FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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HONORING OUR VETERANS THROUGH LOCAL ACCESS TO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES

SACRAMENTO, CA – The County Behavioral Health Directors Association (CBHDA) marks Veteran’s Day with a reminder that county mental health and substance use disorder services are a resource to help serve our communities’ active duty services members, Veterans of the United States Armed Forces, and their families.

“The toll of war on our military members doesn’t end when they come home and have completed their service. California’s county behavioral health directors honor the sacrifice of Veterans, service members, and their families by providing the mental health and substance use services and supports that help our soldiers access care and achieve recovery,” said Phebe Bell, Behavioral Health Director of Nevada County, and CBHDA Board Secretary-Treasurer.

According to the federal estimates, just half of Veterans receive the mental health care they need. While the number of Veterans suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) varies by era, it is estimated that just over 2 out of 10 Veterans with PTSD also have a Substance Use Disorder. In 2018, just under nine percent of all homeless adults were Veterans. An estimated 17 Veterans die by suicide each day.

Nevada County’s Welcome Home Vets program is just one example of how counties across California address the specific challenges Veterans encounter related to their service and re-entry into civilian life. Prior to the development of this county program, some Veterans with combat-related Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) diagnosed by the Veteran’s Administration were required to travel up to one and a half hours for continued treatment through the VA’s contracted providers, which served as a barrier to treatment. Nevada County’s Welcome Home Vets is funded by the Mental Health Services Act to bring those mental health services to Veterans in their local community, and to keep those Veterans engaged in the treatment they need. The Welcome Home Vets program has also connected Veterans and their families with other services such as SSI/SSDI benefits, Social Services benefits, and Veterans’ benefits through the Veterans Services Office. To date, several hundred Veterans have participated in the Welcome Home Vets program offered by Nevada County.

Each Mind Matters, a county-supported organization working to end mental health stigma, has developed this web page with California and national information and resources for Veterans’ mental health, including where Veterans can get help in a crisis: https://www.eachmindmatters.org/mental-health/veterans/

The County Behavioral Health Directors Association is a statewide non-profit association that represents all 58 county behavioral health directors and two city mental health programs (Berkeley and Tri-City) which is dedicated to advocating for public policy and services on behalf of people who are living with substance use disorders and mental illness.

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1 https://www.ptsd.va.gov/understand/common/common_veterans.asp
2 https://www.ptsd.va.gov/understand/related/substance_abuse_vet.asp