



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Former King/Drew Medical Center Being Transformed Into Cutting-Edge MLK Behavioral Health Center**

The Board of Supervisors approved transforming the long-shuttered King/Drew Medical Center in Willowbrook into the state-of-the-art Martin Luther King, Jr. Behavioral Health Center slated to open in late 2020.

Closed since 2007, King/Drew Medical Center will undergo a \$322-million renovation to become the MLK Behavioral Health Center. One of the first facilities of its kind, the MLK Behavioral Health Center is envisioned to provide integrated inpatient, outpatient and supportive services for some of Los Angeles County's most vulnerable populations, including those struggling with mental illness, substance use disorders and homelessness, and those who have been involved in the criminal justice system.

"This pioneering project will bring much-needed integrated mental health, substance use and medical services throughout the region," said Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, who championed the project. "This sorely needed investment will deliver cutting-edge care for the residents of Los Angeles County, with the goal of fostering long-term community wellness."

The MLK Behavioral Health Center will house clinical and behavioral staff from the Departments of Mental Health, Public Health and Health Services. It will also have staff from the Departments of Probation and Workforce Development, Aging and Community

Services to provide rehabilitative, vocational and training opportunities intended to give people the skills they need to reintegrate into society.

“By revitalizing the former MLK Hospital as an integrated Behavioral Health Center that delivers resources across the continuum of care, we will be able to provide desperately needed treatment services and recovery opportunities to our County’s most vulnerable populations,” LA County Mental Health Director Dr. Jonathan Sherin said.

“We are uniquely positioned to offer hope for our residents struggling with behavioral health concerns through an integrated approach that places patients at the center,” added LA County Public Health Director Dr. Barbara Ferrer.

LA County Probation Chief Terri McDonald said, “The ability of Probation staff to connect our clients to critical onsite reentry services, such as behavioral health counseling and job training, improves client outcomes and community safety.”

LA County’s Office of Diversion and Reentry will also operate at the MLK Behavioral Health Center. The Office’s director, retired judge Peter Espinoza, said, “With the MLK Behavioral Health Center, the people we serve will have an easily accessible location in the community from which to take advantage of the critical mental health, substance use, housing and job readiness services that they need to successfully reenter society after a stint in the criminal justice system.”

The MLK Behavioral Health Center will be latest addition to the 42-acre [MLK Medical Campus](#), which already includes the [MLK Community Hospital](#), [MLK Outpatient Center](#), [MLK Recuperative Care Center](#), [MLK Mental Health Urgent Care Clinic](#), and [MLK Center for Public Health](#).

The campus is still expanding and, within months, will include a new Child and Family Well-Being Center. Scheduled to open in mid-2019, it will include the newly expanded MLK Pediatric HUB, an Autism Screening and Treatment Center, and a Family Justice Center. This collaboration will be the first of its kind to serve children and adolescents, as well as individuals and families fleeing intimate partner and domestic violence.

Meanwhile, the MLK Medical Office Building, where patients can see doctors for routine visits and specialized treatments, is slated to become a part of the campus in mid-2020.

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