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For Immediate Release: Sept. 8, 2014

Mental Health Thought Leaders Gather for Forum in Fort Worth

The Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute and Mental Health Connection of Tarrant County host discussion of regional mental health landscape as part of Texas State of Mind tour

- Nearly 75,000 people in Tarrant County are disabled as the result of a mental condition. (Source: Tarrant Cares Public Health and Healthy Communities)
- In 2010, intentional self-harm was the second leading cause of death for adults between the ages of 25 and 34 in Tarrant County and the third leading cause of death for young people between the ages of 15 and 24. (Source: Tarrant County Public Health Department)
- MHMR of Tarrant County received 40,000 calls for mental health resources through its 24-hour line between September 1, 2013 and July 31, 2014. (Source: MHMR of Tarrant County)

These are just some of the concerns that led Mental Health Connection of Tarrant County to host the local installment of The Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute's (MMHPI) statewide "Texas State of Mind" tour. Today's event at the Fort Worth Botanic Garden brought together more than 200 mental health professionals, civic and business leaders and public officials to discuss mental health issues and best practices in Tarrant County and throughout the state.

Among the featured speakers and panelists were Tarrant County Judge Glen Whitley, Fort Worth Mayor Betsy Price, Arlington Mayor Robert Cluck and MMHPI President and Chief Executive Officer Tom Luce. Panels of local experts discussed Tarrant County issues surrounding the state of mental health services for children, veterans and individuals involved in the justice system

Wayne Carson, PhD, chair, Mental Health Connection Board of Directors, said, "The initiatives being addressed by the Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute closely align with Mental Health Connection's long-range plan. We are excited to be partnering with MMHPI to help transform mental health care, not only in Tarrant County, but throughout the state."

The Tarrant County event was the second stop on the MMHPI's "Texas State of Mind" tour. Held throughout the fall in cities around Texas, each tour event is regionally tailored, bringing

together partners, speakers and decision makers to discuss, analyze and raise public awareness on key regional and statewide mental health issues.

“With the upcoming 2015 legislative session, we have a unique opportunity to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of how mental health care is delivered to Texans,” said Luce. “In order to impact change, input from those at the local level is critical. We hope that this tour will spark thoughtful conversations about mental health issues and help us identify and implement promising best practices and policies.”

The “Texas State of Mind” tour follows the successful launch of the Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute in April 2014. The Meadows Foundation established the institute to work with partners across the state to identify best practices, explore innovative new approaches, and find policies that work to deliver efficient and effective mental health care to Texans.

About The Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute

The Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute is a nonpartisan nonprofit organization that identifies and encourages the implementation of mental health policies and practices to enable Texans to get help when and where they need it.

About Mental Health Connection of Tarrant County

Mental Health Connection is a broad collaboration of stakeholders that has been committed to the transformation of the mental health care system since 1999. Its mission is to lead the collaboration of public and private interests, healing professionals, community leaders, elected officials, individuals and families who are committed to assuring quality, accessible, culturally competent behavioral health services for everyone in Tarrant County. Its vision is “Healthy Minds, Healthy Communities.”

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