



Be Well
ORANGE COUNTY



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COUNTY**



CalOptima Health

Representative Lou
Correa
FOR CALIFORNIA'S 46TH DISTRICT



Cottie Petrie-Norris
CALIFORNIA STATE ASSEMBLYWOMAN

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Be Well OC Breaks Ground on Irvine Health and Wellness Campus

- *Irvine campus will provide best-in-class clinical services for mental health and substance use for children, adolescents, adults and families, plus wrap-around wellness support to the entire community*
- *Set to open in 2025, campus is modeled after the successful Be Well Orange Campus which opened in January 2021*
- *Drawing from the initiatives put forth by the state, the county has forged a path that combines accessibility, inclusivity and a holistic approach to mental health services*

Irvine, CA. October 16, 2023 – Be Well OC marked the groundbreaking of its new Irvine campus today, joined by officials representing the State of California, County of Orange, CalOptima Health, the City of Irvine, local non-profit hospital partners, and multicultural and multifaith partners. The ceremony was held at the site of the new campus at 7800 Marine Way, Irvine, California.

“With a commitment to prioritizing mental well-being, Orange County has pioneered innovative approaches to address the complex challenges of mental health. Drawing from the initiatives put forth by the state, the County has forged a path that creates an accessible, comprehensive and holistic approach to mental health services,” said Orange County Board of Supervisors Chairman, Don Wagner, Third District. “Orange County has fostered a community where individuals can find support, resources and hope on their journey to wellness.”

Orange County has emerged as a leader in the transformative landscape of mental health care, aligning itself seamlessly with the recent passage of SB 326. With a commitment to prioritizing mental well-being, Orange County has pioneered innovative approaches to address the complex challenges of mental health. Drawing from the initiatives put forth by the state, the county has forged a path that combines accessibility, inclusivity and a holistic approach to mental health services, and has fostered a community where individuals can find support, resources and hope on their journey to wellness.

“Orange County is transforming the way patients access mental health care,” said Orange County Board of Supervisors Vice Chairman Andrew Do, First District. “In 2015, then-Supervisor Lisa Bartlett and I formed the County’s first-ever Mental Ad Hoc Committee and began working on building an integrated and regionally coordinated System of Care. This led to the creation of the first Be Well OC Campus. This new campus in Irvine will make it possible to deliver on our promise to provide every patient with the treatment and quality care they deserve.”



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The Be Well OC Irvine campus is located on 22 acres of county-owned property that was deeded to the County of Orange as part of the Closure Realignment Act in the 1990s, on the former Marine Corps Air Station El Toro. The long-term vision for the Irvine Campus is to provide a full continuum of mental health and wellness services for children, adolescents, families and adults in Orange County, from urgent care to residential treatment to community wellness support.

The Campus will be developed in three areas, beginning with Area 1 which includes approximately 75,000 square feet of building space to house an array of adult services, including crisis stabilization mental health urgent care, a sobering center, and residential and outpatient programs. The community has been instrumental in identifying the types of services and programs needed to help children, adults and families reach their optimal mental health.

Area 2 is planned for child, youth and perinatal specialty programming, expanding both residential and outpatient services capacity while supporting the entire family. Area 3 will expand opportunities for community connections by providing space for educational programs and classrooms, centralized support and navigation services, community meetings, interfaith and multicultural event space, and youth and senior centers.

“The opening of our second Be Well facility in Orange County represents our commitment to providing accessible and quality mental health services to our county residents, regardless of their ability to pay,” said Supervisor Vicente Sarmiento, Second District. We know only 36% of Latinos received mental health services compared to non-Hispanic Whites (52%). This facility is a vital step towards building out the capacity needed to meet the ever-growing demand for essential mental health services for our diverse communities.”

“Modeled after the successful Be Well Orange Campus, which opened January 2021, the Be Well Irvine Campus will be a safe place where families can receive comprehensive best-in-class mental health and substance abuse treatment,” said Supervisor Doug Chaffee, Fourth District. “We have seen the success in the county, and trust that this new campus’s services will be available to all Orange County residents, regardless of insurance type or ability to pay.”

In addition to much needed clinical services, the Irvine location will provide wrap-around wellness support to families and the entire community such as entry navigation services to connect residents and families to care and services across the County, including a multi-entity health care collective integrating public and private health systems across Orange County with youth and community education and enrichment. Services will be available to all Orange County residents.

“Once the Irvine Be Well campus opens its doors, South County’s children, youth, and families will finally have a place for mental health crisis stabilization – regardless of their income,” said Supervisor Katrina Foley, Fifth District. “Be Well Irvine proves Orange County continually invests in creative health, wellness, and resiliency programs for our community.”



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The Campus' design is intentional - low density, modern, simple, warm and inviting—seamlessly integrating indoor areas and extensive outdoor gathering areas, classrooms, gardens, and activity spaces. The inviting outdoor environment will also foster community engagement and wellness. From the gardens to the walking paths, the open lawn, gathering and lounging area, and the regionally appropriate landscaping, the connectivity of outdoor and indoor promotes well-being, creating a sense of dignity, belonging and calm while bringing a sense of hope and clarity.

“Orange County is leading the state in delivering an integrative and innovative system of behavioral and mental health care to address the crisis that exists in our county among our most vulnerable residents,” said Assemblywoman Cottie Petrie-Norris (D-Irvine). “I’m proud to have secured \$16.5 million in state budget funding toward construction of the Be Well OC Irvine campus, as well as to deploy mental health response teams in the cities of Huntington Beach, Irvine and Laguna Beach, which will help transform the lives of those suffering from behavioral and mental health challenges.”

Orange County is not only breaking down stigmas surrounding mental health but also serving as a model for other counties to emulate in the quest for a brighter, healthier future for all.

“This is a tremendous next step for the Be Well OC movement and the Orange County community, said Rick Afable, MindOC Board Chair and interim CEO of Be Well OC. “By uniting public, private, academic and faith-based organizations, Be Well OC is unifying the community to build a more compassionate and comprehensive system of behavioral and mental health care to benefit all residents. Our goal is to become a vital part of Orange County’s robust healthcare ecosystem responding to the community’s mental health and wellness needs and offering services to all OC residents. We look forward to working collaboratively with the community as we plan and prepare for the opening of the Irvine Campus.”

The Orange County Board of Supervisors (OCBOS) approved \$40 million for the construction of the Irvine campus. In addition, \$15 million was approved by the CalOptima Health Board of Directors, \$37.6 million in BHCIP grant funding from the State of California, \$12 million for capital was secured by Assemblywoman Cottie Petrie-Norris, \$2 million in Federal dollars was secured by Congressman Lou Correa (CA-46) in the Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23) omnibus appropriations bill, along with additional investments from MemorialCare, Hoag and Kaiser Permanente.

“As the public health plan for almost one million residents in Orange County, CalOptima Health is proud to support Be Well OC’s Irvine campus as it will provide critical access to mental health and substance use treatments for our members,” said Michael Hunn, CEO, CalOptima Health.

ABOUT BE WELL OC

Be Well OC is a transformative initiative bringing together public, private, academic and faith-based organizations, as well as others, to create a coordinated system of mental health care and support for all Orange County residents. The Be Well OC mental health system, which also includes



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substance use services, features a world-class mental health and wellness facility in Orange and a robust mobile response program currently serving 7 cities. Be Well OC's movement spans across all cities of Orange County and a range of needs, from prevention and early intervention to crisis aversion, acute care and recovery. For more information visit bewelloc.org.

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