



**DECEMBER 16, 2009**

## **Kern County Mental Health Department Is Recognized As A Top Mental Health Provider in California**

The Kern County Mental Health Department has been recognized as one of the top county mental health providers in the State. Out of 58 counties in California, Kern County Mental Health was one of only twelve counties to receive the label “Highest Performer” based on an independent review.

APS Healthcare, an external quality review organization contracted by the State Department of Mental Health, conducts annual quality assessments with site reviews that examine multiple indicators including quality of service delivery, organizational culture, evidence-based decision making, and workforce development. Also included are comments by consumers and family members.

Dr. Jim Waterman, Director of Kern County Mental Health, said Kern’s high rating is particularly noteworthy in the current difficult fiscal climate. “State budget reductions are requiring significant changes in County mental health departments across California,” Dr. Waterman said. “Kern County Mental Health has been able to preserve its focus on quality services and on our belief that individuals with serious mental illnesses can and do recover. With the enormous amount of uncertainty about the future of mental health care in California, it is helpful to have our reviewers confirm that we are continuing to provide quality mental health services to the residents of Kern County.”

An Executive Summary of the July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009 review is posted on the Department’s website at [www.co.kern.ca.us/kcmh](http://www.co.kern.ca.us/kcmh) and can also be found on the APS Healthcare website at [www.apshealthcare.com](http://www.apshealthcare.com)

