The start of school can be an exciting, but challenging time for children of all ages. Whether heading off to college or back to a local school system, the new year brings changes in routines and a long list of possible stressors that range from social to academic to emotional.

For some students, the normal stress of school can be compounded by mental illness. One in every five youth ages 13 to 18 has a mental health condition; that number jumps even higher in college age students, with more than 25 percent of students diagnosed with a mental health condition each year.

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To help students with mental illness find success in the school setting, the Hartford HealthCare Behavioral Health Network offers a wide range of services. Starting this fall, Natchaug is partnering with behavioral health student services at the University of Connecticut and Eastern Connecticut State University to create a college track at the Mansfield Young Adult Program.

“The feedback we received from clinicians at UConn and Eastern was that there is a definite need for a higher level of services, but the existing hours were challenging with a student’s schedule,” said Carrie Pichie, PhD, director of ambulatory services for the East Region. “We’re now offering new evening hours, transportation from local college cam-

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Continued on page 2
A White House commission focused on addressing drug addiction and the opioid epidemic released its preliminary report a few weeks ago, including its “most urgent recommendation” — that the president declare the opioid epidemic a national emergency under either the Public Health Service Act or the Stafford Act.

According to the report, “with approximately 142 Americans dying every day, America is enduring a death toll equal to Sept. 11 every three weeks.”

The commission, which is led by New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, urged President Trump to take executive actions that would encourage the cabinet and Congress to address the issue and also, “awaken every American to this simple fact: if this scourge has not found you or your family yet, without bold action by everyone, it soon will.”

The report included eight other recommendations that addressed issues such as prescriber education, expansion of medication-assisted treatment and naloxone availability, and the elimination of barriers to treatment.

“It’s critical to see that this crisis is receiving recognition at the federal level,” said James O’Dea, PhD, MBA, vice president of operations for the Behavioral Health Network. “We are lucky in a sense because Connecticut has been very progressive in addressing the opioid epidemic, and many of the recommendations from the federal report have already been implemented in Connecticut.”

Gov. Dan Malloy’s recently passed opioid legislation included provisions to address provider education and interstate prescription drug monitoring program, both among the recommendations made by the commission.

Hartford HealthCare has also been at the forefront of addressing the opioid crisis. Over the past two years, the BHN expanded its Medication-Assisted Treatment Close to Home program to eight locations; began offering naloxone education, training and prescriptions to clients and families; and has been instrumental in organizing opioid education for prescribers within HHC and throughout the state.

“If this issue is addressed at a federal level, that translates to additional resources,” O’Dea said. “Those resources will go a long way in supporting the good work that is already being done.”

To read the full report, visit http://bit.ly/2weCCDw. For more information on opioid addiction treatment in the BHN, visit www.matchrecovery.org.

New support offerings tailored to college students

The Behavioral Health Network has 14 clinical day treatment schools that offer an alternative educational environment for students who struggle in the public school setting.

in guidance or the nurse’s office than the classroom.

The Institute of Living and Natchaug’s Joshua Center Thames Valley both offer School Refusal Programs that evaluate and treat school avoidance.

School refusal programs offer comprehensive assessments, collaboration with local school districts to develop a plan to improve attendance and functioning, therapy and psychiatric consultations.
BHN leader to speak at opioid workplace forum

Behavioral Health Network leader Pat Rehmer will give the keynote address at an upcoming Hartford Business Journal seminar on understanding the impact of opioids on the workplace.

The event will be held from 8-10 a.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 27, at the Infinity Music Hall, 32 Front St., Hartford.

The widespread abuse of opioid drugs, including prescription painkillers heroin and other highly addictive drugs, are in the headlines on a daily basis. In Connecticut, there were 917 reported deaths from opioid overdoses in 2016, and there is no indication that trend is slowing down. And for every overdose, there are many more daily users getting by day-to-day with their addiction. There is no doubt this crisis is having an impact on the workforce and in the workplace. But are employers prepared to recognize the problem, or know where to go for help?

If you go

- **When:** Wednesday, Sept. 27, 8-10 a.m.
- **Where:** Infinity Music Hall, 32 Front St., Hartford
- **Cost:** $45
- **Opening remarks:** Gov. Dannel Malloy, State of Connecticut
- **Keynote address:** Pat Rehmer, Senior Vice President, Behavioral Health, Hartford HealthCare
- **To learn more:** Visit www.hartfordbusiness.com

Mental Health First Aid training class available

HHC Behavioral Health Network employees are invited to register for a Mental Health First Aid training program at the Institute of Living on Friday, Sept. 29, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the Litchfield Room.

Please note that at least 10 participants are needed for the course to run. To register please email patriciac.graham@hhchealth.org. For more information, please call 860.545.7788.

For financial assistance

Do you know a patient who is in need of financial assistance? Hartford HealthCare can provide help to patients in need. Learn more about the program at https://intranet.hartfordhealthcare.org/inside-hhc/patient-support.

About BHNews

BHNews is published every other Friday. Story ideas or submissions may be sent to amanda.nappi@hhchealth.org.

Articles must be submitted as a Microsoft Word document. Every effort will be made to run the article in its entirety, but due to space constraints and style requirements, editing may be necessary.

Deadline for the next edition of BHNews is Tuesday, Sept. 5, at noon.
Suicide is the second-leading cause of death among 15- to 24-year-olds in the United States. Adolescence, when suicidal ideation and behaviors often begin, may offer an important window to understand the causes and prevent the progression of suicide phenomena. Prior suicide attempts are one of the strongest predictors of subsequent suicide attempts and suicide deaths in both adolescents and adults. It is clear that adolescents who have attempted suicide are a high-risk population in need of intensive suicide prevention efforts. Despite accumulating treatment research and efforts to develop effective treatments, empirically supported treatments for reducing suicide attempt risk in suicidal adolescents remain elusive. Additionally, adolescence as a period of emerging and increasing risk may offer a developmental window of opportunities for early intervention. This presentation will review the recent developments in prevention and intervention strategies to address youth suicide prevention, with a particular focus on engaging schools and parents in these important efforts.

Clinicians need more information about the links between non-suicidal self-injury (NSSI) and suicidal behavior to more effectively provide interventions for addressing NSSI and suicide in adolescents. The Safe Alternatives for Teens and Youth (SAFETY) was developed by Drs. Joan Asarnow and Jennifer Hughes as an intervention to address both NSSI and suicidal behavior in youth. The SAFETY intervention aims to reduce the risk of suicide attempts by targeting individual and environmental risk and protective factors using a cognitive behavioral approach. Dr. Hughes received funding from the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention to test the SAFETY intervention with 30 treatment-seeking youth with significant self-harm behavior. Youth and families randomized to the SAFETY group received weekly intervention sessions for three months. Dr. Hughes will present a description of the treatment and outcome data from the trials conducted in collaboration with Dr. Asarnow.

Jennifer L. Hughes, Ph.D., M.P.H., is an Assistant Professor and Licensed Psychologist at the UT Southwestern Center for Depression Research and Clinical Care (CDRC). She is the head of the CDRC Risk and Resilience Network, which aims to build partnerships with DFW schools and youth community organizations to provide mental health promotion and suicide prevention programs, as well as to work together to better understand resilience and risk in youth.
Behavioral Theory course planned for September

Beginning this September, the Anxiety Disorders Center/Center for CBT will offer the Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy Basic Proficiency Course on Tuesdays from noon to 1 p.m. Sept. 26 through Jan. 23 (no class on Dec. 26 or Jan. 2) in the Institute of Living’s Hartford Room.

The course, which is instructed by David Tolin, PhD, and free to HHC staff, is an opportunity for interested staff to become familiar with the theory and application of cognitive-behavioral therapy. To register, contact Beth Pizzuto (ext. 5-7578). Pre-registration is required. Please note that this is a CME-approved educational activity.

Attendees will be required to purchase the course textbook by the first class “Doing CBT: A Comprehensive Guide to Working with Behaviors, Thoughts, and Emotions.” A reference copy of the textbook may be available at the IOL medical library.

Family Resource Center Support Groups

The IOL Family Resource Center (FRC) holds regular support groups. For additional information, please contact the FRC at 860.545.7665 or 860.545.1888. 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.** Aug. 25, Sept. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, Oct. 6, 13, 20, 27 (Every Friday), 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 call Elizabeth Alve-Hedegaard, APRN, at 860.545.7050.
Family Resource Center Support Groups (continued)

**Depression Bipolar Support Alliance Group (DBSA).** Aug. 28, Sept. 11, 18, 25, Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 (Every Monday), noon – 1 p.m. in the Todd Building, Bunker Room and Aug. 30, Sept. 6, 13, 20, 27, Oct. 4, 11, 18, 25 (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.

**Dementia Lecture: An Introduction.** Aug. 29, Oct. 24, 6:30 – 7:45 p.m. This program is for family members and friends of individuals who have dementia or a related disorder. It will present a basic understanding of the disorder, its treatment, along with specific suggestions to help family members and friends better cope with the illness.

**Al-Anon Parent Group.** Aug. 31, Sept. 7, 14, 21, 28, Oct. 5, 12, 19, 26 (Every Thursday), 7 - 8 p.m. One hour topic discussion.

**It’s Hard To Be A Mom.** Sept. 7, 21, Oct. 5, 19, Nov. 2, 16, Dec. 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 in a safe and open-minded space. Babies welcome! Space is limited. Please RSVP to 860.545.7324.

**Dementia Support/Educational Group Meeting.** Sept. 5, Oct. 3, Nov. 7, Dec. 5 (First Tuesday of each month), 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the Donnelly Conference Room, First Floor. Please join us as we bring together experts and those who want guidance, direction, and support. Space is limited — reservations are required by calling 860.545.7665.

**Substance Use Educational And Support Group.** Sept. 5, Oct. 3, Nov. 7, Dec. 5 (Second Thursday of each month), 4 – 5 p.m. For family members impacted by loved ones with substance abuse.

**Anxiety Disorders: An Introduction.** Sept. 5, Dec. 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.

**Support Group For Families Dealing With Major Mental Illness.** Sept. 7, 21, Oct. 5, 19, Nov. 2, 16, Dec. 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. Share your success and struggles. Learn to care for yourself while caring for others.

**Autism Spectrum Support/Educational Group Meeting For Parents.** Sept. 20, Oct. 18, Nov. 15, Dec. 20 (Third Wednesday of the month), 6 - 7 p.m. Providing a place for parents of children on the autism spectrum, or with 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.

**Bipolar: An Introduction To The Disorder.** Oct. 3, Dec. 19, 6:30 – 7:45 p.m. This program is for family members and friends of individuals who have bipolar or a related disorder. It will present a basic understanding of the disorder, its treatment, along with specific suggestions to help family members and friends better cope with the illness.

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.
Aetna helps with Apple Watch purchases through year’s end

Hartford HealthCare employees can buy an Apple Watch with a $75 discount from Aetna. The promotion is part of a partnership between Aetna and Apple designed to help employees stay active, track their health and keep track of their insurance.

From practicing mindfulness to reaching fitness goals, Apple Watch is designed to help you stay active, healthy, and productive throughout the day — right from your wrist.

Employees of Hartford HealthCare will be able to purchase an Apple Watch online and pay for it with a credit card or, if they are eligible, spread the cost over a year, using interest-free payroll deductions. To learn more, including purchasing instructions, click on the Wellness Incentives page of HHC Connect.

Natchaug Hospital 63rd Anniversary Staff Celebration

Friday, Aug. 25 1-3 p.m.

Natchaug Hospital Community Room

Natchaug Hospital has a lot to celebrate in August! Join leadership and co-workers for cake in honor of:

- Staff appreciation
- Welcome back for school staff
- Natchaug Hospital’s 63rd anniversary (founded on Aug. 4, 1954)

The satellite locations will have their own celebrations at their sites on Aug. 25.

No RSVP required - just show up!
Stonegate and Rushford Academy clients were able to enjoy the solar eclipse on Monday afternoon thanks to glasses contributed by Rushford staff including Sue, Kellie and Katie.

Full bloom

Current clients at Stonehaven have done a great job planting flowers and landscaping the grounds, an example of Volunteering Discretionary Effort Constantly, one of HHC’s leadership behaviors that is taught to clients in the program.

Help Rushford help others!

We are currently interviewing for membership on the Rushford Client Advisory Council

The Rushford Advisory Council is a volunteer collaborative partnership between Rushford staff and our clients and their families to help make Rushford’s great client service even better.

We are seeking members from across Rushford’s programs, services and locations. The council meets on the second Wednesday of every month at 5 p.m. at Rushford’s Paddock Avenue location in Meriden.

If you have a client or client family member who might be interested in providing ongoing constructive feedback about their experiences with Rushford, please contact Caitlin.Swartz@hhhhealth.org.

Rushford
A Hartford HealthCare Partner
Rushford Academy students spent Monday morning volunteering at the Meriden Humane Society. They helped clean indoor and outdoor cages, cleaned litter boxes, swept and mopped rooms and hallways, and enjoyed some time with the animals, all with no complaints!

Pet therapy

Anything to share?

Are you interested in sharing your clinical experience or knowledge with coworkers throughout the HHC Behavioral Health Network? Consider submitting an article to the Clinical Corner. For more information, e-mail amanda.nappi@hhchealth.org.

Are you planning for your retirement?

Do you know how much money you will need in retirement? Are you taking too much or too little risk with your investments? Do you know Hartford HealthCare provides retirement education and planning resources at no cost to you? Find out how your account is performing. Learn about planning tools and educational resources. Ask questions about long term strategies and feel more confident about your potential retirement income.

To get started, contact Dan Dionne, your Prudential Retirement Counselor. Schedule a personalized, one-on-one session, at your work location or by telephone.

Email: daniel.dionne@prudential.com
Phone: 860.424.7621.
Visit: prudential.com/hartford-healthcare

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Feel it. Share it. Build it.

Momentum is Hartford HealthCare’s new internal social media platform. With just a couple of keyboard clicks you can say “thank you” and share your thoughts.

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