Our Mission

The Mission of Natchaug Hospital is to provide a continuum of accessible, community-based services for those living with psychiatric illness and chemical dependency, or emotional and related educational disabilities, with a commitment to the dignity and privacy of those needing services, empowering them to participate in their own care and recovery.

The Mission of Hartford HealthCare is to improve the health and healing of the people and communities we serve.

Our Vision

Natchaug Hospital:
Helping people find their way.

Hartford HealthCare:
Nationally respected for excellence in patient care and most trusted for personalized coordinated care.

Accreditation & Licensure

• Licensed by Connecticut Department of Public Health
• Surveyed by the Joint Commission using Hospital and Behavioral Health Standards
• Licensed and surveyed by the Department of Children & Families
• Special education programs are approved by Connecticut’s Department of Education
• Participates in most insurance and managed care programs
• Approved by Medicaid and Medicare
• A member of Hartford HealthCare the Behavioral Health Network
**Expertise. Access. Excellence.** It’s the theme of Hartford HealthCare’s annual reports this year, and what Natchaug Hospital is all about.

Throughout this report, you will read about exciting accomplishments in the past year. None of this could have happened without the expertise and compassion of every staff member at every level of this organization, on and off site and every shift.

We want to thank everyone for your participation in improving the care we provide to our patients and solidifying our status as a safety net for the community. It takes a unique combination of expertise and compassion to care for behavioral health patients who are sometimes vulnerable, traumatized and discriminated against.

None of this occurs by happenstance. In the past year, we have put into place policies, protocols and standard work to improve quality and safety.

Natchaug is a high performer when it comes to core measures, with 75 percent of its measures performing in the 75th percentile or higher. We’d like to thank Behavioral Health Network (BHN) Director of Quality & Safety Melissa Morgera and Deborah Weidner, MD, MBA for their leadership in these areas. Because of her success, Dr. Weidner moves into a new role as vice president of patient safety and quality for the BHN in October. We welcome her replacement, Tony Ng, MD, who will join us as medical director of the BHN’s East region, which includes Natchaug.

**Some specific successes include:**

- The Zero Suicide initiative, where we have added standard work around our post-discharge and no-show phone calls, quarterly ligature risk rounding, review of suicide data and implementation of the Columbia Suicide Assessment.

- We also tackled another important safety issue – restraint and seclusion reduction. In May, a Kaizen focused on the philosophy of care for child and adolescent populations. Through this process, we developed training and education for our staff to better understand the prevalence of trauma on the lives of the people we serve. More informed and compassionate care means a greater sense of safety for patients, decreased risk of re-traumatization, a feeling of being understood and more buy-in on their plan of care.

- The addition of recovery support specialists to help patients identify with caregivers who have “lived experience.” While much work still needs to be done, we are certain that the addition of a recovery support specialist has contributed to Natchaug having the highest patient experience scores across the BHN.

- The opening of a second College Student Treatment Program in Groton to help the growing number of college students who suffer from issues such as depression, anxiety and substance abuse.

- A partnership with Electric Boat in Groton that offers employees easy access to Natchaug clinicians.

All of the accomplishments we mentioned above, and throughout this annual report, was done through innovation, efficiency and standard work. During this time, we saw our inpatient beds filled on a daily basis and approximately 200,000 outpatient visits.

Bravo to our team – our footprint is growing and it has been a remarkable year. These accomplishments take a team that works together, coordinates, cares about each other and puts patients first. We see your dedication every day, and are confident that our patients have a better chance at recovery because of you.

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**Patricia Rehmer, MSN, ACHE**  
President, Hartford HealthCare  
Behavioral Health Network  
Senior Vice President,  
Hartford HealthCare

**John Santopietro, MD, DFAPA**  
Physician-in-Chief, Hartford HealthCare  
Behavioral Health Network  
Senior Vice President,  
Hartford HealthCare
Every summer and Christmas vacation from high school through medical school found John Santopietro, MD, DFAPA, donning a rubber apron and working in his family’s fish market, preparing, stocking and selling filets, squid, eel and snails.

The large Italian family that gathered often and talked incessantly was a good breeding ground for the future psychiatrist, who became the first physician-in-chief of the Hartford HealthCare Behavioral Health Network on Oct. 1, 2018.

“I’ve always been fascinated by the mind and relationships,” he said, chuckling. “Then, I went for 12 years to a Quaker school, where it was all about looking inward. It was inevitable that I would go into mental health.”

A longtime supervisor at the fish market also helped Dr. Santopietro, a Rhode Island native, hone his work ethic and “servant leadership” management style.

“Angelo would never ask you to do something he couldn’t or wouldn’t do himself,” he recalled. “I take pleasure in watching others succeed. If I’m good at anything, it’s putting together great teams that go on to do great things.”

“John has a career-long track record of leadership that promotes and embraces servant-leadership, feedback and quality improvement based on standard work,” said Patricia Rehmer, the Behavioral Health Network president.

Dr. Santopietro, who assumed the vacancy left by Institute of Living Psychiatrist-in-Chief Dr. Harold “Hank” Schwartz, wants to continue the quest to “bring the best care to the most people.” His arrival changed the position from a focus on the Institute of Living to the entire Behavioral Health Network president.

“We have extraordinary resources here and this is a great opportunity to leverage those resources across a network to a wide population,” he said of Hartford HealthCare.

In a nation that treats only about 40 percent of people with behavioral health issues, there are many barriers to care, including stigma and discrimination.

“The situation as it stands is not okay,” he said. “What people don’t generally understand is that we have excellent treatment for mental illness and substance use disorders. If you get somebody into treatment at the right time, 60 to 80 percent will recover.”

Dr. Santopietro returned to Connecticut as president and medical director of Silver Hill Hospital after a stint as chief clinical officer for behavioral health and chair of the Department of Psychiatry at Carolinas HealthCare System. While there, he spearheaded the integration of behavioral health practitioners in 70 primary care practices. He wants to continue that work at Hartford HealthCare.

“The rates of depression and anxiety, the rates of hospitalization and emergency room visits, and patients’ diabetic numbers all went down,” he noted. “Insurers are starting to see that if they pay for behavioral health, physical health improves and the total cost of care for these patients goes down. They can prevent so much downstream cost and suffering.

“Caring both for a person’s physical and behavioral health helps on both sides. The focus needs to be on integration of behavioral health into primary care but also specialties, emergency departments, inpatient and long-term care. Integration with a capital ‘I.’”

People with behavioral health concerns are accessing care today more than before and the stigma is easing slightly.
but Dr. Santopietro would like the trend to continue, especially as other concerns heighten. The nation’s suicide rate, for example, is rising, as is the rate of post-traumatic stress syndrome and suicide among military veterans.

“What are we doing to diagnose those who need help? What kind of access do they have? How do we help them reach out?” he said of veterans.

Other aspects of modern life threaten our mental well-being, he continued.

“We’re still learning about the effects of living in the age of terrorism, with a 24-hour sensational news cycle focused on things people have little control over and social media,” he said. “It will take time, but we’re starting to understand more about how this affects our brains, our relationships and our communities.”

At Hartford HealthCare, Dr. Santopietro said a strong network of facilities – the IOL, Rushford and Natchaug, as well as programs in acute-care hospitals – gives him hope we will be able to bring excellent care to more and more of the community members in need.

“People at HHC have a deep sense of a heritage of treating people like human beings,” he said.

When he joined Rehmer to lead the Behavioral Health Network, Dr. Santopietro added the perspective of a physician and someone with experience in a variety of systems of care – public and private, large and small, across several geographic and demographic areas. Still, his goal is to breach barriers and deliver care to those who need it.

“The number one need is access,” he said. “If we just got people into the care they deserve, our recovery rates are amazing.”

A graduate of Yale University, Dr. Santopietro earned his medical degree from Northwestern University Medical School, and completed his residency in psychiatry at Cambridge Hospital and a fellowship at the Austen Riggs Center, both in Massachusetts and part of the Harvard system. He has published and lectured extensively, especially on the use of technology to enhance the delivery of behavioral health services.
Natchaug announced a number of promotions and new leaders who joined the team during the 2018-2019 fiscal year.

Deborah Weidner, MD, MBA, who served as regional medical director for the East Region of the BHN for several years, transitioned fully into the role of vice president of patient safety and quality for the BHN. In her expanded role, she will focus on advancing the BHN towards its goal of delivering the best care to the most people, using data, metrics and evidence-based practices.

Dr. Weidner has been with the BHN for almost 10 years. During this time, she has overseen medical provider and service line quality metrics and clinical performance initiatives, as well as HHC’s rollout of primary care-behavioral health to more than 40 practices and the building of an infrastructure for Zero Suicide.

Prior to joining HHC, Dr. Weidner served at Cambridge Health Alliance, while also holding appointment as assistant professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School. She completed her residency at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, her child and adolescent fellowship at Children’s Hospital of Boston and, most recently, her Master of Business Administration at Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

As Dr. Weidner transitioned into a new role, Natchaug welcomed Tony Ng, MD, who joined as regional medical director for the Behavioral Health Network’s East Region, overseeing psychiatric providers and care at Natchaug, Backus and Windham hospitals.

Dr. Ng most recently served as senior physician executive at Northern Light Acadia Hospital and chief of psychiatry at Eastern Maine Medical Center in Bangor, Maine, as well as Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at the Uniformed Services University of Health. Prior to that, Dr. Ng held a number of positions in the New York City area, focused on consultation liaison psychiatry and homeless outreach and psychiatric care.

Dr. Ng has a passion for public psychiatry and a long history of national work. He currently serves on the Medical Directors Council for the National Council on Behavioral Health; as a board member of the American Association of Community Psychiatry; and is an active member and past president of the American Association of Emergency Psychiatry.

Dr. Ng received his bachelor’s degree at The City College and his medical degree at SUNY Buffalo School of Medicine. He completed his psychiatry residency at St. Vincent’s Hospital and an additional year of training as a public psychiatry fellow at Columbia.

With the retirement of long-time East Region employee Gale Sullivan, RN, Natchaug welcomed Debora S. Heidtman, RN, MHA, as new director of nursing for the Behavioral Health Network East Region.

Heidtman brings significant nurse management and clinical leadership experience to the position. Most recently, she served as nursing director of the trauma unit at McLean Hospital in Massachusetts and clinical leader for centralized intake at CharterCARE Health Partners in Rhode Island. Prior to that, Heidtman held a number of leadership positions at Butler and Kent County hospitals in Rhode Island. During her more than 25-year tenure, she served as director of inpatient nursing and patient assessment services, director of adult and adolescent services, nurse manager, and utilization review clinician for coordinated care.

Heidtman received her associate degree in nursing at Pace University, her Bachelor of Arts in psychology at Rhode Island College, and, most recently, completed her Master of Health Administration at Salve Regina University.
When Norwich school officials announced there would be no room for Natchaug Hospital’s in-district clinical day program, there was momentary panic. But the ensuing move to Franklin Elementary School this past school year proved to be a blessing in disguise.

Housed in Norwich since 1999, the former Hickory School (originally the Hickory Street School) provides services for students with social, emotional and behavioral issues who are not succeeding in a traditional classroom environment. As the 2018-2019 school year began, the program moved to Franklin Elementary School, where students, teachers and administrators have an entire wing for learning. The new Green Valley School joins five other state-approved clinical day treatment school programs at Natchaug for students in all grades.

“This is really better for us in many ways,” said Jill Bourbeau, chief administrator of Natchaug and Rushford school programs.

The Green Valley School accepts students from all area school districts in the elementary grades, with a capacity of up to 30 students.

“They have 45 minutes a day of group therapy, where they work on social and emotional health. We’re trying to build those skills back up for them. The goal is to get them into the least restrictive environment. This is a very restrictive environment,” Trepanier said.

“We want them back in a traditional school, going to prom and doing all the things you do in a regular school, but for some students, our school programs are the least restrictive environment for the amount of time they need,” Bourbeau added.

The track record for the program is good, with many of the 28 students in Hickory last year transitioning back to regular schools. Establishing Green Valley inside a regular public school helps make that move go smoothly when the time is right, they stressed.

“We’re able to have these kids with non-disabled kids, which is an ideal situation,” Bourbeau said. “It’s normalizing for these kids – there’s a regular playground, a library, a gymnasium.”

That similarity isn’t lost on parents investigating programs for their children. Many, she said, prefer a program such as Green Valley because it’s in a regular school building.

“But, it’s still a small, private setting, especially for kids who are traumatized and might worry that word would get out that they go to group therapy every day,” she said.
Tonya Cutler stands in front of the room, tapping a marker on the list of “triggers” written on a large sheet of paper taped to the wall.

While one of the eight adolescents in the room paces relentlessly around the perimeter, his ears picking up everything she says, two girls seem to ignore her, passing cards back and forth. A second boy lounges prone on a stack of gym mats; a third interrupts constantly with questions.

“If I’m being bullied,” Cutler persists despite the distractions, “what am I thinking at that point? What do I do?”

Slowly, the teens offer answers.

“I ignore them.”

“I over explain myself.”

“I get angry because I can’t do anything about it.”

The simple exercise on triggers and consequences of drug and alcohol use with teens in the Natchaug Hospital residential program is one way Cutler, the facility’s first recovery support specialist (RSS), helps clients.

The 45-year-old Colchester resident started as a part-time employee on the inpatient unit at the Institute of Living about two years ago, moving to the outpatient setting at Rushford before Natchaug created her current position. While Hartford HealthCare introduced recovery coaches in emergency rooms to help people overdosing, the RSS supports people struggling with recovery and mental health issues, as someone who understands from experience.

“The RSS is in recovery, too,” said Cutler, who was diagnosed with anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder and bipolar disorder, and used pain medication and cocaine to cope with her diagnoses and chronic physical and emotional pain before going to Rushford’s Medication Assisted Treatment Close to Home (MATCH) program in Glastonbury.

Cutler embraced treatment and “worked hard at seeing where it stems from” emotionally. She was speaking at Rushford programs and serving on its Client and Family Advisory Council when a staff member suggested she become RSS-certified.

“The clients need people who can relate to and understand what they’re going through,” she said of the 80-hour state certification through Recovery University, which led her back to Rushford, first as a volunteer and then an employee. “It’s the best of both worlds – they get medical experience from the doctors and ‘lived’ experience from me.

“The clients have been very responsive to me. They know they can trust me because we can relate to each other. They know I’m not judging them.”

This was the most important factor in instituting the RSS position, according to Behavioral Health Network President Patricia Rehmer.

“It’s critical that the clients feel safe and understood,” she said. “No one but a person who has been in their shoes can truly understand the grips of substance use and mental illness. Tonya brings her own experience and an
incredible amount of compassion to the job. She impacts the lives of our clients every single day.”

Cutler is constant motion. On a typical day, she schedules one-on-one sessions with clients, then makes Caring Connection calls as part of the Zero Suicide Initiative to newly released patients, checking on their transition home. She also runs adolescent and adult recovery groups at Natchaug, drawing on various tools for sessions like “Tips for Recovery” and “Smart Recovery.”

The mother of three and grandmother of one finds her new vocation a way to channel the trouble she’s faced.

“It’s how I can make things that were so bad in my life count for something,” she said. “It eases the shame and guilt for me.” She also understands how alienating recovery can feel.

“My family initially felt it was my problem,” she said. “Part of my recovery was talking to them; we had many hard conversations. My kids were angry and scared. They grew up with that being normal. I didn’t see the effect of it on them. My journey in recovery began with a late-night conversation with my son. That heart-to-heart with him saved my life and changed the lives of my family.”

Slight with bright eyes, a ponytail and a whimsical mustache tattooed on her right index finger – “See?” she said, putting her finger under her nose. “It’s fun!” – Cutler says she gets as much out of her work as the clients at Natchaug.

“We learn from each other – about having patience, respecting other people’s perspective, appreciating others uniqueness,” she said. “It’s an extension of my recovery and it plays a role in my healing as I learn to connect on a deeper level.”
As the MATCH (Medication Assisted Treatment Close to Home) program continues to expand with new locations and new services, the BHN launched a new advertising campaign. In the past, the focus has been on opioids, but the new campaign zeroed in on an issue that doesn’t always make headlines but, statistically speaking, may be a larger problem – alcoholism.

The campaign included two styles of ads – one that is straightforward with an immediate call to action, and another that is more emotional and subtle. The ads promoted all of the Behavioral Health Network’s MATCH locations, and will include cable TV commercials, radio, billboards, digital advertising, social media, e-newsletter stories and more.

The second phase of the campaign, launched this spring, brought the MATCH alcohol campaign to the Hispanic community. A dedicated Spanish MATCH page was created with ads on Telemundo, Univision, Bomba Radio, email marketing and boosted Facebook posts on HHC Español.

You’re not the only one with a drinking problem.

If your drinking is out of control, we can help. The Hartford HealthCare Behavioral Health Network offers Connecticut’s most comprehensive program to help you recover from alcohol addiction, including 12 MATCH™ facilities. MATCH (Medication Assisted Treatment Close to Home) has the care you need.

Recovery never stops. Neither do we.
Call us today at 1-855-825-4026
MatchRecovery.org/alcohol

Hartford HealthCare
Behavioral Health Network
BHN in the National Spotlight

As the National Council for Behavioral Health held its annual conference in Nashville in late March, a Behavioral Health Network (BHN) contingent was on hand, with several clinicians presenting research and observation as part of professional sessions throughout the four-day event.

“Hartford HealthCare was well represented at the conference by an enthusiastic group of providers,” said BHN Physician-in-Chief John Santopietro, MD, DFAPA, who was in attendance and was invited to give a tribute to outgoing CEO Linda Rosenberg as well as to introduce the opening session. “It was an energetic, inspiring few days and I’ve urged our contingent to bring back the many pearls of wisdom they gleaned to share with their teams.”

Dr. Santopietro and Harold “Hank” Schwartz, MD, psychiatrist-in-chief emeritus of the Institute of Living, were part of the panel presenting “Mitigating Mass Violence – What Can a Community Mental Health Center Do?” on day one. The session related directly to the aftermath of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting in 2012. Afterwards, they both participated in a podcast for Netsmart.

In addition, J. Craig Allen, MD, medical director of Rushford and vice president of addiction services for the BHN, was part of the group presenting sessions entitled “Peer Services in the Emergency Department” and “Applying Technology to Addiction Treatment,” which reviewed the range and focus of available smartphone apps and future opportunities for mobile technology in treating addictions.

He also presented and facilitated discussion about the opioid epidemic at the Medical Directors’ Institute, a full day of programming also attended by Dr. Santopietro.

Other BHN staff attending the national conference included: Patricia Graham, LMSW, of the Connecting Adolescents with Psychosis (CAP) Program and a mental health first aid coordinator with the BHN; Jessica Matyka, LCSW, director of crisis services and community programs with Rushford; Melissa Monroe, LPC, director of the MATCH ambulatory programs at Rushford; and Patricia Rehmer, MSN, ACHE, president of the BHN and senior vice president of Hartford HealthCare.

“I left the conference feeling extremely proud of the work we are doing throughout the Behavioral Health Network, and further inspired to do more to meet the needs of those in our communities,” Rehmer said.

The conference was celebrating the National Council for Behavioral Health’s 50th anniversary and stressed the joint commitment of behavioral health clinicians everywhere to people in need. With the simple header “We,” the conference underscored that “when we work together, we change lives.”

“It was an amazing experience. We have many ideas to introduce at the BHN and have some follow-up action items already in the works,” said Graham, who, with case worker Paula Rego, also attended the Mental Health First Aid summit on the Sunday before the conference.
Natchaug housekeeper Marisol Caraballo was one of four winners recognized at Hartford HealthCare's first-ever EMMie Awards, a new honor for HHC team members who make every moment matter.

Caraballo won the Caught in the Act Award, which honors those who demonstrate the HHC value of integrity by doing the right thing – even when no one is looking.

"Whether it's eye contact we make with each other, a passing hand on someone's arm, a touch on someone's back as you move past them in the hallway; at Hartford HealthCare, every one of these moments and every individual has meaning and purpose," said Gerard Lupacchino, senior vice president of experience, engagement and organization development. "Our EMMie Award winners and finalists truly embody our promise to make every moment matter."

As an EMMie Award winner, Caraballo has the opportunity to select a non-profit organization to receive a $250,000 donation from Hartford HealthCare and also identify internal projects and initiatives within HHC that will receive $1 million in funding.

From her nomination:
"Caraballo epitomizes Every Moment Matters... she performs her duties with integrity, holds herself and her co-workers to a high standard and has an incredible knack for noticing those fleeting moments that can make a huge difference, and always acts on them in an appropriate way. Caraballo is a huge asset to our unit, our hospital and the whole HHC organization, but most of all to our young clients and their families... doing many things behind the scenes and stepping up to makes things better."

Journey to current role:
Caraballo arrived to Natchaug Hospital almost a decade ago after working at a local nursing home for a number of years. For the last eight years, Caraballo has worked as a housekeeper on an inpatient psychiatric unit for children and teens – an age group she has grown to love working around. "I enjoy cleaning for them and trying to make their day go a little better. I want them to have a clean, safe environment while they're here," Caraballo said. When a client arrives who doesn’t speak English, Caraballo, who is bilingual, never hesitates to comfort the client and help them communicate with staff. "I want to make them comfortable, like they're at home," she said.

Activities that keep her energized and fresh:
Whenever Caraballo isn’t at work, she’s spending quality time with her seven grandchildren, who range from ages 16 to one and a half. She especially loves spending time with her 10-year-old grandson who is autistic. "When I’m out of work, it’s just all grandma. It’s a blessing."

Thinking about the financial awards:
Caraballo's relationship with her grandson has inspired her to contribute her share of the EMMie award to an organization focused on autism. Her first-hand experience, not only with her grandson, but also with children on the inpatient unit who are autistic, has given her an appreciation for the impact that the right support and programs offer.
Natchaug nurses Marie Patulak, BS, RN, and Leslie Lucas, RN, were honored with the 2019 Nightingale Awards for Excellence in Nursing. The annual Nightingale awards recognize nurses that have made a significant impact on patient care and/or the nursing profession; gone “beyond the call” in a clearly illustrated scenario; demonstrated excellence above what is normally expected; shown commitment to the community served in a way that is significantly above the norm; or achieved a life-long legacy in a particular arena.

As a nurse on the pediatric unit, Marie Patulak, BS, RN, relies on her communication skills to help put parents and children at ease and de-escalate any situations that arise. Her commitment and willingness to go above and beyond has made her a resource for her co-workers and new nurses who arrive at Natchaug Hospital. Patulak is quick to credit those who work with her, saying “A team approach is vital to the nursing profession, and is fostered by collaboration with mental health workers, nursing supervisors and providers to offer excellent patient care.”

Leslie Lucas, RN, understands that often it’s the small gestures that make the biggest difference in a patient’s day. Whether she’s taking the time to meet with a patient’s family to answer questions, helping celebrate a patient’s birthday, or listening to a co-worker who needs some emotional support, Lucas never hesitates to go above and beyond for those around her. “Having a positive attitude and outlook has a ripple effect that can be felt, not just by members of the staff, but by patients as well,” Lucas said.

When clients transitioned to the school program of the hospital and a doctor or clinician needed to see them, there was inadequate space for them to meet privately. Three departments shared space in a storage room that was not well organized. Shawn Cyr recognized this room could be reorganized and used for a meeting space. Now, clients have the opportunity to privately disclose sensitive information pertinent to their treatment. It offers new secure storage, with storage and new countertops, purchased with grant money. Cyr is always considering the future state of not only the inpatient school and Journey House in his role as principal, but the entire hospital and staff development. Rather than focusing in issues on a reactive manner, Cyr prides himself in solution and improvement focused assessment.

Amy Gallagher was off-duty and driving with her 16-year-old daughter on I-91 when she was forced to slam on her brakes to avoid an accident. A car in front of hers had spun out and came to an abrupt stop in front of an overpass. While her daughter called 911, Gallagher approached the stopped car to see if the driver was OK. The driver then got out of the car and attempted to harm herself by jumping off the overpass. Gallagher used her training as a social worker to counsel the woman and help calm her until emergency workers arrived. Gallagher prevented a potential suicide and maintained the safe environment so the woman could be brought to treatment. Gallagher uses the same approach in her day-to-day work with behavioral health patients.
Since 2015, the Hartford HealthCare Behavioral Health Network has committed itself to improving patient safety through the implementation of Zero Suicide. The Zero Suicide initiative represents a philosophy of care and set of tools for healthcare systems to dramatically reduce the number of suicide deaths among people in care. The BHN continued to advance this key quality and safety initiative in 2018 through the implementation of a number of best practices.

As more organizations throughout the BHN began implementing Zero Suicide, leadership recognized the need for a system-wide governance structure to organize and support this work. Subgroups were developed to focus on areas identified as opportunities for improvement in initial case review, including care transitions, environment of care and suicide risk assessment.

Post-transition phone calls have been rolled out to inpatient, partial hospital and intensive outpatient programs and some residential settings. The goal of these Caring Connection calls is to continue the connection with patients after transitioning from care, when they are most vulnerable and at risk for readmission. Through this follow-up, BHN entities are able to support patients as they access care and resources in the community, fill prescriptions for important medications, and follow through on aftercare plans. Documentation templates for these calls have been built into the electronic medical record, and data is being collected on completed calls to reduce variability across the system. Ultimately, the hope is that these calls not only reduce suicide risk, but also improve the overall patient experience.

In addition to Caring Connection Calls, wellness checks are now being done for patients who fail to show at initial intake appointments at partial hospital and intensive outpatient programs. These follow-ups, which align with the Zero Suicide best practice of supporting patients at vulnerable transitions in care, are designed to prevent patients from falling through the cracks in the healthcare system and increase opportunities to connect them with care.

The Zero Suicide model prioritizes the training of both clinical and non-clinical staff to improve their ability to assess suicide risk and intervene appropriately. The BHN created a four-hour suicide assessment training for clinical staff and also made it available to non-clinical staff across the Network. In addition, 25 individuals – both clinical and non-clinical – have been trained to run professional education courses for non-behavioral health staff on an evidence-based approach to identifying and intervening with suicidal individuals. The goal is to offer this 60-minute training to HHC partners in medical settings across the system, thus broadening the footprint of Zero Suicide across the continuum of care.

Lastly, the BHN has modified its approach to suicide risk assessment and chosen the Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale (C-SSRS) as its system-wide screening and assessment tool. Pathways to care have been developed to aid in interpretation of the C-SSRS and to assist in triaging patients to appropriate levels of care. Smart forms are being built into the electronic medical record that will allow staff to accurately capture data and report on progress.
Highlights

Master Gardeners plant seeds of wellness

At Hartford HealthCare, patient care extends beyond the walls of our buildings. Sometimes, in fact, the best care can be found in the garden.

Semi-retired internist Edward Sawicki, MD, is a driving force behind gardens at Natchaug and Windham hospitals. His garden work began a decade ago when he served on the Natchaug board of directors. “We looked out the window at the board meeting to see a drab courtyard,” recalled the man credentialed as a “Master Gardener” through the University of Connecticut Extension Service, and he was about to put it to good use.

First was a courtyard outside Journey House, a program for adolescent girls, who often help plant and tend the garden. Dr. Sawicki and his fellow volunteers maintain connections with the girls, even during winter, when they meet every third Friday for an activity incorporating garden-related items. A second courtyard became a perennial garden where native plants attract bees and pollinators. A third provided a respite courtyard for both patients and staff, who regularly sit and listen to water cascading through a fountain.

“If a kid is having a hard time, she will ask to sit out by the fountain,” Dr. Sawicki said.

The therapeutic effects also derive from planting, he said.

“By connecting kids to nature, you never know what kind of impact you will have,” he said, recalling one 15-year-old boy on the autism spectrum who needed 1-to-1 supervision. “He came out one day to the gardens and asked ‘What are you doing?’ He started planting, and we couldn’t stop him. His mother gave him stuff (to plant) and he planted that.”

In less than a month, the boy went home, and staff told Dr. Sawicki that the “garden therapy” was instrumental in the success of the clinical program.

“He had been unmanageable before participating in the gardens. Provide the environment and things happen,” he recalled.

The Natchaug Joshua Center Thames Valley Graduation and Awards Ceremony

Four seniors graduated from high school and five eighth-graders were recognized as they now advance to high school.

Office manager Diane Daniels, left, who has worked with the Joshua Center for 19 years, received special recognition for her retirement from Principal Lamirra Simeon, right.
Natchaug Hospital’s College Student Treatment Program Opens Second Location

Going off to college seems picture-perfect in advertising and university catalogs, but the reality can be much more stressful and even debilitating for some young adults.

Many relocate from their parents’ home to a dorm room where loneliness can set in. All must function more independently than ever, with fewer rules, guidance and oversight, in a pool of peer pressure that heightens insecurities and anxiety.

To help, Natchaug Hospital opened the College Student Treatment Program last year in Mansfield. This September, as students head back to campus, a second location opened in Groton, according to Program Director Cathy Walton.

“The program is designed to meet the specific needs of matriculating college students struggling to function due to issues, such as depression, anxiety and/or substance abuse,” Walton explained.

While colleges offer basic behavioral health care to students, the Natchaug program is for those who require a higher level of attention that will not interfere with their college studies.

“These are students who may be struggling to function in the college environment due to mood issues, the stress of a significant life adjustment, peer pressure and academic challenges,” Walton said. “They may also be struggling with substance use. They are facing problems unique to being a college student and may have other stressors, such as working while going to school.”

The intensive outpatient program offers comprehensive assessment and treatment planning. Participants attend sessions Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 5:30-8:30 p.m., at Natchaug’s location at 1353 Gold Star Highway, Groton. Free transportation is available to nearby college campuses if needed.

“In group therapy, participants are engaged to talk about issues relevant to them as college students,” Walton said. “The supportive environment empowers young adults to learn how to gain control of their mental health and/or substance use and strive to achieve their personal goals in school.”

In addition, psychiatric consultations and medication management is available. Students can opt to involve their families, too, if desired.
Natchaug’s finest honored at first annual staff awards event

Natchaug Hospital honored exemplary staff members at its 64th Annual Reception and Staff Awards event on Tuesday, Oct. 23, 2018, at the Hartford HealthCare East Region System Support Office in Norwich. Among those honored were:

The Little’s Dedication to Caring Award Medical Staff Award
Pamela Shuman, MD

Nightingale Award(s) for Excellence in Nursing
Klari Esmaeli, RN
Janice Ash, RN

CAPSEF Golden Apple Award
Ellen Cecchini, LMFT
Diane Daniels
Laura Jordan
Vorasinh Phommasith
Paula Rich

Quarter Century Club (25+ years of service)
Theresa Campanelli-Miner, COTA
Timothy Ellis
Donna Kihenny, RN
Barbara Pajak, LPC
Rajesh Parekh, MD
Sheryl Savino
Susan Williams

Community Benefit Award
Paul Weigle, MD

Gold Medal Manager(s)
Lamirra Simeone

Staff Volunteer Award
Ben Nazario
The grants received from August 2018 to August 2019, totaling $41,878.33, include:

**Altrusa International, Inc. NECT**
$500 to support the residents of Journey House

**Bodenwein Public Benevolent Foundation**
$1,000 to support a clothing fund for clients being served at Care Plus and Joshua Center Southeast

**Community Foundation of Eastern CT**
$500 to support the Joshua Center Northeast CDT

**Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut – Northeast Women and Girls Fund**
$1,635 for Girls Circle Curriculum for the students in the Northeast CDT

**Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut – Windham Area Women and Girls Fund**
$3,270 for Girls Circle Curriculum for the students in the Mansfield CDT and Enfield CDT

**The ECSU Foundation**
Thanks to the support of the ECSU Foundation, the annual Natchaug luncheon raised almost $7,000 to benefit Natchaug educational programs. Over 11 years, the annual ECSU Foundation luncheons have raised more than $125,000.

**The Jeffrey P. Ossen Family Foundation**
$5,000 to support the purchase of two computers for the residents of the Journey House

**The Johnson Family Foundation**
$20,000 to support Natchaug Hospital’s programs for drug addiction program and education

**William and Alice Mortensen Foundation**
$1,973.33 to renovate available space into private meeting area for Mansfield CDT students

**Soroptimist International of Willimantic**
$1,000 to fund trauma-informed yoga programs at Journey House
Donors

Visionary
Johnson Family Foundation

Advocate
Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut
Jeffery Ossen Family Foundation

Benefactor
Anderson Paffard Foundation
Stephen W. Larcen, PhD & Susan Graham
Carol Wiggins, PhD

Leadership
Arthur Diaz
ECSU Foundation
William & Alice Mortensen Foundation
Putnam Bank Foundation
Soroptimist International of Willimantic
Deborah Weidner, MD

Sustainer
Altrusa International, Inc. NECT
Jill Bourbeau
Dee Charbonneau
Karen Colt
Dr. & Mrs. Raymond Johnson
Dr. & Mrs. Carl Lindquist
Dr. George & Carol Little
James Murray
Patricia Rehmer & Peter Tercyk
Betsy & Grant Ritter
Savings Institute Bank & Trust Company
Lamirra Simeon
Mary & Robert Sullivan
Ellen Lang & James Watson, MD
Paul Weigle, MD

Friend
Patricia Adamoski
J. Craig Allen, MD

Chryystyna Andrychowski
Donna & Jim Andrychowski
Jessica Arrowsmith
Briana Ashton
Emma Baldridge
Mike Barhalon
Marla Bartholomew
Katey Baruth, PhD
The Beaulieu Family
Curt Beck
Honey Birkenruth
Susan & John Boland
Kathy & Tom Borner
Jan Bosworth
Barbara Brandt
Laura & Glenn Brilla
Gloria & Bert Brine
Harold Bruce
Ellen & Don Buffington
Rosario Cacciato
Christy Calkins
Kaishuang Cao
Sandy Carboni
Marianne & Tim Carroll
Kevin Carson
Anna & Donald Casoni
Janette Cawley
Ken Champagne
Joanna Chaurette, MD
Darren Chick
Galadriel Chilton
Mary Chretien
Kimberly Clofer
Scott Cornell
Scott Crawford
Stacy & Dean Cruess
Shawn Cyr
Nicole Danish
Lisa Donahue
Lisa Donovan, MD
Carol & Howard Drescher
Richard Fernandes
Karla Harbin Fox
Oksana Travel
Stacey Fulton
Lisa Gardiner
Katie Geist
Laurie Gerundo
Marlene Gibbons-Brown
Maureen Gillis
Joan Russoniello Goba & William Goba
Andy Goodhall
Kayne Gregory
Betty Hale
Lisa Harrison
Karen Hart
Michele Healy Rogers
David Heg
Jennifer & Brian Helble
Angela Hernandez
Al Herzog, MD
Nisal Hewathanthri
Shawna & Brian Jaworowski
Kimberly & Edward Johnson
Janet & George Jones
Erin Joudrey
Ryan Kennedy
Elizabeth Kettle
Mary Kinsella-Shaw
Christine & Hans Koehl
June & Henry Krisch
Landon Tire
Ashley & Todd Laprade
Rebecca & Scott Lehmann
Leslie Lucas
Alyssa Markowycz
Dylan Markowycz
Monica Marsh
Margareth & Matt Mashikian
Maury’s Pub
Shawn Maynard
Andrea McKenzie
B.A. & Penelope McNulty
Katherine McNulty
Roger Meunien
Kathy & Alan Miller
Melissa Monroe
Melissa & Tony Morgera
Dave Morrocco
John Normington
Jim O’Dea, PhD
Carmen Ouimette
Cindy & Scott Paggioli
Michael Pallein, CPA
Kye Reen Paradise
Melissa Pelletier
Carrie Pichie, PhD
Heidi Pope
Ryan Powers
Candace & William Powers
Kenneth Przybysz
Paula Purvis
Janet Ragno
Stephanie Rand
Larry Ross
Damon Russell
Heidi Sandling
Marie Santa
Mayra Santana-Robles
John Santopietro, MD
Roy Sasenaraine
Mr. Jose Scarpa
Rabbi Jeremy Schwartz
Jacqueline Seide
Joan Shaw
Johnathan Simpson
Beverly Sims
Sherry Smardon
Amy Smith
Shelby Smith
Denise St. Germain
Gale Sullivan
Janine Sullivan
Lisa Tedesco
Daniela Titterton
Cathy Walton
Jonathan Watts
Edmund Wehrle
Susan Woodman
Yan Wu
Denise Yost
Susan Zacharie
Greg Zlotnick
We are grateful for all of the community groups and members who support the Journey House residential treatment program. Thank you to the following supporters for their donations of time and talent during 2018-2019.

Dr. Willena Price and the African American Cultural Center of UCONN
Coach Ray Aramini and the ECSU Rugby Team
Sharon Bartlett and Delta Kappa Gamma-Theta Chapter
EASTCONN
ECSU Center for Community Engagement
Mansfield Community Center
Natchaug Garden Improvement Team
  Jim Raynor
  Ron Beaudoin
  Maryellen Donnelly
  Trish Lyons
  Dave Field
  Will Russell
  Beth Russell
  Ed Sawicki
Caragh O’Brien
Samadhi Yoga Studio
Soroptimist International of Willimantic
Tera Rescue Farm
Carol Wiggins, PhD
Windham Area Interfaith Ministry
Jeffery P. Ossen Family Foundation
Altrusa International NECT
Dr. Robert Asher
# Financial Statement

## Assets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash on hand</td>
<td>$8,439,068</td>
<td>$6,983,142</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accounts receivable</td>
<td>$8,456,872</td>
<td>$9,788,865</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other current assets</td>
<td>$501,681</td>
<td>$1,758,177</td>
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<tr>
<td>Property, plant and equipment</td>
<td>$22,716,381</td>
<td>$22,697,302</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accumulated depreciation and amortization</td>
<td>$(11,758,061)</td>
<td>$(11,552,459)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Net property, plant and equipment</td>
<td>$10,958,321</td>
<td>$11,144,842</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other assets</td>
<td>$589,484</td>
<td>$361,492</td>
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**Total Assets:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2017</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$28,945,425</td>
<td>$30,036,519</td>
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</table>

## Liabilities & Fund Balance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total current liabilities</td>
<td>$6,749,029</td>
<td>$10,392,176</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total long-term liabilities</td>
<td>$3,025,423</td>
<td>$3,618,548</td>
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<tr>
<td>Long-term debt</td>
<td>$63,330</td>
<td>$1,851,161</td>
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**Total Liabilities & Fund Balance:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2017</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$9,837,783</td>
<td>$15,861,884</td>
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## Fund Balance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>2018</th>
<th>2017</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unrestricted</td>
<td>$18,478,845</td>
<td>$13,604,782</td>
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<tr>
<td>Restricted</td>
<td>$628,797</td>
<td>$569,853</td>
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**Total Fund Balance:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$28,945,425</td>
<td>$30,036,519</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

## Total Revenue

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$54,468,094</td>
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**Total Expenses:**

<table>
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<th>2017</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>$54,674,905</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Revenue Sources

- **Educational Services** $9,052,230
- **Child/Adolescent Inpatient** $10,200,837
- **Adult Inpatient** $13,052,472
- **Adult Ambulatory** $8,947,636
- **Residential Treatment Center** $3,559,603
- **Other Revenue** $393,438

### Expenses Categories

- **A:** Supplies & Other – $888,147
- **B:** Eastern Region Collaborations – $646,690
- **C:** Capital Costs – $1,586,430
- **D:** Bad Debt – $1,690,560
Community Benefit FY 2018

Total Community Benefit

$7,018,564

Unpaid Cost of Medicaid
$3,978,847

Uncompensated Care
$938,768

Financial Assistance
$365,539

Community Health Improvement Services
$437,664

Health Professions Education
$605,818

Subsidized Health Services
$60,427
**Inpatient Treatment Programs:**
- Intensive 24-hour treatment for up to 57 clients on a daily basis in three programs (child, adolescent and adult)
  - Mansfield

**Journey House Residential Treatment Program:**
- Residential treatment for adolescent girls involved in the juvenile justice system
- Treatment includes group and individual therapy modalities as well
- Average length of stay - nine months
  - Mansfield

**Partial Hospitalization and Intensive Outpatient Programs:**
- Intensive mental health and substance abuse treatment for children, adolescents, young adults and adults
- Seven Challenges® substance abuse program for adolescents
- Young Adult program serves men and women age 18-25 years old in Dayville, Groton and Mansfield
- Older Adult program serves adults over 55 in Windham
  - Danielson, Dayville, Enfield, Groton, Mansfield, Norwich, Old Saybrook, Vernon and Windham

**Intensive In-Home Child & Adolescent Psychiatric Services:**
- In-home services treatment for the family, two to three times a week
- Two-person therapeutic teams consist of a case worker and a social worker
  - Norwich

**Extended Day Treatment Program:**
- Afterschool treatment for children and adolescents struggling with social skills
- Structured therapy including off-site activities, and life skills development
  - Danielson, Groton, Mansfield, Norwich

**Medication-Assisted Treatment, Close to Home (MATCH):**
- A combination of Suboxone® and therapy to aid in recovery from opioid dependency
- Reduces cravings and allows patients to remain functional and involved with family, jobs and communities
  - Dayville, Groton, Mansfield

**Clinical Day Treatment Special Education Program:**
- Alternative school option for students who struggle to succeed in the public school setting
- Placement referral made by the local education authority
  - Danielson, Enfield, Mansfield, Norwich, Old Saybrook, Franklin
Help for children & adolescents

One in five children will struggle with mental health issues in their lifetime. Warning signs include:
- Mood changes
- Intense worries or fears
- Extreme changes in behavior
- Difficulty concentrating
- Changes in eating or sleeping habits

If your child shows these signs or is acting out, we can help. With six locations across eastern Connecticut, Natchaug offers intensive after-school treatment with transportation provided. We can help your child or teen overcome anxiety, substance abuse and other behavioral and mental health concerns.

We also offer The Seven Challenges®, a unique, evidence-based treatment program that helps teens with drug or alcohol abuse as well as underlying psychological, situational and life skill issues.

For more information, call 860.779.2101 or visit Natchaug.org