

State launches new crisis hotline to help those affected by Tucson tragedy

By Christina Boomer

TEMPE, AZ - A statewide crisis hotline has been created to help those affected by the tragic mass shooting in Tucson on Saturday.

We are aware that even as this story unfolds it is impacting people across the state, said David Covington of Magellan Health Services.

Covington was talking to ABC15 from the Maricopa Crisis Recovery Network in Tempe, this is the crisis psychiatric call center for Maricopa County.

Magellan has partnered with Arizona's Department of Health Services to launch a statewide crisis hotline, that would be able to support those that wanted to talk about their grief, about their anger, about their sadness, about this event.

Covington is also a counselor who said some people may experience anxiety and when that feeling begins to interfere with your day to day life, to include having trouble eating and sleeping, is when you really need to consider talking to somebody.

The new hotline went live Monday night at 5 p.m. and less than 24 hours later they had already fielded 40 calls.

Covington said, The idea was to quickly launch something that could be available to anyone who is feeling distressed, being a little overwhelmed by the situation where a caring professional is available 24 hours a day on the phone to be able to help out.

Behavioral health clinicians sit in rows of cubicles armed with a headset and lots of training.

They listen, counsel and refer to area resources when necessary.

When you have people's lives who have been lost in Tucson with this tragedy people are touched by that and it's going to have varying degrees of impact.

The hotline number is 1-800-203-CARE (2273).

http://www.abc15.com/dpp/news/region_southeast_valley/tempe/state-launches-new-crisis-hotline-to-help-those-affected-by-tucson-tragedy