Although early treatment is seen as an important first step to combating depression, only about half of depressed adolescents are diagnosed before becoming adults. Primary care physicians only identify about one out of every three adolescents with depression, and only about half of those receive care. As a result, more than 80 percent of adolescents with depression receive no care at all.

That’s why primary care physicians are now being asked to screen adolescents for depression every year. The recommendations are part of new guidelines issued recently by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

“Six months of struggling with a major depressive disorder is a long time in the life of a teenager,” said Laura Saunders, PsyD, assistant director of psychology at the Institute of Living. “The sooner we can screen kids and get them additional support, the better.”

The report points to a number of issues that keep adolescents from getting the care they need, including a shortage of mental health clinicians. According to Paul Weigle, MD, associate medical director of ambulatory services at Natchaug Hospital, mental health stigma also plays a role.

“These barriers are particularly tragic because treatment for depression is safe, available and very effective,” Dr. Weigle said.

Evidence can help guide clinical practice and give physicians the tools they need to manage the condition when they see it in their patients. The new guidelines were designed to deliver tangible recommendations that pediatricians can start using now.

“Screening by primary care providers will identify most teens who are dealing with depression, and allow for a proper... Continued on page 2
NBA star Kevin Love shares story of his bouts with anxiety

On the night Kevin Love left the Cleveland Cavaliers blowout loss to Oklahoma City citing a “medical issue,” some in the media called Love “soft” and some players even hinted that the five-time All Star quit on his team.

What they didn’t know was that Love was in the middle of a panic attack, something he’s struggled with for years but had never admitted publicly. Love recently shared his experience in an article in the Players’ Tribune, saying he was inspired to share his story after fellow NBA player DeMar DeRozan went public about his own battle with depression.

“I’ve never been comfortable sharing much about myself. I turned 29 in September and for pretty much 29 years of my life I have been protective about anything and everything in my inner life. I was comfortable talking about basketball — but that came natural,” Love wrote. “It was much harder to share personal stuff, and looking back now I know I could have really benefited from having someone to talk to over the years. But I didn’t share — not to my family, not to my best friends, not in public. Today, I’ve realized I need to change that.”

Director of the Institute of Living’s Anxiety Disorders Center David Tolin, PhD, ABPP, said is it’s encouraging when high-profile athletes and celebrities come forward to speak of their struggles with mental health.

“So often people who have these kinds of problems might think they’re the only one, or that it’s shameful, or that others will view it as a sign of weakness. None of these things are true. The fact of the matter is a lot of people struggle with these kinds of problems and it’s good to see someone come forward and acknowledge it,” said Tolin.

Tolin said that panic attacks are quite common and usually are not something to be overly concerned about. However, people who experience recurrent attacks might have panic disorder and should seek professional help, Tolin said.

“People with panic disorder become nervous and are constantly worried that they’re going to have another attack, and they don’t know what to do,” said Tolin. “It becomes a vicious cycle. A person with panic disorder has a fear of fear so they worry that they’re going to get anxious; and of course they do get anxious which seems to confirm their worry and it just gets worse and worse.”

Tolin said that panic disorder can be controlled effectively through treatment, including anti-depressant medication and cognitive behavioral therapy which works to help patients change their unhelpful thoughts and behavior to improve their quality of life.

Tolin has a simple rule of thumb for patients if they think they should seek professional help for their panic attacks.

“If the symptoms are affecting your quality of life or your ability to do things that are important to you, then it’s time for you to do something about it,” said Tolin.

To connect with a provider at the Institute of Living Anxiety Disorder Center visit www.instituteofliving.org/adc or email ADC@hhchealth.org.

Saunders: ‘Six months of struggling ... is a long time in the life of a teenager’

referral for needed treatment,” Dr. Weigle said. “This is good news for America’s teens.”

Unfortunately, depression among teens is common. Research suggests one in five people will have anxiety or depression during adolescence. The condition inflicts suffering and is often impairing for those who go through it.

The dialogue started by increased screenings can be valuable beyond the specific diagnosis of depression, according to Saunders.

“Teens can have a low-level issue that doesn’t meet the diagnostic criteria but still needs attention,” Saunders said. “When parents understand the conversation, we continue to destigmatize mental health problems and improve communication between teens and their parents.”
Momentum reminder calls moved from 1 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Health professionals are used to middle-of-the-night messages. We take them seriously. So it’s not surprising that a weekly 1 a.m. message from Momentum caused major frustration.

Over the last year, many of you provided feedback that you did not want wee-hour robo-emails from Momentum reminding you to check in to the weekly pulse survey.

Interestingly, you used the survey to tell us how you felt. And the emoji you chose to sum up your mood was not smiling.

We heard you the first time, but sometimes change takes longer than we hope. After working with our Momentum vendor for months, we are pleased to announce that pulse check-in reminders will be sent at 1 p.m. on Wednesdays, instead of 1 a.m.

This improvement is a direct result of your input. Please continue to use the Momentum pulse to share your views and concerns. Your feedback allows our leaders to respond. Log into Momentum once a week and check one of the five emoji faces to express how you are feeling at work today. After checking the appropriate emoji, click green “view responses” box to tell us why you feel the way you do.

And sleep well. We cannot promise no more late-night interruptions, but we can promise they will no longer come from Momentum.

Healthy Family Funfest

More than 4,000 people attended the ninth annual Healthy Family Funfest on Saturday, Feb. 25, at the Aqua Turf Club in Plantsville. The Behavioral Health Network was well represented with four tables representing different organizations and services in the Central and Hartford regions. From left are Meagen Yacobino, clinical supervisor for Rushford at Cheshire, Melissa Curtis, account manager for the Behavioral Health Network and Pat Rehmer, president of the Behavioral Health Network and senior vice president for Hartford HealthCare.

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Tuesday, May 22, 2018

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Rushford
883 Paddock Avenue
Meriden, CT 06450

Recovery never stops. Neither do we.
On Monday, Feb. 26, the state Board of Physicians tabled a proposal to add opioid use disorder and opioid withdrawals to Connecticut’s list of approved medical marijuana conditions, citing a need to further consult with mental health and addiction experts.

The Board considered three other chronic conditions and diseases at the public hearing in Hartford, approving one, rejecting one, and tabling two, including opioid use and withdrawals.

There are currently 22 conditions that qualify adults for medical marijuana in Connecticut, with more than 23,000 registered patients.

According to J. Craig Allen, MD, medical director at Rushford and a board certified addiction medicine doctor, the treatment of opioid use disorder with medical marijuana carries many risks.

“There is no evidence that cannabis is an effective treatment for opioid use disorder,” Dr. Allen said. “But, there is significant research showing that addictive substances like marijuana, alcohol and cocaine impact the same neuro-circuitry that is dysfunctional in opioid use disorder leading to decreased inhibition, impaired judgment and increased vulnerability to relapse.”

Another concern, according to Dr. Allen, is that adding opioid use disorder to Connecticut’s approved conditions would draw people away from the evidence-based, FDA-approved, first line treatments like medication-assisted treatment.

“Medication-assisted treatment is already highly underutilized,” Dr. Allen said. “Medications such as Suboxone or Vivitrol provide protection from overdose at the level of the opioid receptor; marijuana doesn’t do that. Without this protection, people are at a much higher risk of relapsing and potentially overdosing and dying.”

Whether cannabis or cannabinoids have any role in the treatment of someone suffering from opioid addiction is yet to be determined. However, a study in the January edition of “The American Journal of Psychiatry” concluded that cannabis use appears to increase rather than decrease the risk of developing nonmedical prescription opioid use and opioid use disorder.

“As is the case with most proposed medical uses of cannabis, more research needs to be done in order to determine efficacy and safety,” Dr. Allen said. “At this point, we need to be cautious and collect more information before moving forwards with any decisions about opioids and medical marijuana.”
Managing stress takes more effort as we get older

Stress is like taxes and death — one of life’s certainties — but as we age, the types of stress we face and our ability to handle it changes, and not always for the better.

“Contributors to stress and anxiety vary with age,” said Peter Lucchio, PsyD, with the Institute of Living at Hartford Hospital. “In a person’s youth, they might experience anxiety related to finding a profession, whereas older adults might experience anxiety related to medical issues and/or mortality.”

In addition, the way our bodies naturally protect us against stress gradually break down with age, and it becomes increasingly important that we find ways to reduce and manage stress.

Lucchio said it’s not that older people are necessarily more stressed or anxious, but that age can impact resilience by changing one’s social network and connectedness to others. These, he said, are both important ways to manage stress.

Physically, stress can take its toll on the body by causing wounds to heal slower and colds to linger longer. Emotionally, older brains don’t regulate stress hormones like cortisol and adrenaline as efficiently. When the level of these hormones gets too high, it’s linked to a host of health problems from high blood pressure to a weakened immune system. It can actually speed up the aging process, too.

The easiest gauge that stress is becoming too difficult to manage, Lucchio said, is when it begins to impact one’s day-to-day functioning. Some signs may include:

- You’re always sick and can’t better.
- You always have a headache.

You have trouble concentrating.
- You are having trouble remembering things.
- Your back and/or neck always bother you.
- You’re always tired but never seem to get a good night’s sleep.
- Your outlook is always negative.
- You suffer from constant mood swings.

To help tame the stress, Lucchio suggested speaking to a doctor about the problem. The provider may offer a referral to a behavioral health specialist. Other potential solutions include:

- Practice deep breathing, meditation or yoga.
- Stay connected to family and friends.
- Maintain a positive attitude about life in general.
- Exercise (walks, bike rides, water aerobics).
- Eat a healthy diet.

Institute of Living
A Division of Hartford Hospital

Young Adult Med-Psych Group
Psycho-therapy group for young adults ages 17 to 26 struggling with co-occurring medical and psychiatric conditions

The group provides young adult patients (ages 17 to 26) an opportunity to grieve losses and limitations brought on by their medical conditions, while maintaining a future-oriented focus. Patients are encouraged to modify hopes, expectations and plans, which helps them lead more fulfilling and meaningful lives.

Every Friday (except the first Friday of the month)

Institute of Living
200 Retreat Avenue, Hartford
First floor conference room, Center Building

For more information, contact Marissa Sicley-Rogers, PsyD, at 860.545.7058 or marissa.sicley-rogers@hhchealth.org.
Family Resource Center Support Groups

The IOL Family Resource Center (FRC) holds regular support groups. All programs are free of charge and, unless otherwise noted, are held in the Massachusetts Cottage, First Floor Group Room at the IOL Campus, 200 Retreat Ave., Hartford. The upcoming IOL FRC Support Group schedule is as follows:

- **Support Group For Those Coping With A New Or Chronic Medical Condition.** March 9, 16, 23, 30, April 13, 20, 27, May 11, 18, 25, June 8, 15, 22, 29. (Every Friday except the first of the month), 1 - 2 p.m. in the Center Building, First Floor Conference Room. For young adults ages 17-26 struggling with a new diagnosis, chronic medical conditions, physical symptoms or limitations. The group will help with difficult losses and limitation due to a medical condition, and build a positive, future-oriented focus with realistic goals. To RSVP, please email marissa.sicley-rogers@hhchealth.org.

- **Depression Bipolar Support Alliance Group (DBSA).** March 12, 19, 26, April 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, Mat 7, 14, 21, June 4, 11, 18, 25. (Every Monday), noon – 1 p.m. in the Todd Building, Bunker Room and March 14, 21, 28, April 4, 11, 18, 25, May 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, June 6, 13, 20, 27. (Every Wednesday), 7 – 8 p.m. in the Commons Building, 2nd Floor, Litchfield Room. Peer run support group for those who have been diagnosed with depression or bipolar disorder.

- **Social Support Group — LGBTQ Issues (Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender/Questioning).** March 14, 28, April 11, 25, May 9, 23, June 13, 27. (Second and fourth Wednesday of each month), 5 – 6:15 p.m. in the Center Building, Young Adult Service Group Room. Support group for 16- to 23-year-olds who identify LGBTQ issues as being prominent in their lives. The goal is to discuss support strategies to manage life challenges.

- **Trauma Support Group.** March 14, 28, April 11, 25, May 9, 23, June 13, 27. (Second and fourth Wednesday of each month), 6-7 p.m. A peer-led group that offers a supportive environment for individuals with any type of trauma history. Attendees will discuss relevant topics and educational materials will be available. To attend, please RSVP to Laura at 860.545.7324.

- **It’s Hard To Be A Mom.** March 15, April 5, 19, May 3, 17, June 7, 21. (First and third Thursday of each month), 10 - 11:30 a.m. Peer-led group that acknowledges the inherent challenges with modern-day mothering and offers an opportunity for mothers to come together, share experiences, and support each other. This group welcomes expecting mothers and mothers with babies to discuss any and all challenges associated with motherhood. Babies welcome! Space is limited. Please RSVP to Laura at 860.545.7324.

- **Hearing Voices Network (HVN).** March 15, 22, 29, April 5, 12, 19, 26, May 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, June 7, 14, 21, 28. (Every Thursday), 5 - 6:30 p.m. in the Todd Building, Bunker Room. Peer run support group based firmly on a belief of self-help, mutual respect and understanding where people can safely share their experiences of voices, visions, unusual sensory perceptions. The groups offer an opportunity for people to accept and find meaning in their experiences that help them regain power over their lives.

- **Support Group For Families Dealing With Major Mental Illness.** March 15, April 5, 19, May 3, 17, June 7, 21. (First and third Thursday of each month), 5:15 - 6:30 p.m. in the Center Building, First Floor Conference Room. For family and friends of individuals who have schizophrenia, bipolar or other related disorders. Learn to care for yourself while caring for others.

- **Al-Anon Parent Group.** March 15, 22, April 5, 12, 19, 26, May 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, June 7, 14, 21, 28. (Every Thursday), 7 - 8 p.m. One hour topic discussion.

- **Anxiety Disorders: An Introduction.** March 20, June 5, 6:30 – 7:45 p.m. This lecture is for families and friends of individuals who have an anxiety disorder or a related disorder. Participants will acquire a basic understanding of anxiety disorders, their treatments and suggestions to help them better cope with the illness. To attend, please RSVP to Laura at 860.545.7324.

- **Autism Spectrum Support/Educational Group Meeting For Parents.** March 21, April 18, May 16, June 20. (Third Wednesday of the month), 6 - 7 p.m. Providing a place for parents of children on the autism spectrum, or another related disorder, to come together and get support and information. Monthly, peer-run support groups interspersed with special guests and speakers to offer additional guidance and perspective. Please RSVP to Goviana at 860.560.1711 or gmorales@spedconnecticut.org.

If you are a student that needs to observe a group for a class assignment, you must contact the Family Resource Center by emailing Laura Durst at laura.durst@hhchealth.org two weeks prior to the group you would like to attend. Please note, not all of our groups are open for observers and it is up to the facilitator and group members themselves.
Amazon Smile triples donation rate

Amazon is tripling the donation rate on your first smile.amazon.com purchase. Go to smile.amazon.com/ch/06-0966963 and Amazon will donate 1.5 percent of your purchase to Natchaug Hospital from March 12-31.

When you shop at smile.amazon.com, you’ll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to Natchaug.

Journey House needs magazines

Journey House staff are looking for donations of magazines or subscriptions for the residents to enjoy. Examples include People Magazine, Glamour, Seventeen, Essence, and more. Thank you to the second shift staff who came up with the idea through H3W!

Chili cookoff slated for March 21

The Natchaug Hospital Chili Cook-off has been rescheduled for Wednesday, March 21. Those who already purchased tickets can use them for the new event date.

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Valentines’ Day at Glastonbury

“You are important.”
“You are on the right path. Be proud of what you have accomplished. You are loved.”
“This will be a new beginning.”
“I am comfy with my vulnerability and I know I am loved.”

These “Valentines-to-self” cards were created by Glastonbury intensive outpatient clients on Wednesday, Feb. 14, after a discussion about self-love and self-care in its various forms.

Learning to prioritize self-care and self-love as primary in recovery is paramount to having a healthy, fulfilling relationship with oneself, and later with loved ones. Clients are encouraged to place importance on self-care, and “treating oneself nicely” on daily basis to make themselves as a priority.

SMART groups offer help for young adults

Are you a teen or young adult struggling with an addiction? In the weekly Rushford Self-Management And Recovery Training (SMART) group, teens and young adults work to gain independence from addictive behavior, including:

- Alcoholism
- Drug abuse or addiction
- Eating disorders
- Gambling addiction
- Self-harm or injurious behavior
- Addiction to other activities

Through open discussion and education, participants will build and maintain motivation, learn coping skills to handle urges, work on managing thoughts and behaviors, and live more balanced and satisfying lives.

Group meetings are held at the following times and places:
- **Rushford at Glastonbury, 110 National Drive:** Tuesdays, 6-7 p.m. — family and friends group; Fridays, 2:30-4 p.m. — 16- to 18-year-olds; Fridays, 4:30-6 p.m.: 19- to 24-year-olds.
- **Rushford at Meriden, 883 Paddock Avenue:** Thursdays, 2:30-4 p.m. — 16- to 18-year-olds; Thursdays, 4:30-6 p.m. — 19- to 24-year-olds; Thursdays, 4:30-6 p.m. — family and friends group (separate group)

No registration or cost to participate. For more information, contact Krystle Blake at 203.238.6800 or krystle.blake@hhchealth.org.

Volunteers needed for Recovery 5K in May

Calling all volunteers! We are looking for staff who are willing to help with Rushford’s Race for Recovery 5K on Saturday, May 12, in Portland. All proceeds will benefit clients at Rushford’s Stonehaven facility.

Please contact Ashley Laprade at ashley.laprade@hhchealth.org if you are interested in planning and/or volunteering for this fun event!
Dr. Silverman offers pair of book reviews

Samuel M. Silverman MD, FAPA, DFASAM, Director of Medical Education at Rushford and Assistant Clinical Professor at UConn Medical School, recently wrote two editorial book reviews:

“Cannabis on Campus gives the reader an excellent overview of the history of a current societal quandary. Combining student interviews with in-depth description of the root issues affecting society, Beazley and Field have presented us with a well-written, readable, and evidence-based analysis. We all need a starting point to understand the complexities of adding another potentially addictive substance into our society through legalization, decriminalization, or medicalization. This book is a great place to start.”

“The topic of learning disabilities has remained an area of weakness in the addiction/recovery field since its inception into the educational field back in the 1990’s. Clinicians would benefit by learning the techniques Jurewicz has arduously worked and developed over the past years. Addiction Recovery definitely feels like one of the missing pieces to the puzzle of recovery.”

Trinidad visit

Faculty members from the University of the West Indies in Trinidad and Quinnipiac University visited the Rushford at Meriden facility on Monday, March 5. The representatives from Trinidad, who are in the midst of planning a student and faculty exchange program with Quinnipiac, toured the facility and discussed Rushford’s services, challenges and social work internship program.

Town Hall Meetings

Connect with your Senior Leadership Team at one of two upcoming Town Hall Meetings.

- Receive responses to your feedback from the last Town Hall Meeting
- Share feedback on your work environment
- Celebrate wins and recognitions
- Hear updates on our external environment

Tuesday, April 3, 3-4 pm
Silver Street Cafe

Thursday, April 5, 3-4 pm
Paddock Avenue Cafeteria

Can't make it? Join by VMR: meet.rushfordoperations@video.hhchealth.org
Call in: 860-972-6338 Access code: 787436732

If you have questions, contact Laurie Clinton at 203.238.6894 or laurie.clinton@hhchealth.org.