



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dec. 3, 2012

## **ADHS and Magellan Receive National Honor For Successful Suicide Deterrent Program**

PHOENIX – The Arizona Department of Health Services/ Division of Behavioral Health Services and Magellan Health Services of Arizona have been selected as one of the national winners of the Council of State Governments (CSG) Innovations Awards. Together, ADHS and Magellan have changed the culture in the public sector behavioral health care workforce to tackle the silence and stigma of suicide.

“We work hard every day to save Arizona lives from public health threats,” said Arizona Department of Health Services Director Will Humble. “Though suicide is not thought of as a health threat, and we don’t hear about on the news like meningitis or influenza, it is a state-wide priority. We are glad to be at the forefront of suicide prevention nationwide.”

“We are delighted to have partnered with ADHS to win this prestigious national competition,” David Covington, vice president, Adult & Youth Services for Magellan, said. “But moreover we are thrilled to have our suicide deterrence work in Arizona recognized as a best practice. We hope that other states will be able to utilize our experience and implement similar programs so that we may achieve a turning point in the suicide rate for individuals with mental illness nationwide.”

Arizona’s Programmatic Suicide Deterrent System launched in 2009 and has evolved from a training initiative for behavioral health professionals to a comprehensive national model addressing one of the most at-risk populations – individuals diagnosed with mental illness.

Since its inception, the initiative has trained more than 3,000 behavioral health care staff to recognize the signs and symptoms of suicide in persons with mental illness, and to help these individuals stay safe and seek help, as needed. The program has also addressed the issues of family engagement and support groups for suicide attempt survivors and has developed clinical tools and procedures for assessing risk and appropriately intervening.

-more-

## **ADHS and Magellan Receive National Honor/2**

The program has become far reaching and now includes a partnership with the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) in developing an innovative clinical care and intervention framework and enhanced engagement programs.

CSG began presenting Innovations Awards in 1986 to bring greater visibility to exemplary state programs and to facilitate the transfer of those successful experiences to other states.

###

### **About Arizona Department of Health Services Division of Behavioral Health Services**

Created in 1986, the Arizona Department of Health Services/Division of Behavioral Health Services (ADHS/DBHS) serves as the state authority to provide coordination, planning, administration, regulation and monitoring of all facets of the state public behavioral health system. ADHS/DBHS contracts with community based organizations, known as Regional Behavioral Health Authorities (RBHAs), to administer behavioral health services throughout the State. RBHAs function in a fashion similar to a health maintenance organization. [www.azdhs.gov/bhs](http://www.azdhs.gov/bhs)

### **About Magellan Health Services of Arizona**

Magellan Health Services of Arizona is the Regional Behavioral Health Authority for central Arizona, which includes all of Maricopa County and part of Pinal County. In this role, Magellan serves as a critical point of connection to the more than 80,000 individuals who have experienced life challenges as a result of mental illness and substance abuse. Magellan gives these individuals voice and choice to realize their desired outcomes and supports them with caring, unrivaled customer service that is sensitive to the diversity of our communities. For more information, visit [www.MagellanofAZ.com](http://www.MagellanofAZ.com) or call Magellan of Arizona at (800) 564-5465, TTY (800) 424-9831. Information is available in English and Spanish.

### **About The Council of State Governments**

CSG is our nation's only organization serving all three branches of state government. CSG is a region-based forum that fosters the exchange of insights and ideas to help state officials shape public policy. This offers unparalleled regional, national and international opportunities to network, develop leaders, collaborate and create problem-solving partnerships. [www.csg.org](http://www.csg.org)

#### **Media Contacts:**

*ADHS*  
Laura Oxley, Communications Director  
(602) 542-1094 - Direct  
[Laura.Oxley@azdhs.gov](mailto:Laura.Oxley@azdhs.gov)

*Magellan*  
Mary Ehlert, MS, ABC, Communications Director  
(602) 350-6432 – Cell  
[meehlert@magellanhealth.com](mailto:meehlert@magellanhealth.com)

*Magellan: Spanish Language Media*  
Ramiro Camarillo, Community Outreach  
(602) 572-8282 – Direct  
[rcamarillo@magellanhealth.com](mailto:rcamarillo@magellanhealth.com)