

Harriet Tubman

"Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world."

touch

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PEER PROVIDER RESEARCH STUDY

Gaining Perspective



Louise Byrne, PhD, visiting the Crestwood Sacramento Home Office as part of her Peer Provider Research Study (R to L) Patty Blum, Louise Byrne, Mertice “Gitane” Williams, George Lytal.



Louise Byrne with Crestwood Recovery and Rehabilitation Center, Vallejo’s staff during her visit to the campus.

Louise Byrne, PhD, recently visited Crestwood Behavioral Health as part of a peer provider research study she is working on in the United States. Louise who has lived experience, is from Australia and based at Yale University. She is conducting research as part of a Fulbright Scholarship, which emphasizes exchange of knowledge and learning about local culture, that includes traveling to many different states and learning about the types of services provided by different organizations.

The purpose of her research study is to gain information about how to support the peer workforce more effectively within organizations, particularly those organizations with a multi-disciplinary workforce. The organizations for the study were selected by first bringing together an advisory group of experts from across the United States. This group was asked to nominate five organizations with a multi-disciplinary workforce, including peers, that “demonstrated commitment to the effective employment of peer workers.” Crestwood, as one of the leaders in peer provider services, was one of the organizations that was chosen to be part of the study. At each organization’s site visits, Louise spoke with people in management roles, traditional mental health roles/clinicians and peers. The range of organizational types was deliberately broad, including County Behavioral Health Departments, managed care, private and not-for-profit. The sites were located throughout the United States and served different types of communities from metropolitan to rural.

During her visit to Crestwood, Louise visited the Crestwood Sacramento Home Office and was invited to tour our Crestwood Recovery and Rehabilitation Center in Vallejo.

She said, “I was provided with a warm and colorful welcome from the Administrator, Minda Bunggay, whose enthusiasm was absolutely infectious! I found that Minda’s sincere commitment to the wellbeing of people staying at Vallejo was evident and reflected in the passion of staff. I was fortunate enough to be guided in my tour by a resident and member of the Dreamcatchers Empowerment Network program, who shared his excitement for what he saw as a wonderful service and, with Dreamcatchers, a wonderful opportunity to gain skills and confidence. Throughout the campus the principles and components of recovery are featured on the walls of the hallways, as are the rights of people accessing mental health services. Beautiful gardens provide a sanctuary that truly felt healing, and the relaxation rooms were fantastic. I could have spent much longer there. While I was there I was told about the impressive schedule of events and got to participate in a drum workshop. As a person with lived experience, Crestwood Vallejo felt like a genuinely warm and nurturing environment.” Louise’s observations about the research study so far are that fairly similar conditions exist in the United States and Australia, where peer

work is still struggling to be seen as a necessary part of the wider mental health workforce. She observed, “We still have a long way to go to gain mainstream acceptance, but there were some encouraging pockets where organizations have made a very strong philosophical and financial commitment to the development of peer work and the outcomes for organizations, service users and colleagues in traditional roles were outstanding and very exciting.”

“Employment of peers has a long history at Crestwood, but expansion from one or two roles to a more robust workforce has become very prominent in the company. This is really encouraging as the data also shows that a few peers in isolation are much less likely to be successful in their roles, whereas a more significant investment provides opportunity for networking/mutual support between peers, for the roles not to be too stretched and for the value of the role to become more apparent within both the workplace and wider community,” observed Louise.

For more information on Louise Byrne’s research study, please visit Research Gate at www.researchgate.net/profile/Louise_Byrne2.

Contributed by: Louise Byrne, PhD, RMIT University, FulbrightFellow/Vice-Chancellors Research Fellow



WRAP

Coming Together in Wellness

Collectively we can start to feel the shift.

A few days before our August WRAP Seminar II in Eureka, I was working on finalizing some last-minute arrangements with the Jefferson Center, who hosted us. I experienced some nervous-stream-of-consciousness-type thoughts about the upcoming week such as, “It’s my first time mentoring as an Advanced Level WRAP Facilitator (ALWF) and BJ North and Jane Winterling from the Copeland Center will be watching me.” Of course, everything worked out well and the Jefferson Center was wonderful and the staff gracious and accommodating.

Day One of the Seminar, Jane Winterling said something amazing in response to a question posed to each participant about their hope for the training, she said, “You know when a WRAP Seminar is successful because the participants come together and make the magic of WRAP happen.”

What I’ve found with WRAP seminars is that it’s very difficult to hide from the demand that wellness makes. Being immersed in a setting where we’re all talking about how we will support ourselves each day really doesn’t allow us to ignore internal questions and long held beliefs about wellness. For me, these questions are, “How do I not judge myself for prioritizing my wellness? What do I do to keep myself well? Where in my life am I denying my wellness?” Answers to these questions involve holding up my “WRAP mirror” and realizing that wellness isn’t something I’ll kick back and do when I get the time, but something that I must continually take personal responsibility for.

During that seminar, I watched some of my peers experiencing similar reflections about the foundations of their wellness, and I really saw some magic happen. Individuals opened up to their own vulnerabilities. Participants who had personal-life challenges arise, took hold of those challenges and prioritized their wellness in the midst of the difficulty, affording themselves a view of the problem from the perspective of their unique action plans. It was amazing and humbling to observe.



Participants celebrating their completion of Crestwood’s WRAP Seminar II in Eureka.

Our Crestwood Eureka staff returned with an enthusiasm and commitment to working toward a campus culture of wellness. I hear the language of hope and recovery becoming more common on the campus every day. Wellness connections are becoming part of shift change. We had our first Organizational Wellness Landscape (OWL) gathering for wellness support for staff this past September. We also have two facilitators in the community coming to be a part of our WRAP meetings and groups.

At Crestwood, our personal practice of wellness directly serves as the model of wellness and recovery to those we serve. We have been presented with the OWL Project as a challenge for us to take responsibility for wellness at the campus level, with a built-in platform of support. Part of this support is the ALWF training offered to each campus. As an ALWF, both the commitment to personal and campus wellness and the OWL Project grows. And as a result, change for the better does happen, with ourselves, our staff, those we serve, and our communities.

It’s inspiring to watch, and it is an honor to be a part of the Crestwood family, as we hold hope and model recovery to those we serve every day.

**Contributed by: Theresa Sorensen,
Director of Staff Development, ALWF
Eureka Campus**

home is where the heart heals

“I am home” are rarely the words spoken by a client entering a behavioral health program, however, at Crestwood Behavioral Health, Inc., we hear this often.

The environments we create are as important as the therapeutic tools we employ throughout the course of treatment, whether it’s several hours in our Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) or days in one of our Psychiatric Health Facilities (PHFs) or years in one of our Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNFs).

Our mission at Crestwood is to provide the highest quality of recovery-based care and delivery of services to the people we serve, stakeholders, and the community. The strategy includes using the environment as a therapeutic tool and it is designed to maximize options and choices, as well as clients’ freedom of movement. The environment is intentionally designed to reduce the amount of client rooms and clinical space to allow for space design to be based on evidence-based practices, promising practices, best practices and Crestwood’s client-centered model. SAMHSA and CARF have recognized our utilization of space and environmental features at our campuses as a trauma-informed treatment approach. Space utilization, as well as Crestwood philosophies and trainings, encourages reduction of barriers for interaction between the clients and staff.



Crestwood’s intention in creating our homelike environments is to allow for the greatest choice and ease of living, while providing a secured, safe and sustainable environment, which is not an easy task. Janet Vlavianos, our Director of Development and Corporate Initiatives, has been the creator of most of our Crestwood environments. Her sense of design and color is outstanding, but her greatest asset is looking at a space from the perspective of the person who will be receiving treatment.



Crestwood San Diego's Gym.



The relaxing pond at Crestwood San Diego.



San Francisco Healing Center's gathering space with fish tank media screen and tiles.

The space is allocated not just on the number of beds or clients served, but rather on how much movement will be needed in the interior and exterior space, particularly if it is secured. We believe people need to be able move around and to have windows that look out onto gardens, trees and ponds. We also believe there needs to be a quiet space and a social space for activities such as gaming, so our serenity rooms, which are quiet and contemplative in design, are not next to living rooms or gaming rooms, which are designed for louder, group activities. Our gaming rooms, which are a new addition to our Crestwood environments, are equipped with bean bag chairs, gaming screens and a variety of games. These environments allow clients a choice on what space that would like to be in that fits their needs and contributes to their wellness and recovery.

We have also replaced nursing stations in many of our Crestwood’s programs with a casual gathering space that features overstuffed loveseats and a fish tank relaxation media screen. You often find people gathering there regularly to talk or to simply watch the fish or nature scene on the screen. Nursing stations historically have been the site of power struggles and arguments, but now this location has been transformed into an empowering, social, and welcoming place for our clients.

Wellness is another focus of our Crestwood programs and today many of our campuses are now equipped with gyms and workout areas that provide an outlet for exercise, which is much needed when you are working on your wellness in a secured setting. The gyms are shared by staff and clients alike, which serves to minimize stigma and maximize empowerment. And if working out is not in our clients’ recovery toolbox, then we have created small, cozy libraries in each setting, which allows access to a variety of reading material, wellness tools and a quiet space to read and contemplate.

One environment feature in our campuses, the use of tiles, has had some recent acclaim and was even referenced in a San Francisco Chronicle article (March 4, 2018) on the opening of our San Francisco Healing Center. Janet has placed tiles, in a variety of shapes, colors and textures, strategically on walls in common areas and some bedrooms. Her work in trauma-informed approaches has allowed Crestwood to be on the leading edge in using tiles as a trauma-informed tool, which provides clients support with grounding and release of energy. Crestwood is beginning to build a body of evidence supporting the use of tiles. The tiles support grounding when a client places their hand and touches a tile, which allows them to focus on the tile’s texture, temperature, size and smell. This focus brings attention inward and allows for mindful practices and settling their thoughts. The tiles are also used to release energy



The gaming room at Crestwood’s CSU, complete with comfortable bean bags.



Crestwood San Diego’s beautiful outside environment with a soothing water fountain feature.

for clients when they place their hands on the tiles and push with as much pressure as possible, then gradually release the pressure and repeating until the ability to be at ease is achieved, this then allows the brain to reset the body and bring it into homeostasis.

The exteriors of our campuses are also designed for choice and respect, as well as fun. Our grounds have organic gardens, fruit trees, volleyball courts, chicken coops, swings, basketball courts, gazebos, waterfalls, bird feeders, ponds and water features. It’s not uncommon to see staff, clients and their families sitting in the sun and picnicking on our grounds.

Healing and recovery requires a great deal of work and love. There is science behind each tool that Crestwood applies, whether it’s Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) or our Trauma-Informed environments. From originally using research from trauma experts including Raul Almazar, Elaine Miller-Karas and Peter A. Levine, Crestwood is now building our own body of research to support the growth of our homelike environments as healing tools. Home is where the heart heals and for many at Crestwood, it is healing their hearts through our homes.

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





With Gratitude.

At 50 years, being thankful seems natural. You have lived enough life to appreciate and comprehend the value of the gifts and friends that have supported you and you also have the experience and knowledge to know what it's like to go without and to go it alone.

Gratitude is the practice Crestwood Behavioral Health, Inc. is choosing to celebrate for our 50th Anniversary. According to Yale University Center for Emotional Intelligence, "Gratitude isn't just an emotion that occurs, but a virtue we can cultivate. Gratitude is something you practice as you might a sport, piano or meditation. Gratitude practice begins by paying attention, being mindful. Notice all the good things and relationships that you normally take for granted."

Gratitude means saying thank you, demonstrating appreciation, and sharing your gifts with others. Gratitude implies a relationship. You can be grateful to your higher power and that is relational. You can be grateful to someone who has given you a gift and that is relational. Relationships are central to gratitude. And so, for the past 50 years, relationships and partnerships have been at Crestwood's core as a company.

Our Mission Statement begins with two statements related to relationships: *Our mission at Crestwood Behavioral Health is to create a partnership with clients, employees, families, business associates and the community in caring for individuals of all ages affected by mental health issues. Together, we invest our energies to enhance the quality of life, social integration, community support and empowerment of mental health clients.*

The relationships we have built during the past 50 years are what have enabled us to grow and support so many people in their recovery journey. These relationships are significant commitments; some are memorialized in contracts and others with a handshake and a smile. Our relationships are our investment in communities and they start with our county partners; local NAMI organizations; universities and colleges; Rotary Clubs; our employees and their families; peer-led recovery centers; statewide and national advocacy organizations; faith communities; and local businesses that all come together to support the people we serve. We are grateful for and have become a better organization because of these wonderful relationships.

We want to especially thank all of our amazing and supportive county stakeholders who we have been honored to partner with during the past 50 years. These partnerships have helped us to grow, so we now serve more than 5,000 people annually, in 22 communities, with 32 programs that are all dedicated to support recovery and resilience. We are grateful to be part of a team that is truly making a difference in peoples' lives every day.

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

Alameda/Amador/Butte/
Calaveras/Colusa/Contra Costa
Del Norte/El Dorado/Fresno
Glenn/Humboldt/Inyo/Kern
Kings/Lake/Lassen/Los Angeles
Madera/Marin/Mariposa
Mendocino/Merced/Modoc
Mono/Monterey/Napa/Nevada
Placer/Plumas/Riverside
Sacramento/San Bernardino
San Diego/San Francisco
San Joaquin/San Luis Obispo
San Mateo/Santa Barbara
Santa Clara/Santa Cruz/Shasta
Sierra/Siskiyou/Solano/Sonoma
Stanislaus/Sutter/Yuba/Tehama
Tulare/Tuolumne/Ventura/Yolo

On a sunny day last March, staff members at Idylwood Care Center discovered that the resident feral cat had given birth to three tiny, adorable kittens.

HENRY THE GREAT

Two of those kittens were black and white, and one was grey and white with piercing blue eyes. The grey and white kitten was quickly named Henry and he soon became the campus' very own resident kitten. The staff soon discovered that, while this chosen kitten was small in stature, he was big in heart and personality.

Immediately after taking Henry in, their Business Office Manager, Deana Guzman, aka Idylwood Care Center's Cat Mom, took him to a nearby veterinarian. The Cameron Veterinarian office went above and beyond their call of duty and provided Henry with a free examination, free formula, a free can of food, a flea comb, and a wealth of advice on how to best care for Henry.

After Henry was bathed and the fleas were removed from his plump belly that was now full of food and treats, he looked like a new kitten. Staff members volunteered to take him home for the night, and lines to visit with Henry during breaks formed in the Business Office. Staff members rallied together to provide Henry with the necessities that included blankets, a comfortable carrier, kitty condo, litter box, and toys. To say that Henry is well-loved is an understatement.

Our gracious and compassionate Administrator, Rashmi Rajadhyax, allowed us to bring Henry to visit our residents after he was vaccinated and acclimated to human interaction. Our residents love dogs and cats. They receive a monthly visit from a volunteer group, Furry Friends, and look forward to visiting with the dogs and benefit from the calming, loving interaction that these animals provide. Since we strive to give our residents the best quality of life possible, we truly believe having Henry is also emotionally and mentally beneficial to our residents. Staff members have benefited from Henry's presence, too! Henry is truly part of our campus family.

As for the other two kittens, they were adopted by staff members. We were also able to bring the other feral cats to a veterinarian office to have them spayed or neutered and released. Our Idylwood Care Center staff's amazing compassion can be seen and felt every day for humans and animals alike.

**Keri Arnold, Social Worker
Idylwood Care Center**



At our Crestwood San Jose Psychiatric Health Facility (PHF) we are constantly striving to meet the needs of our clients and recognize the importance of an active recovery. As an acute PHF, we are a short-term, stabilization crisis center that helps our clients move forward with their recovery goals, and often that means they may be with us two or three months if they are waiting for long-term care.

Meeting the Needs of the People We Serve at the Crestwood San Jose PHF

*Feeling safe,
individualized
and progressive
allows our
clients to meet
their ongoing
mental health
recovery needs.*

Our staff works on providing holistic recovery services that addresses the mind, body and spirit for every client who comes into our program, so that we can meet as many of their needs as possible. In taking this holistic approach, we have added many new features and programs such as, each client is met with a welcome basket which provides a variety of toiletries, a journal, and a water bottle to meet their basic needs, while promoting self-care. Every morning we also introduce a new DBT skill of the day, which is incorporated into each group we provide. We have added a gym to our unit to help our clients practice the skills we are teaching related to distress tolerance and physical wellbeing. We have also added a prevocational track called Achieving Success, which allows our clients to be productive and engaged in their recovery throughout the day.

Feeling safe, individualized and progressive allows our clients to meet their ongoing mental health recovery needs. Every day, our team looks for ways on how we can best ensure the dignity, recovery and care of the people we serve.

**Contributed by: Angele Suarez, Clinical Director,
Crestwood San Jose PHF and Michael Bargagliotti,
Campus Administrator, Crestwood San Jose**

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

“Service is the rent we pay for being. It is the very purpose of life, and not something you do in your spare time.”

– Greg Parnell, ALWF
Crestwood's Health and Wellness Facilitator



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.

Crestwood Behavioral Health, Inc. complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.

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