

Peer 613 Now Open for Crisis Services



La Junta, CO—December 4, 2014—Southeast Health Group

Southeast Health Group recently opened peer-run crisis services at 613 Barnes Avenue in La Junta. “The crisis facility will provide a new level of care for people experiencing emotional distress,” said JC Carrica, Chief Operating Officer. “The local facility provides walk-in support for adults seeking a calm, safe environment and someone to talk with for a while. Even if you have never received services at Southeast Health Group before, you are welcome at Peer 613.”

Kristi Roe, who has been with Southeast Health Group since 2007, manages the facility and program. Kristi began her career teaching life skills to individuals with developmental disabilities in La Junta, taking on increasing levels of responsibility. As a case manager for Southeast Health Group, Roe served as a representative payee and coordinated care for individuals with severe mental illnesses before being promoted to her new position. “I am excited about this new position, growing the peer program and improving our services to better meet the needs of our community,” said Roe.

“Peer 613” is a new concept in crisis support for people who would otherwise end up in the emergency room because of anxiety, depression or other overwhelming feelings. They are set up just like your living room at home, with a few comfy chairs, soothing music and a warm mug of coffee or tea. Guests visit during the day to regain a sense of balance. The house is staffed by “peers”—people who have recovered from crises of their own and understand what it’s like to feel overwhelmed.

Peer 613 is currently hiring Peer Specialist staff positions. “We are still ramping up our services, but hope to be open from 8:00-5:00, Monday through Friday when we are fully staffed,” said Carrica. Peer Specialists are trained to teach coping skills that help people deal with negative situations and feelings. Peers can help you recognize and use your own strengths to problem-solve. People are welcomed as fellow human beings, rather than ‘patients’, and the focus is on *helping*, not judging.

Spurred by the Aurora Theater tragedy in 2012, the State Legislature set aside \$20 million annually to increase crisis services around the state. “We are grateful for the opportunity to enhance crisis services within our rural and frontier region, building on our existing relationships and cultural knowledge of the people who live here,” said Carrica.

For more information about services at Southeast Health Group’s “Peer 613”, call 1-800-511-5446, or walk-in at 613 Barnes Avenue in La Junta. To apply for a Peer Specialist position, please check out the Employment page at www.southeasthealthgroup.org. Need assistance or have questions? Don't hesitate to contact SHG at 800-511-5446.