Southeast Mental Health Services (SEMHS) is building a 4,300 square foot facility on the health care campus in Lamar, Colorado. This new facility supports SEMHS’ programmatic efforts to integrate mental health with mainstream healthcare. Close proximity to the local hospital, community health clinic, dental annex, adult wellness center and assisted living facility will increase access to health care services and reduce stigma for our clients. Zoning laws and a not-in-my-backyard attitude prevented SEMHS from placing its existing facility near other healthcare providers when it was constructed in 1996. Currently, clients must drive out to the industrial park to receive mental health services, which is morally demeaning and a barrier to coordinated, whole-person care.

The new building is designed to serve up to 1,000 unduplicated individuals annually for mental health and co-occurring substance abuse treatment. It is literally located across the parking lot from other health care providers. Inspired by the native short-grass prairie that lies undisturbed to the south of the one-acre building site, the building itself is organized along a central corridor that serves all of the programmed spaces, including eight counseling offices, a group room, a conference room, two restrooms, a storage room, a telecommunications room, a mail and copy center and a break room. Clients will be welcomed into the building by an atrium space, a reception area, and a large waiting and lounge area. A covered back patio overlooks the native prairie.

The new facility will be completed in May, and a public open house is planned for Monday afternoon, June 4th, 2012.

—Nancy King, Marketing SEMHS