

San Diego Woman Magazine

Dr. Shashita Inamdar
& Dr. Sudabeh Moein

LEADERS *in*
**INNOVATIVE
SOLUTIONS**



AS THEY SAY, "NECESSITY is the mother of invention," and in the case of Crestwood Behavioral Health, Inc. this is a statement with meaning. Fifty-one years ago, James M. Dobbins Sr. was in search of a skilled nursing care facility for his Mom. Frustrated with the limited options, none of which met his standards, Mr. Dobbins decided to build his own. This was the start of Crestwood Behavior Hospitals Inc., a skilled nursing care provider. Over the years, Crestwood has evolved to become one of the state's leading mental health care providers, dedicated to offering a continuum of services that empower their clients to live and succeed in their communities.

On August 21, 2019, their newest location in Fallbrook, California celebrated its Open House as the 24th campus in the Crestwood family. Crestwood Fallbrook Healing Center, a 132-bed Mental Health Rehabilitation Center (MHRC), opened on the former grounds of Fallbrook Hospital.

I had the pleasure of speaking with Pamela Norris, Vice President of Operations. You can't help but feel a sense of calm and confidence when a campus is run by such a wonderful woman,

Crestwood Fallbrook Healing Center

BUILDING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

By *Judith A. Habert*

Photos by *Maggie Ramos*

who obviously loves her job and is extremely proud of the organization for which she works. "One of our greatest resources at Crestwood is our staff. We tell our staff during the orientation if you wouldn't put your family member or your loved one at Crestwood; you shouldn't be working here. This has been the fabric of our company for the past 51 years; we have campuses that take great pride in doing the best for our clients."

Headquartered in Sacramento, Crestwood has behavioral health campuses throughout California that provide many levels of care. They have Psychiatric Health Facilities (PHFs), which provide acute care, with clients generally remaining there for about 6-8 days. They also have MHRCs, that provide rehabilitation programs in secure, residential settings, with a focus on brief lengths of stay (6 to 12 months), as well as Adult Residential

Programs, Crisis Residential Treatment Programs, Residential Care for the Elderly and a Crisis Stabilization Unit.

Crestwood offers many innovative recovery services for their clients. One program they offer, Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), that is the only evidence-based practice that has been effective in treating people with suicide ideations. "We started Dialectical Behavior Therapy, as a recovery tool in our organization. It teaches people different skills to help them when they become dysregulated. That I would say is the foundation of all the many tools and skills we offer," said Pamela.

"Another tool we use is WRAP, and that stands for Wellness Recovery Action Plan. WRAP was started by Mary Ellen Copeland. Simplistically, WRAP comprises identifying what you look like when you're healthy. For instance, when you're



getting a good night's sleep and when you're eating properly. Then they can contrast that to what do I look like when I start to become a little bit dysregulated. Tools are then taught to help you get back to that place. We teach our clients to put supports in place. So, if I'm really knocked out of my comfort zone, I will have a support person who will say, you know, Pam, you're not taking care of yourself and let me help you. This brings accountability and wellness into their life."

"In concert with SAMHSA (Substance Abuse Mental Health Association), our staff is professionally trained in trauma-informed approaches. Our staff has said that



it has been some of the best training we have ever provided. It helped our staff to learn how to support the people we serve. It taught us all how to look at things through the lens of trauma instead of a diagnosis. The truth is that none of us go through life without experiencing trauma. And, I believe that we can be very judgmental of people, often coming to judgment without really looking beneath, and if we looked at everything through the lens of trauma, it would help us to understand why people do the things they do."

Crestwood is also proud to offer and has been recognized by SAMHSA for their beautiful, homelike and therapeutic environments for their clients which includes soft, soothing paint colors and art work, serenity rooms, comfort rooms, welcoming rooms, dining rooms, libraries, gyms, living rooms and sitting rooms which feature television screens that show virtual fish tanks for creating a relaxing environment.

Pamela has been an integral part of Crestwood for the past 24 years. She started her career with Crestwood as a nurse and was promoted throughout the years. "It is an organization that I am very proud of.

You feel our values of Family, Compassion, Commitment, Enthusiasm, Flexibility and Character from the top to the bottom of the organization. George C. Lytal is our Chief Executive Officer at Crestwood. When I received one of my promotions, he came and talked with me and he said, 'You will get to a place where you don't know what direction to go when you have a challenge. All you need to do is to look at our values and let them guide you.' And it's so true."

Learning to live with mental health issues is not easy, but if given the right tools and treatment, recovery is possible. I asked Pamela what she would like our readers to know about Crestwood and their clients. "There are so many misconceptions about people who suffer from mental health issues. We feel totally privileged to be able to serve them They are some of the most special, wonderful and resilient people. The folks that we serve have a diagnosis just like a cardiac condition or diabetes. They didn't ask for it. It's a diagnosis and they deserve compassion, love and care just like the rest of us."

For more information on Crestwood visit their site at: <https://crestwoodbehavioralhealth.com/>



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