

NEWS BY YOU

Integrated health care treats mind, body

Submitted by Kurt R. Sheppard, CEO of Valle del Sol, a health-care company.

Too often in health care, the body is treated while the mind is left to anguish, preventing the patient from total wellness. While they are two separate entities, they must work in tandem to ensure an overall healthy lifestyle.

That's why in August 2011, Magellan Health Services, the regional behavioral-health authority for Maricopa County, launched, with Gov. Jan Brewer's help, its Integrated Health Homes.

Valle del Sol manages physical and behavioral health needs at our integrated care clinic in Phoenix and provide behavioral health services, youth and family services, and workforce development services at our locations Valley-wide.

Because of its integrated structure, our clinic serves patients by having access to information through an electronic system and through face-to-face meetings with doctors who have treated them for either their behavioral or physical

health needs.

For example, if a doctor is worried about a possible behavioral cause of a physical ailment, a behavioral-health specialist who might have seen the patient before is just a quick walk up the stairs.

When a patient was following up at the clinic after going to the emergency room for dizziness, loss of energy, decreased appetite and weight loss, his mother requested behavioral health to be notified. After the physician spoke with the behavioral-health specialist, he immediately requested to see the patient and spoke with him for 20 minutes to determine his weight loss was due to a medical reason, not a behavioral one, and medication was started to improve his appetite and dizziness.

The clinic has a dedicated and caring staff that believes in treating the whole person. One such staff member is pediatrician Dr. Anne Young. Young has been with the clinic since July 2012 and has brought an energy and dedication to her patients on a daily basis that is difficult to match.