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HEALTH CENTER PARTNERS
of Southern California

Mental Health Awareness Month

Together for Mental Health

May 5, 2022

It's already May, and in many ways, life is returning to some form of normal. I have started to see some friends in small groups, mostly made up of vaccinated people. I have started to travel for work and for vacation. However, in many ways, life is different.

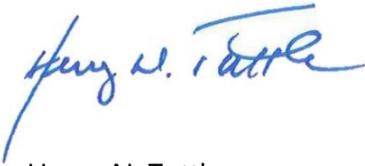
These differences might make it difficult for some to see a bright path ahead right now. There seem to be new challenges, new worries, and new threats in the world, reports of violence, not only in Ukraine, but each day in the news, and in our own communities. As a result, life can feel heavier and more challenging these days. The amount of messaging being targeted at us, who is wrong, or who has the right answers on any given topic, is only increasing through social and paid media, and it certainly will continue to increase in the coming weeks and months as the midterm elections approach.

In this new normal, I find myself thinking about how to balance both my physical health and mental health wellness, and how I can support those around me in balancing their emotional wellness, too. Also, I am reminded that I and others like me might be experiencing challenges in remaining hopeful, purposeful, and focused while leading a life of privilege. Many of the patients served by the Health Center Partners' membership face considerable struggles in their daily lives and may have moments of feeling sadness, loss, or hopelessness, too. It will be important in this new normal to recognize when we might need help, to name it, call it out for what it is, and ask for help. But that can be hard to do. Whom do we ask for what kind of help, how, and when? How can I help?

May is Mental Health Awareness Month, and this year's theme is "Together for Mental Health". By coming together as a community to advocate for the importance of mental health, we can reduce the stigma and ensure that those affected by mental illness can get the support they need. There are resources available if you or someone you know needs help. If you're anxious, depressed, or even having self-destructive thoughts, are worried about a friend or loved one, or would like emotional support, the Suicide Prevention Lifeline network is available 24/7 at 1-800-273-8255.

Mental health conditions, like depression or anxiety, are real, common, and treatable. If you or someone you know is feeling off, talk about it, and ask for or offer helpful suggestions. Mental Health America has an [online screening tool](#) that is a quick and easy way to determine if you are experiencing symptoms of a mental health condition. [Additional self-help resources can be found here.](#)

In this new next normal, I am finding it helpful to allow myself space for contemplation, consideration, to take the time, quiet time, to form a more thoughtful, holistic response to the decisions I'm asked to make. I am being intentional in scheduling time during my day to allow for this. I find that my decisions are more truthful to myself and those I serve. If you find a moment for contemplation, perhaps you will think about how your life has changed and share your thoughts with me.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Henry N. Tuttle". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Henry N. Tuttle
President and Chief Executive Officer

[Health Center Partners of Southern California](#), a family of companies, includes a 17-membership organization of federally qualified health centers, Indian Health Services Organizations, both urban and sovereign, and Planned Parenthood of the Pacific Southwest, collectively serving 917,000 patients each year, for 3.9 million patient visits each year, at 170 practice sites across San Diego, Riverside and Imperial counties, and is the seventh largest provider group in the region. [Read our latest Impact Report.](#)