

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Area Mental Health Agencies to Merge

Montclair, N.J. — The Mental Health Association of Essex County, Inc. (MHAEC), a Montclair-based not-for-profit mental health agency, and the Mental Health Association of Morris County, which is headquartered in Mountain Lakes, have announced formal plans to merge into a single healthcare provider serving both counties. The new organization, which is expected to be officially launched on August 1, 2017, will operate as the Mental Health Association of Essex and Morris, Inc.

According to MHAEC Executive Director Robert N. Davison, who will continue as President and CEO of the new association, “This merger is something that makes absolute sense for all parties involved in that it takes two strong, viable, community-based agencies and unites them into a single entity with even greater capacity to serve individuals and families in our communities whose lives are affected by mental illness.

“The mental health provider community in New Jersey is undergoing seismic shifts as we move into a ‘fee-for-service’ environment and, by joining forces and combining resources, this new, cross-county association will represent a ‘whole’ that is truly greater than the sum of its parts,” Davison said.

Louis A. Schwarcz, outgoing Morris President and CEO who began the merger discussions, identified ‘the best interests of all concerned’ as his reason for initiating the transition into a single agency.

“I truly believe that Morris and Essex becoming one dynamic service provider for much of the northern New Jersey region will provide the greatest benefit to the consumers and families we serve which, at the end of the day, is what matters most.

“The Mental Health Association of Essex and Morris will represent strength, stability, and greater collective capacity for our staff, our volunteers and our supporters to advance our shared mission well into the foreseeable future,” said Schwarcz.

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MENTAL HEALTH AGENCIES MERGE p.2

Said Davison, “I want to thank Lou for his indispensable leadership in this effort.

“What matters most to both of our associations is that the needs of our community’s most vulnerable populations are met in a compassionate, dignified manner.

“That commitment will continue and thrive as we move forward and help the diverse constituents we serve make progress along their journey to wellness and recovery, which is the cornerstone of both of our origins and our new partnership,” Davison said.

The Mental Health Association of Essex County has been providing services to individuals suffering from severe and persistent mental illness as well as a whole range of other behavioral health challenges since it was established in 1950. The Mental Health Association of Morris County, which was founded in 1953, has been providing remarkably similar programs and services to consumers and families in their service area. Both agencies receive the majority of their funding from the New Jersey Department of Human Services. They are also both affiliates of Mental Health America, the national umbrella organization for community-based mental health providers.

To learn more about the Mental Health Association of Essex and/or Morris Counties and the programs and services they provide, residents can call (973) 509-9777 in Essex County or (973) 334-3496 in Morris County for free, confidential information and referral services.

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