one for each wellness topic. The Wellness Fair kicked off on a beautiful day with the Zen Garden fountain bubbling and relaxing music playing. Seats were available in the garden for attendees to reflect quietly and/or relax together. Residents and staff were invited to make their way throughout the fair, stopping at each booth to connect with their Dream Team hosts. Pairs of Dream Team members handed out informational packets and discussed their topic of wellness with participants, and invited them to join them in their wellness activity. One resident remarked, “I was able to get a lot of information proving that music really does relieve stress. It is my favorite way to take the stress away. Music even relieves stress during dental procedures!” Refreshments were also served and participants were invited to share hummus, cucumber toast, a fresh fruit salad, and lemon mint water as they further relaxed in the Zen Garden.

The education, exchange of wellness information and the entire experience was very empowering for Dream Team members and well received by all who participated. “The Wellness Fair was a complete success. It was so much fun and informative for everyone. Participating residents were very enthusiastic and knowledgeable about their respective topics. They were able to communicate and explain the importance on how to live a healthy lifestyle. The visitors who attended the Fair were all impressed with the way the booths were set up and organized by staff and residents,” said Luis de Vera, Assistant Director of Nursing.

The facility is still buzzing about the Wellness Fair and Dream Team members are eager to start preparing for next year’s event. They have big plans to expand the fair and possibly invite other Crestwood facilities to share in the experience. Lillian Fong, Program Administrator, remarked, “I am so impressed with our residents’ enthusiasm and “can do” attitude. Their confidence was evident that day for all to see.”

*Contributed by: Karen Scott, OTR/L Occupational Therapist
Crestwood Treatment Center*



A few of the beautiful booths created by Dream Team members that were on display at the Wellness Fair.

Crestwood Receives CARF Accreditation for its Continued Dedication and Achievement to Higher Standards

When an organization sets its goals to meet higher standards than is required by licensing agencies, payer sources, community stakeholders and industry standards, and then goes on to achieve those goals, it is an extraordinary accomplishment. Crestwood Behavioral Health, Inc. is proud once again to have achieved just that accomplishment. In March 2015, Crestwood received the highest level of Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities’ (CARF) Three-Year Accreditation of our 23 community programs, accounting office and corporate office. This accreditation decision represents the highest level of accreditation that can be awarded to an organization and shows the organization’s substantial conformance to the CARF standards. An organization receiving a Three-Year Accreditation has put itself through a rigorous peer review process. It has demonstrated to a team of surveyors during an on-site visit its commitment to offering programs and services that are measurable, accountable, and of the highest quality.

Crestwood was recognized for many of our strengths during the survey, including our strong relationship with stakeholders; the high level of peer providers at both leadership and direct service levels; reduction and elimination of seclusion and restraints; culturally sensitive services; our wellness program that focuses on heart healthy nutrition; innovative approaches in our facility environments that promote the feeling of community and recovery; a well-developed training program for staff; and a high-level of client satisfaction.

Crestwood also achieved the rare CARF Exemplary Conformance to the Standards for our profound understanding of the process of transitioning, not only for our clients, but for staff members as well. This includes Crestwood’s succession planning process and mentoring to identify future potential leaders in our organization and then providing them with training, education and support to prepare them for those roles.

Also in the CARF survey results, Crestwood’s professional and committed staff were recognized as those whose passion, strong vision and value-driven leadership far exceed expectations. Similarly acknowledged, were the recovery-based services that focus on hope, empowerment, meaningful roles and spirituality as its hallmarks and for supporting the employment of our clients and individuals with disabilities through our alliance with Dreamcatchers Empowerment Network.



This is the fifth CARF Survey that Crestwood has participate in and is proud to receive once again the three-year CARF accreditation as an indication of our greatest level of commitment to quality improvement and demonstrates our extraordinary level of dedication to improving the quality of lives of the clients Crestwood serves.

Crestwood Behavioral Health, Inc.

Crestwood Behavioral Health, Inc. is proud to be California's leading provider of mental health services, assisting thousands of clients from across the state. Our focus is on creating strong relationships with counties in which we both have a financial commitment, providing the services which are tailored to meet clients' specific needs, and reinforcing a common set of values that guide our practices and policies.



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spotlight

“Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn life around.”

Leo Buscaglia
Author, Professor



accreditation

Crestwood Behavioral Health Inc. is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), which requires a higher standard of care than the licensing standards in California. Crestwood believes this accreditation demonstrates our unwavering commitment to achieving and maintaining the highest level of care and rehabilitation.

Editor: Kari Friesen, Director of Communications

