

## Forum to address Brown County mental health care (2.28.07)

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Forum to address Brown County Mental Health Care

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A local nonprofit group announced Tuesday it is planning a public forum March 13 regarding mental health care issues in Brown County.

JOSHUA, a coalition of faith-based groups in the Green Bay area, is sponsoring the forum "Falling Through the Cracks: What's Happening with Mental Health Issues in Brown County?"

"We believe the county will build a new mental health center, but in talking about that, people are still hearing about problems," said member Julie Van Klooster.

"There are a lot of questions about what's happening."

The forum will be from 7 to 9 p.m. at First United Methodist Church, 501 Howe St., Green Bay.

It is designed to clear up public questions about politics and changes at the county's mental health center, 2900 St. Anthony Drive, Green Bay, in addition to other community facilities and services. The Brown County Board has voted unanimously several times to move forward on construction of a \$16.7 million facility. Total project costs could exceed that amount.

Van Klooster said some professionals working with mentally ill people are struggling to find appropriate care in Brown County.

The forum will attempt to address those problems in an open, public format.

At least six panelists have been invited. They will be representing the following agencies or interests: the county's Human Services Department, Green Bay Police Department, American Foundation of Counseling Services, Professional Guardianships Inc., Compass Development, and families of patients or consumers.

Each panelist will speak briefly about his/her concerns, after which questions from the public will be entertained. For information contact JOSHUA at (920) 362-1511.

"We're hoping for turnout of at least 60 people," Van Klooster said.