



UNIVERSITY OF UTAH
HEALTH CARE



NEWS RELEASE

March 13, 2012

Contacts:

Michelle Schmitt
SLCo Mayor's Office
(385) 468-7013 office
(801) 414-0899 cell

Kathy Wilets
University of Utah Health Care
(801) 581-5717

Brad Lotterman
OptumHealth
(714) 445-0453

Mental Health Services Hits the Road with New Mobile Crisis Unit

SALT LAKE CITY – March 13, 2012 – Mayor Peter Corroon announced today the launch of a new mobile mental health crisis unit that will help increase access to mental health services for county residents. The program is a key part of the new partnership among Salt Lake County, OptumHealth and the University of Utah's Neuropsychiatric Institute (UNI).

When an individual faces a mental health crisis they often unnecessarily end up in the hospital or jail because they have nowhere else to go. To better serve people facing a mental health crisis, a new Mobile Crisis Outreach Team (UNI MCOT) will travel directly to the individual in need to provide immediate help.

"We are thrilled to offer this critical new service to residents of Salt Lake County," said Mayor Corroon. "Salt Lake County is dedicated to serving vulnerable populations, and this 24/7 crisis team takes an innovative approach to provide help to those who need it most."

There will be three UNI MCOTs serving Salt Lake County. Each team will include a licensed mental health professional and a Certified Peer Specialist. The Certified Peer Specialist is an important team member because he/she is in recovery from their own mental health issue, which can be comforting to those experiencing a mental health crisis. A psychiatrist is available by telephone for consultation to the team if needed.

When the UNI MCOT arrives on scene they conduct a psychiatric assessment and help stabilize the person. After the situation is under control, the team members will refer individuals to appropriate community mental health resources and provide consultation

to their families and care provider. The teams will also follow-up with the person to make sure he or she goes to recommended referrals or appointments.

"When a person experiences a mental health crisis it's important to get them treatment and support as soon as possible," said Rick Elorreaga, executive director for OptumHealth® Salt Lake County. "The UNI MCOT enhances Salt Lake County's mental health system by making it easier for people to access the mental health services they need to ultimately reach long-term recovery."

The teams will operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week. UNI MCOTs will be dispatched when an individual, family member or community stakeholder calls the county crisis line (801-587-3000). The team can also be activated when law enforcement requests backup in crisis situations. Services begin on March 15.

The UNI MCOT is managed by OptumHealth as part of its contract with Salt Lake County. The service is operated by University of Utah's Neuropsychiatric Institute.

About University of Utah Health Care

University of Utah Health Care is the Intermountain West's only academic health care system, providing leading-edge and compassionate medicine for the people of Utah and surrounding states. The health system includes four hospitals – University of Utah Hospital; the University of Utah Orthopaedic Center; University Neuropsychiatric Institute; and Huntsman Cancer Hospital – with more than 1,000 physicians offering more than 200 medical specialties. It is consistently ranked as one of the top hospital systems in the country by U.S. News & World Report and has been named among the top 10 academic medical centers for the past two years in the annual Quality and Accountability Study conducted by the University HealthSystem Consortium.

About OptumHealth

OptumHealth is part of Optum, an information and technology-enabled health services company dedicated to making the health system work better for everyone. OptumHealth is a leader in population health management, helping approximately 60 million Americans navigate the health care system, finance their health care needs and achieve their health and well-being goals. OptumHealth supports the physical, mental and financial health of individuals with solutions offered through employers, health plans, public sector programs and health care providers. Visit www.optumhealth.com for more information.

About Salt Lake County Division of Behavioral Health

The Salt Lake County Division of Behavioral Health Services is one of nine major divisions within the Department of Human Services. The Division is responsible for administering substance abuse and mental health services for Salt Lake County residents under the direction of the Mayor and Local Authority (County Council). The Division of Behavioral Health Services contracts either directly with private providers or administrative agencies to provide the services. Some of our core functions include: advocacy coordination between providers and clients, annual evaluations of all contracted mental health and substance abuse services, and monitor requirement compliance for government funding sources.