



Parish of Ascension

OFFICE OF THE PARISH PRESIDENT

KENNY MATASSA
Parish President

Ascension Counseling Center Launches Resource Referral Department

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GONZALES – Ascension Parish President Kenny Matassa announced the Ascension Counseling Center is launching a new Resource Referral Department.

“This service being offered by our Ascension Counseling Center will enable parish residents to find the help they need, whether it is health services or the large umbrella of social services that are available here in Ascension Parish and the surrounding metro area,” said President Matassa.

Suzanne Hamilton, director of the Ascension Counseling Center, said these types of services are usually free or low cost. Hamilton said Gina Melancon, a registered nurse at the center, will oversee the department.

“We think of it as a ‘one stop’ to get any kind of assistance that one might need,” Hamilton said. “For instance if our clients come and need other kinds of help in addition to the counseling we provide to them, Gina will link them to people who offer help for their particular needs. Gina actively seeks out entities, churches and agencies in the community that will help people in any kind of need.”

For instance, Melancon said medical home models are available to indigent populations in the parish. The medical home is best described as a model or philosophy of primary care that is patient-centered, comprehensive, team-based, coordinated, accessible, and focused on quality and safety, according to the Patient-Centered Primary Care Collaborative. It has become a widely accepted model for how primary care should be organized and delivered throughout the health care system, and is a philosophy of health care delivery

that encourages providers and care teams to meet patients where they are, from the simplest to the most complex conditions.

“This will provide those patients with a primary care doctor who can refer them to specialists through the LSU system so that it is no cost to these people that don’t have any insurance,” Melancon said. “They are a branch off of St. Elizabeth Hospital and have a clinic at the health unit next to the counseling center.”

Melancon said resources available include those for autism, support groups, pediatrics, utilities aid, housing, employment, educational programs, food banks, addiction detox facilities, health screenings, female health services, domestic abuse shelters, vision and dental services, crisis intervention, and aid provided by churches to name a few.

“There are so many people in need in our community and there are so many resources out there,” Hamilton. “Because we are so close to it, we see the resources and we think everybody knows about them but they don’t. So it’s really important that we come up with a way to get this information out to the community.”

For more information about all resources being offered, please call Gina Melancon with the Ascension Counseling Center’s Resource Referral Department at (225) 450-1167. They are located at 1112 S.E. Ascension Complex Ave., Suite A, Gonzales, La. 70737.



PHOTO CUTLINE –Gina Melancon (left) a registered nurse and Resource Referral Department manager with the Ascension Counseling Center shows informational display literature about Autism to Director Suzanne Hamilton. Melancon is managing the center’s new Resource Referral Department and will assist residents with finding information and available services for their specific needs. “Serving as a main liaison to residents and community resources, our goal is to increase public awareness of those available resources and determine other needed resources that may benefit our community in the future,” Melancon said.