

Riverview Psychiatric Center

A Safe and Secure, Knowledge-Based Treatment Facility That is Recognized as a Center of Excellence

Background

Shortly after a change in leadership at Riverview Psychiatric Center, in March 2014, Superintendent Jay Harper began working with DHHS leadership to identify both hospital and systems barriers that were inhibiting the development of this 92-bed state psychiatric hospital and community forensic outpatient services into a Center of Excellence providing the most effective and appropriate treatment for all of our patients.

This vision is for a safe and secure facility that employs knowledgeable staff members who believe that recovery from serious and persistent mental illness is possible with effective treatment strategies and support. Staff must be supported and motivated to continue to develop skills, build additional knowledge and use best practices that have been proven to be effective in order to lead Riverview to being recognized as a Center of Excellence.

Part of achieving this goal is ensuring that services are accessible and delivered in a safe and appropriate environment and meet patients' needs.

What follows in this document is an update of accomplishments at Riverview over the last three years by areas of focus, as well as information about work that is currently underway and bills that are currently being deliberated at the Legislature.

A Safe and Secure Riverview

Accomplishments

- Added four acuity specialists to begin to address the needs of patients when experiencing behavioral deregulation.
- Completed Phase One of the installation of additional security cameras
- Trained staff in Motivational Interviewing and Nonviolent Communication, two programs that have proven track records in de-escalating unit acuity.
- Initiated the training of Acuity Specialists in Management of Aggressive Behaviors and case consultations from the psychology department for Acuity Specialists

In Process

- Installation of phase two of enhanced security cameras with secure back up
- Improvement of our duress pager system that alerts staff and first responders to patient and staff incidents – both medical and psychiatric

- Modifications of door locks to increase both internal and external security. These have helped to prohibit patients from wandering into staff areas and also reduce lower grade locks for external doors
- Expanding Acuity Specialists positions by 16

Awaiting Legislative Action and/or New Fiscal Budget

- Behavioral Assessment and Safety Unit (BASE) created for forensic patients prior to their admission to the open milieu treatment setting
- Appropriate legal procedures established for medicating patients who object to taking medications who are Sixty-Day Evaluations, deemed Incompetent to Stand Trial, Not Criminally Responsible and jail holds

A Knowledge-Based Treatment Facility

Accomplishments

- Converted three meeting rooms (including one class room) for teleconferencing allowing staff to exchange and review materials with the Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth College
- Expanded the occupational therapy program to provide a focus on life skills necessary for successful transition from the hospital to the community
- Doubled the number of available psychologists through an expanded internship and post-doctoral program
- Established a risk assessment protocol for all patients with enhanced risk assessment for all forensic patients
- Implemented protocols and procedures to add transparency for all incident reporting including daily review, so that adjustments can be made to address treatment and security concerns
- Reestablished treatment groups based on current research
- Added equine therapy and pet therapy for patients as part of a trauma-informed care focus

In Process

- Overhaul of the Electronic Health Records System continues
- Enhanced case conferences to focus on hospital wide clinical practice of complex cases.
- Data mining of trends in seclusion, psychiatric emergencies, restraints, pharmacological interventions and staff managements are ongoing to determine best resource application

A Center of Excellence

Accomplishments

- Regained full State licensure and Joint Commission accreditation
- Collaborated with Dartmouth College's research projects on measures of patient violence and therapeutic outcomes from a community drumming group for reducing anxiety measures.
- Promoted a series of supplemental trainings for all staff in motivational interviewing; non-violent communication; mental health first aid; cultural sensitivity; boundaries in therapeutic relations; traumatic brain injury; and abnormal psychology (specifically personality disorders)
- Establish a post incident support team of Riverview staff clinicians

In Process

- Moving away from a care model that emphasized containment to one that emphasizes treatment
- Continued expansion of psychology and occupational services
- Supporting nurses who are eligible for Psychiatric certification by providing training, tuition and testing support
- Providing in-house training to help mental health workers acquire CNAs
- Earning certification from the American Psychology Association to establish a gold standard psychology internship program
- Securing CMS certification for hospital services following removal of patients from Riverview who no longer need hospital-level care
- Expanding outpatient services in the community to support forensic patients with modified release to live independently in the community with an emphasis on gainful employment whenever possible to promote stability

Awaiting Legislative Action

- Establish appropriate alternative therapeutic programs for patients and develop up to 14 residential beds for those who no longer require hospital-level care but lack court-approved modified release