Suicide is more often considered, and carried out, by people who have come to the conclusion that there is no other way to end their psychological or emotional pain. With that in mind, leading experts in suicide prevention gathered today (Friday, Sept. 9) at the Institute of Living to mark the annual World Suicide Prevention Day and rededicate their efforts to understanding how people reach the decision to end their lives.

More than 42,000 Americans die from suicide each year, making it the 10th-leading cause of death.

The IOL hosted a special symposium called “Suicide Assessment and Prevention: New Solutions to Old Problems,” at the Educational Resource Center at Hartford Hospital. The keynote speaker was Shawn C. Shea, MD, Director of the Training Institute for Suicide Assessment and Clinical Interviewing, who gave two presentations, the first focusing on how suicide can be understood through a powerful planning model called Matrix Treatment Planning, and the second focusing on the importance of understanding and A crowd of more than 100 people gathered to observe the annual flag-lowering ceremony outside Hartford Hospital to mark annual World Suicide Prevention Day on Sept. 9.

Hartford Hospital Chaplain Jeanne Pedane, MDiv, performed the song “Morning Has Broken” on the flute as the flag was lowered during the ceremony.

Call to action against suicide

IOL marks annual World Suicide Prevention Day

Continued on page 2
Here’s to you!

A weekly roundup of kudos from staff and patients. Please email your submissions to matt.burgard@hhchealth.org. Editors reserve the right to edit submissions for length and grammar.

‘Hope is the best antidote’

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delineating nuances in assessing risk and protective factors.

“Hope is the single best antidote to suicide,” Dr. Shea said.

Participants took a break in the middle of the symposium to gather for a flag-lowering ceremony in front of the entrance to Hartford Hospital, where IOL Psychiatrist-in-Chief Harold I. (Hank) Schwartz, MD, spoke on the importance of being vigilant and compassionate in the effort to prevent suicide. Several of those in attendance included people who have lost loved ones to suicide.

Besides the annual World Suicide Prevention Day activities, the IOL has also committed to increasing its efforts to prevent suicide through its participation in the national Zero Suicide initiative, which aims to significantly reduce and prevent the number of suicides committed by patients who are under behavioral health care. The initiative is part of a national suicide prevention strategy supported by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), with the goal of systematically preventing suicidal patients from “falling through the cracks” as they navigate their way through care. It also aims to reinforce the safety and training for staff who treat suicidal patients.

IOL specialists have attended annual Zero Suicide Academy events in which they have received further training in suicide prevention, and the IOL has implemented a model for suicide prevention influenced and guided by Zero Suicide principles.

About BHNews

BHNews is published every other Friday, except for the weeks of Independence Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year’s.

Story ideas or submissions may be sent to matt.burgard@hhchealth.org or amanda.nappi@hhchealth.org. Articles must be submitted as a 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. 20, at noon.
BHN president takes part in special series on addiction

Patricia Rehmer, president of the Behavioral Health Network, took part in a special series on addiction that ran over the course of several days on WTNH-TV Channel 8 last week, offering insight and commentary on the ongoing heroin and opioid epidemic and steps that are being taken to address the problem.

Rehmer was interviewed for each of the segments that aired in the series, which covered a variety of topics including:

- Steps parents can take if they suspect their child is using drugs
- Treatment options for kids addicted to drugs and alcohol
- The importance of talking early and openly with children about the dangers of drug use
- The story of a young mother who learned that her child had become addicted

Rehmer spoke about the factors contributing the skyrocketing rate of drug-related overdose fatalities in Connecticut, while emphasizing some of the innovative steps that agencies such as the BHN are taking to tackle the problem. She pointed to the BHN’s leading role in integrating behavioral health specialists in primary care practices to help identify problems early and create easy access for treatment, in addition to placing recovery coaches in emergency departments to provide support and treatment options for patients who have overdosed.

A link to the series can be found at http://wtnh.com/2016/09/02/treatment-options-for-kids-addicted-to-drugs-and-alcohol/.

IOL expert discusses school refusal anxiety

Dr. Scott Hannan, PhD, program director for the School Refusal Program, part of the Anxiety Disorders Center at the Institute of Living, appeared on Fox 61’s “Good Day Connecticut” program on Sept. 2 to talk about children and adolescents who have great anxiety about going to school, and go to great lengths to avoid going to school.

During the live televised interview, Hannan said as much as 5 percent of the population of school-age children in the United States have issues with school refusal or school avoidance. He cautioned that it is natural for children to want to avoid going to school on occasion, but when it becomes a chronic situation, it can be time to seek help.

Hannan said children can exhibit symptoms of the disorder by regularly pretending to be sick to avoid going to school, or pretending to leave for school but going somewhere else instead. He said parents should speak openly and compassionately with their children about the need to go to school if their rate of absence at school exceeds 10 percent of the school calendar.

A link to the story can be found at http://fox61.com/2016/09/02/276197/.

Anything to share?

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

Help through HHC Connect

Do you know a patient in need of financial assistance? Hartford HealthCare can provide help. Learn more about the program and how to assist patients on HHC Connect (https://intranet.hartfordhealthcare.org/inside-hhc/patient-support).
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.** Sept. 9, 16, 23, 30 (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.

**Depression Bipolar Support Alliance Group (DBSA).** Sept. 12, 19, 26 (Every Monday), noon – 1 p.m. in the Todd Building, Bunker Room and Aug. 31, Sept. 7, 14, 21, 28 (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.

**Alcoholics Anonymous.** Sept. 13, 20, 27 (Every Tuesday), 12:30-1:30 p.m. Join us for coffee and a one-hour topic discussion. To learn more, contact the AA General Service Office at 212-870-3400 or P.O. Box 459, New York, NY 10163.

**Support Group For Families Dealing With Major Mental Illness.** Sept. 15, Oct., 6, 20, Nov. 3, 17, Dec. 1, 15 (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.

**Youth Psychosis Family Support Group.** Sept. 15, Oct., 6, 20, Nov. 3, 17, Dec. 1, 15 (First and third Thursday of each month), 5:15 - 6:30 p.m. in the Center Building, Young Adult Service Group Room. For parents with youth up to age 18 who have psychotic symptoms such as: hallucinations, delusions, paranoia, disorganized thoughts and behavior or are diagnosed with schizophrenia and other related disorders. Join us to receive guidance on how to help your young person.

**Al-Anon Parent Group.** Sept. 15, 22, 29 (Every Thursday), 7 - 8 p.m. One hour topic discussion.

**Dementia Support/Educational Group Meeting.** Oct. 4, Nov. 1, Dec. 6 (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.

**Survivors Of Suicide Support Group.** Oct. 5, Nov. 2, Dec. 7 (First Wednesday of the month), 7 – 8:15 p.m. For those who have lost someone close to them by suicide. Please call the RSVP numbers with questions or concerns. 860.545.7716 or 860.545.7665.

**Substance Use Educational And Support Group.** Oct. 13, Nov. 10, Dec. 8 (Second Thursday of each month), 4 – 5 p.m. For family members impacted by loved ones with substance abuse.

**Social Support Group — LGBTQ Issues (Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender/Questioning).** Sept. 14, 28, Oct. 12, 26, Nov. 9, 23, Dec. 14, 28 (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.

**An Introduction To Mental Health Benefits and Services.** Sept. 20, 6:30 – 7:45 p.m. This presentation will provide an overview of benefit programs available for individuals with mental health disabilities.

**Yoga.** Sept. 27, Oct. 25, Nov. 29, Dec. 27, 5 - 6 p.m. in the Commons Building, Hartford Room. Open to adult staff and family members. Mats are provided or bring your own! The class begins with breathing exercises and gentle stretches, followed by a series of poses and ends with relaxation and meditation. Instructor: Valerie Raggio, LCSW, Yoga Fit, Level 1 Certified. To RSVP or inquire, call the FRC at 860.545.7716 or email patriciac.graham@hhchealth.org

**Anxiety Disorders: An Introduction.** Sept. 27, Nov. 8, 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.
Natchaug annual meeting Oct. 6

Save the date for Natchaug Hospital’s 62nd annual Board Reception on Thursday, Oct. 6, at the Hartford HealthCare Eastern Region System Support Office at 11 Stott Ave. in Norwich.

A reception will begin at 5:30 p.m while the main program will begin at 6:30 p.m. Join us for a celebration of Natchaug Hospital’s 2015-2016 accomplishments with remarks by Tammy de la Cruz, co-founder of Community Speaks Out, a New London County organization established in response to the lack of a support system for families dealing with opiate/heroin addiction.

In order to attend, please RSVP by Wednesday, Sept. 28 to Sherry Smardon at 860-465-5910 or sherry.smardon@hhchealth.org.

Positive Parenting
Parenting Children and Teens

In a relaxed and supportive atmosphere, parents discuss behavior challenges and learn effective, research-based methods of communication and discipline. Parents will learn to use positive reinforcement to successfully change behavior while improving their relationship with their child. Parents can expect to see the following outcomes in their children:

- Improved Self Esteem
- Increased Cooperation
- Improved Family Atmosphere
- Improved Parent–Child Communication

These courses are provided free of charge, courtesy of Natchaug Hospital

2016-2017 Schedule
Parenting Children and Teens

Mondays 6 – 8 p.m.
September 26 – October 31, 2016
November 21 – December 19, 2016
February 27 – March 27, 2017
April 24 – May 22, 2017

LOCATION: Natchaug Hospital, 189 Storrs Rd, Mansfield Center, CT
TO REGISTER: Call Joe Freeman, MDiv, LCSW (860) 696-9500

Single parents, grandparents, foster parents and other caregivers are welcomed.
Couples are encouraged to attend together.

School supply drive a big hit for kids

Joshua Center Thames Valley’s back-to-school drive was a huge success! We well surpassed our goal, ensuring that all kids walked out today with a brand new backpack full of school supplies and clothing. Thank you to everyone who donated!

Depression support group for men meets Tuesdays

We all have been frustrated with traffic, been tired at the end of the day or become bored with things now and then, but when feelings of irritability or sadness last for a long time, become overwhelming or start to interfere with other parts of your life, it might be a sign of something more serious — depression.

People may have told you it’s not a “real illness” and you should snap out of it. Maybe they say real men don’t talk about their feelings.

Depression is a real illness (like diabetes or asthma) and it affects over 6 million men in the United States today.

It happens to a lot of men and its nothing to be embarrassed about. There is no shame in seeking help. It takes courage to admit that you need help. We are a group of men supporting other men with depression.

Please come and join our support group on Tuesday nights from 6:45-7:45 p.m. at Rivereast at 428 Hartford Turnpike in Vernon (back of the building).
Walk paves road of hope for opioid overdose crisis

More than 500 people took to the trails off Hubbard Park in Meriden on Aug. 27 to mark the first annual Roadway to Hope event to call attention to the continuing crisis in overdoses connected to opioid and heroin addiction.

The event, which was co-sponsored by Rushford and organized by the Meriden Healthy Youth Coalition, was connected to the National Roadway to Hope campaign which featured numerous anti-drug walks and marches across the country.

Besides the walk to nearby Castle Craig, the event featured numerous speakers and experts who talked to the crowd about their experiences with addiction, including Rushford Medical Director J. Craig Allen, MD, who explained how addiction is a chronic disease that impacts and alters the brain. One speaker, a mother who talked about losing her daughter to drug abuse, told the crowd how she is reminded every day of her loss by looking at her young granddaughter, who stood next to her, holding her hand.

First-responder community comes together

Numerous representatives from first-responder emergency services agencies in Meriden came to an Open House at Rushford’s residential location on Parker North in Meriden this week, with the goal of helping clients and first responders get to know each other in a casual and friendly setting.

The successful event drew representatives from Meriden police, fire and ambulance companies, who mingled with clients at the location on Parker North, which houses a small group of women who have been traumatized by behavioral health and substance abuse issues. Rushford employees help the women with the goal of helping them transition to an independent lifestyle.

“The turnout was great,” said Victoria Dingwell, one of the behavioral health specialists who works at Parker North. She said the contingent of first responders who showed up for the event included Meriden community police Officers Mike Ford and Mike Habvab; Deputy Fire Chief Ryan Dunn, Firefighter Richard D’Angelo and Firefighter Dan Waskowivz; Hunter Ambulance Director of Operations William T. McGovern and Paramedic Matt Skiffington.

Contestants sought for talent show

Come one, come all for the Rushford Clients Talent Show on Wednesday, Sept. 21, at 1 p.m. in the Rushford Cafeteria at Paddock Avenue in Meriden. Rushford clients from Case Managers, Clinicians, Friendship Club, Young Adult Services, Kuhn Employment, Homeless Outreach, Crisis and other departments are all eligible.

If you know of a client who would like to participate, please let us know by calling Antoinette at 203.630.5353 or Lucille at 203.630.5240.
FOR SALE
CAR ROOF BAG — Waterproof, soft car top carrier for car, van or SUV, 15 cubic feet, new, $90. Call or text 860.961.7495.


WHIRLPOOL REFRIGERATOR — Stainless, like new, one and a half years old, $700 or best offer. Call 860.889.5302.

FREE
GAS STOVE — Black drop-in gas stove in very good condition, self cleaning oven. Call 860-889-5302.

WANTED
YARD SALE VENDORS — Yantic Women’s Auxiliary yard/Mum sale, Saturday, Sept. 17, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Norwicktown Green. Call 860.822.8488.

CRAFTERS/VENDORS — Scarecrow Festival, Saturday, Sept. 24, Preston City Congregational Church, Preston. Call 860.887.4647 or email scarecrowfestivalcraftr@hotmail.com.

VENDORS — For the Kris Kringle Fair, Saturday, Nov. 12 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Saints Peter & Paul Church, 181 Elizabeth St., Norwich. Please apply by calling the Rectory at 860.887.9857.

VENDORS — Craft, Hobby and Product Show, Saturday, Nov. 19, at the Lebanon Volunteer Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary. Call 860.208.3554.

EVENTS
GREEK FOOD FESTIVAL — Friday, Sept. 9 and Saturday, Sept. 10 from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Saturday to noon to 4 p.m., at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, 247 Washington St., Norwich. Free admission, cash raffle, take-out orders, live music, Greek gift store, pastry booth, Loukomaries, Gyro, Greece a la Carte. Call 860.887.1458 or go to www.holytrinitynorwich.org.

VINYASA IN THE VINEYARD — Friday, Sept. 9, at 5 p.m. Vinyasa in the Vineyard benefits local non-profits, Reliance Health and Integrated Day Charter School. Enjoy an evening of yoga and wine at Preston Ridge Vineyard for a great cause. Native American Drumming runs from 5:30-6:45 p.m.

MULTI FAMILY YARD SALE — Saturday, Sept. 10, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 47-50 Lincoln Ave, Norwich.

WINDHAM PRIDE PROGRAM — Saturday, Sept. 10, noon at Lauer Park, Willimantic. Collecting new or lightly used sneakers prior to the event. Drop off is Willimantic Police Station, 22 Meadow St., Willimantic. Contact Corporal Clark or Chief Rosado at 860.465.3135 with questions.

WILLIAM B. STANLEY LECTURE SERIES — Saturday, Sept. 10 through Friday, Nov. 4. Presented by The Norwich Historical Society and the Slater Memorial Museum. Free and open to the public. Call 860.422.5563 for complete details.

REMEMBER TOGETHER — Sunday, Sept. 11, 3 p.m. at the Veteran’s Park, Ashland St., Jewett City. Please bring lawn chairs, if raining the event will be held at Griswold High School.

AWAKENING TO YOGA AND ART — Starts Monday, Sept. 12, registration deadline Friday, Sept. 9. Norwich Arts Center, Donald L. Oat Theater, 62 Broadway, Norwich, six-week program, Mondays and Thursdays at 5:30-7 p.m., no experience in art or yoga necessary, art supplies provided, please bring a yoga mat, $120 for full 12-session program, drop-ins welcomed at $12 per class. Call 860.303.7603 or email hughes.c5@gmail.com.

SINGING GROUP — Every Tuesday from 7-8:30 p.m. at Christ Episcopal Church, 78 Washington St., Norwich. No fee, voluntary donation only. Call 860.237.1887.

GRISWOLD REC PROGRAM — Every Tuesday and Thursday from 6-7 p.m. at the Griswold Elementary School cafeteria. Low impact aerobics, weights, Pilates. Bring mats and water. Call 860.376.4741.

ST. JAMES SCHOOL MOTORCYCLE POKER RUN — Sunday, Sept. 18, registration at 9 a.m., ride to noon-3 p.m, chicken BBQ from 3-5 p.m, DJ from 3-6 p.m. Email sunbunny2@yahoo.com for more information.

NORWICH ARTS CENTER FUNDRAISER — Friday, Sept. 23, at the Norwich Inn and Spa. An evening of fine food, lively music, cocktail hour, silent auction, dinner, entertainment by Cabaret to Go. Tickets, $125 per person. Call 860.608.2088 or email djjewels@sbgboglobal.net.

ANNUAL SCARECROW FESTIVAL — Saturday, Sept. 24, at Preston City Congregational Church, Preston. Crafters and vendors needed. Call 860.887.4647 or e-mail scarecrowfestivalcraftr@hotmail.com.

CHICKEN BBQ — Saturday, Sept. 24, 4:30-6 p.m. at Yantic Fire House. Reservations only, seniors/adults, $10. Call 860.822.8488 or 860.889.8504.

SIX PACA FARM — Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 24, and Sept. 25, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at 44 Bozrah St., Route 163, Bozrah. Open farm days, pens being open for the public to play with the Alpacas, farmer’s market, local vendors, new demonstrations of what to do with fiber, dyeing fiber, weaving, spinning, food vendors, free parking, free admission. Call 860.204.0386 for information.

ANNUAL RUSSIAN FESTIVAL — Saturday, Oct. 1, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia, 364 Canterbury Tpke., Norwich. Russian foods, tag sale, silent auction, children’s games, baked goods, Russian imports. Call 860.822.9955 for more information.

PARK CHURCH FALL FESTIVAL — Saturday, Oct. 1, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Park Congregational Church, 283 Broadway, Norwich. Free bouncy house for kids, arts, crafts, tag sale, Lois’ Affordably Chic Clothing/Accessories Boutique, St. Vincent de Paul Place food concessions, basket raffle, bake sale. All proceeds benefit St. Vincent de Paul Place Soup Kitchen and Food Pantry. Crafters/vendors can reserve a space for $30. Call 860.887.1747.