

Letter: It is time to act

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Del Norte County is in a homelessness and mental health crisis. We should not throw money at a temporary short-term solution to a long-term problem.

Opioid and stimuli drug use is prominent in our community. We should offer rehabilitation and compassionate care to addicts, not slap handcuffs and arrange a court date to see a judge. Our mental health crisis is interconnected to our homelessness crisis. We should not piss test or means test social services eligibility. Privacy should be a fundamental guaranteed human right.

Yes, the persons/individual(s) should meet the criteria and requirement to receive such services. The governor and the California State Legislature should recognize our mental health crisis goes along with our homelessness crisis. Project HomeKey/RoomKey is a compassionate and well-intentioned program, although it is a temporary short-term solution, not a long-term solution. We need a permanent and long-term solution. The novel coronavirus (COVID-19) exacerbated our mental crisis and homelessness crisis, respectively. Isolation, anxiety, depression, suicidal ideation and substance drug use is rampant and prevalent today.

Sidenote: Do not be afraid or ashamed to seek help and counsel.

I suggest our county and city, respectively, get serious about our mental health crisis. We need more funding and resources in our mental health system.

This should be a community effort, because it is a public health and public safety issue. From our peace officers, social workers, to our teachers and school resource officers.

I suggest, and humbly request the county put a ballot initiative to address and reform our mental health resources and services, and homelessness prevention priorities.

We must regulate the housing market and the real estate industry at a state and federal level. The time to act is now. If we do not act, we fail our community.

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