Clinicians in the Hartford HealthCare Behavioral Health Network’s primary care behavioral health project participated in the first of a series of trainings on the program’s new standardized curriculum at the Institute of Living on Thursday, Sept. 1.

The primary care-behavioral health (PCBH) initiative, which embeds clinicians in primary care offices to provide consultation, diagnosis, treatment and referral for behavioral health issues, recently underwent a major expansion with grant support from the Connecticut Health Foundation. During this fiscal year, the number of sites participating in the PCBH project will grow from three to as many as 12, with sites in downtown Hartford, New Britain and Willimantic.

“When PCBH was a small pilot program with three clinicians, we had confidence that each therapist understood the model and practiced it with fidelity,” said James O’Dea, PhD, MBA, vice president of operations for the BHN. “Now that we’re undergoing a major expansion, we recognize that we need to build training and ongoing support for these new clinicians so we can continue to see the same positive results.”

Above: Members of the Primary Care-Behavioral Health implementation team include, back row from left, Dana Kupec, Ila Sabino, Jennifer Ferrand, Ruby McArthur, Jacqueline Berkowitz, Richard Ginty, Linda Koflanovich, Susan D’Ambrosio; front row from left, John Brooks, Alana DiPesa, Janine Fonfara and Joann Averill.


The new PCBH curriculum was developed by Barbara Ward-Zimmerman, PhD, a clinical psychologist and consultant.

Continued on page 2
Training and support ‘so we can continue to see positive results’

continued from page 1

with experience in integrating behavioral health into the primary care setting. Over the next two to three months, Zimmerman will continue to host interactive trainings and seminars for the PCBH clinicians, in collaboration with Janine Fonfara, LCSW, the primary care-behavioral health program manager.

“In the PCBH model, the behavioral health clinician operates as a member of a team whose role is to help the primary care provider manage the needs of their patients,” Fonfara said. “Visits are brief, problem-focused, and geared towards functional restoration, which requires a very different approach from that seen in traditional outpatient therapy.”

Since its inception in 2015, the PCBH initiative has been a tremendous success. Patients referred to the on-site behavioral health clinician were significantly more likely to attend their first visit (80 percent attendance as compared with 30 percent attendance for traditional referrals). A reduction in emergency department utilization and inpatient admissions was also observed among patients who were referred to the embedded clinician.

“We don’t have to prove the model works, but we’re excited to help bring this type of integration to Connecticut,” O’Dea said.

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.
Students at schools across the Behavioral Health Network celebrated International Peace Day on Sept. 21, participating in a special Pinwheels for Peace activity to mark the occasion.

Jim Russo, Rushford Academy School’s education assistant, planned the day’s events and shared them with other schools across the BHN. Students and staff members made pinwheels, engaged in a lesson about peace, discussed “what peace means to me” and shared their ideas with their peers.

Students and staff members in Joshua Center Old Saybrook, led by clinician Paula Dodge and teacher Stephanie Brucher, held a brief moment of silence in front of the building after “planting” their pinwheels to symbolize their desire for peace on Earth.

Students and staff members from the residential and school programming at Rushford Academy in Durham, led by clinician Kellie Hougasian, shared why they decorated their pinwheels the way they did, and what peace meant for them and their families.

Students at Joshua Canter Thames Valley and Joshua Center Hickory School, led by art teacher Jen Davies, planted numerous pinwheels at their locations.

Converting to an Electronic Medical Record (EMR) for documenting patient care is the wave of the future for health care facilities and systems across the world, but it’s definitely not an easy process. The details that go into building a computerized system for medical record-keeping can seem infinite at times, making it challenging work for the technical and clinical experts who take on this necessary work.

With that in mind, I would like to pass on my enthusiastic congratulations to the teams at the Institute of Living and Natchaug for last month’s conversion to the Epic system for electronic medical record keeping, which by all accounts went extremely smoothly. The conversion came after months of hard work and preparation on the parts of clinical departments throughout both organizations working closely and collaboratively with Epic specialists who helped with the digital integration of clinical records.

The untold number of challenges and details that needed to be addressed to achieve a successful go-live in August meant that many clinical staff members had to miss time on their everyday patient care responsibilities to receive the training they needed to become familiar with the new system. That meant that other staff members, including organizational leaders, needed to step in and make sure patient care was not impacted by the effort to prepare for the conversion.

That meant that literally hundreds of people were impacted by the conversion to Epic, which is the system being implemented and integrated across Hartford HealthCare. At Natchaug, the conversion touched on adult, adolescent and child inpatient units, while reaching out across all units at the IOL.

The goal behind all this, of course, is to improve the overall experience for our patients by making sure there are no gaps in their records as they progress through treatment. Epic eliminates the need for multiple medical charts and redundant paperwork as patients navigate the health care system; and by giving providers easy access to medical history and records, the likelihood of repetitive medical tests and medication errors is greatly reduced.

Hartford HealthCare Medical Group, Hartford Hospital, MidState Medical Center and Windham Hospital also went live during fiscal year 2016. Plans are in the works to roll out Epic at all Hartford HealthCare institutions over the next few years.

The feedback I’ve received so far is that the conversion at the IOL, Hartford Hospital and Natchaug was the smoothest yet. Congratulations again!

Pat Rehmer, MSN, ACHE, is Hartford HealthCare senior vice president for behavioral health and president of the Behavioral Health Network. Her column appears monthly in BHNews.
RiverEast client counts her blessings

Tammy, a client at Natchaug’s RiverEast program in Vernon, wrote the following note about her experience in the program:

RiverEast Day Program Vernon

- A place where you can be yourself without any expectations other than sobriety (abstinence), privacy and respect for yourself, other patients and staff.
- No pressure, no alienation, no stereotypical judgment by staff or other patients
- Comfort from the realization you are not alone.
- Staff is well-educated and experienced in the areas of addiction, behavioral health and dual disorders.
- Care and treatment are directed to patient needs but in a group setting
- Staff and patients provide a good support system, especially for those who may not have one.
- Treatment here provides structure, safety and accountability.

BBQ for staff and clients goes well

On Sept. 8, Rushford’s ACE and ITP team hosted their very first summer Lean Daily Management Huddle—a special barbecue for residential staff and clients. The event started at noon and went until 4 p.m. Typical summer BBQ food was provided for everyone along with ping pong, corn hole, can jam, water balloon toss, and hula hoop contests. Music was played and clients were allowed to spend their afternoon outside mingling with each other and staff. It was a beautiful day and the event flowed seamlessly.

This was the product of idea generation from the ACE/ITP Lean Daily Huddle. The project team consisted of Chris Ferrante, Ashley Przekopski, Nadege Francois and Courtney MacNeill. Their dedication and excitement allowed more than 50 clients to be able to enjoy an afternoon clean and sober.

I am so incredibly proud of what they were able to create for the clients. Many people helped pull off the final details of the event, but additional recognition should also go to Ann Kmetz, Gabriela Zgiec, Michelle Liss, Lauren Damato, Jim Punkunus (and the entire kitchen staff), and Steve Clark.

— Jillene A. Bertolini, LMFT, Rushford, Director of Adult Residential Services and Adult Ambulatory Services at Middletown

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, Oct. 4, at noon.
IOL leaders discuss famous surgical case

Leaders at the Institute of Living took part in a discussion on “The Colin McEnroe Show” on WNPR radio this week focusing on a new book about a famous surgical case that took place at Hartford Hospital in the 1950s.


The book’s author, Luke Dittrich, took part in this week’s discussion along with Harold I. (Hank) Schwartz, MD, Psychiatrist-in-Chief at the IOL, and David Glahn, a neuroscientist at the Olin Center for research at the IOL.

Dr. Schwartz said cases such as this helped lead to much stricter regulations and guidelines regarding the provision of informed consent for medical treatment and surgical procedures especially regarding discussion of risks and benefits necessary in the consent process.

“We are not too far removed from that era, but we have made enormous strides in protecting the safety of patients and developing much more humane standards for care,” he said.


IOL psychiatrist published in AJP

Institute of Living psychiatrist Andrew Winokur, MD, Ph.D., co-authored an article on ketamine clinical trials for treatment-resistant depression that was featured in a recent issue of the American Journal of Psychiatry.

The study, which gathered positive results, represents a novel mechanistic approach to depression treatment that has not been utilized since the advent of Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors (SSRIs) in the late 1980s.

You are invited to a LGBTQ Networking event to celebrate the fourth anniversary of the opening of The Right Track/LGBTQ Specialty Track in Young Adult Services.

Intersectionality: Working with Both/And/All of Me

Thursday, October 20 • 6 - 8 pm
Institute of Living – Hartford Room Commons Building, 2nd floor

$10 Professionals
$5 Students

Humans are rarely just one thing. We all have multiple social identities and connections to a variety of communities. When two or more of those identities are stigmatized, however, it creates a unique set of challenges. This can be especially true for LGBTQ youth and their families. This interactive conversation will:

• Lay out the differences between vertical and horizontal identities
• Identify some of the challenges that youth and their families might need to negotiate
• Explore ideas and strategies for supporting diverse families as their children come out

Guest speaker Robin P. McHaelen, MSW, Executive Director of True Colors, Inc., will help lead the discussion. She has co-authored two books and several articles on LGBTQ youth and is a nationally recognized thought leader. Robin is the recipient of numerous awards including the 2016 CCSU Women of Influence Award; the 2014 HRC Upstander Award; the 2011 UCONN Award for Excellence in Public Engagement; 2008 National Education Association’s Award for Creative Leadership in Human Rights; and the 2008 Social Worker of the Year (NASW, CT Chapter).

The event is sponsored by the Family Resource Center at the Institute of Living. There will be opportunities to connect and network with other providers who specialize in this population. Beverages and hors d’oeuvres will be served.

For more information, contact the Institute of Living at 860-545-7502, email clinical.trials@hhchealth.org or visit www.MOODRstudy.com

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To register, visit: https://hartfordhospital.org/health-wellness/classes-events/event-detail?id=1353
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. 23, 30, Oct. 7, 14, 21, 28 (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. 26, Oct. 3, 17, 24, 31 (Every Monday), noon – 1 p.m. in the Todd Building, Bunker Room and Sept. 28, Oct. 5, 12, 19, 26 (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. 27, Oct. 4, 11, 18, 25 (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.

- **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.

- **Social Support Group — LGBTQ Issues (Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender/Questioning).** Sept. 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.

- **Al-Anon Parent Group.** Sept. 29, Oct. 5, 12, 19, 26 (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.

- **Schizophrenia: An Introduction To The Disorder.** Oct. 4, Dec. 20, 6:30 – 7:45 p.m. This program is for family and friends of individuals who have schizophrenia or a related disorder. It will present a basic understanding of the disorder, its treatment, along with suggestions to help family members and friends cope with the illness.

- **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. 860.545.7176 or 860.545.7665.

- **Support Group For Families Dealing With Major Mental Illness.** 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.** 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 disorders. Join us to receive guidance on how you can help.

- **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.
Natchaug Hospital
62nd Annual Board Reception

Join us for a celebration of Natchaug Hospital’s 2015-2016 accomplishments, and invited remarks by: Joe and Tammy de la Cruz - Co-founders of Community Speaks Out, a New London County organization established to provide a support system for families dealing with opiate/heroin addiction.

Thursday, Oct. 6, 2016
5:30 pm ~ Reception
6:30 pm ~ Program

Hartford HealthCare Eastern Region
System Support Office
11 Stott Ave., Norwich, CT

RSVP by Wednesday, Sept. 28
Sherry Smardon: 860.465.5910 or
Sherry.Smardon@hhchealth.org

Because every moment matters

Natchaug’s Master Gardeners spent two days beautifying the front circle at the main hospital in Mansfield. The newly renovated front island includes a dedication to the Natchaug Hospital board of directors, a brick walkway and wrought iron fencing from the original hospital.

Stepping out

Natchaug Hospital hosted its first-ever 5K/10K Trail Run & Nature Walk on Saturday, Sept. 10 at the East Branch of the Nipmuck Trail in Mansfield, Conn. The fund development department would like to thank all those that helped make the event a success — Sue Zacharie and the Natchaug Dietary team; Scott Crawford, Dan Ferrington, Scott Cornell, Mark Sypher; Ed Moran, Tom King, Jim Puleo, Mariene Gibbons-Brown, Annalissa Brassard, Yahaira Hernandez, Amanda Nappi, Kerri Griffin, Jeff Evans and Christy Calkins.

BJ’s discount memberships available for Natchaug employees

Natchaug Hospital is once again offering discounted new memberships and renewals to BJ’s Wholesale Club. Employees who sign up receive a discount on fees, one additional month of membership, and a second card for family. Five dollars from each membership will be donated to Natchaug. Checks should be made payable to BJ’s Wholesale Club.

Applications can be found on the Natchaug Intranet. Application and payment are due by Oct. 12. For more information, e-mail 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.

What’s your ‘best practice?’
HHC wants to know

As Hartford HealthCare mobilizes to improve our patient/customer experience, we know that great things are already happening in our offices, on our units and in our patient rooms every day.

The next step is to make sure that these “best practices” are shared across the system so that we can create one exceptional experience at every location that displays the HHC logo.

The HHC Patient Experience Council would like to hear about what you are already doing and what new ideas you have to improve patient experience. Please help us to spread our best practices by submitting yours for review.

Your submission should explain what you are doing and how it has had a measurable impact on improving patient experience. All submissions should explain how the practice relates to least one of the HHC 2016 Experience focus areas — Service, Communication and Environment.

If you would like to submit a best practice for consideration, please visit our Patient & Customer Experience page on HHC Connect to find answers to your frequently asked questions (FAQs) and an electronic submission form.
Inaugural talent show brings out Rushford’s best

Rushford clients showcased an impressive range of talents at the inaugural Rushford Consumer Talent Show on Wednesday, Sept. 21, at the Rushford location on Paddock Avenue in Meriden, where a large audience of staff members, fellow clients and other well-wishers were treated to an afternoon of moving music, poetry and storytelling.

Clients showed off their skills in singing, playing musical instruments and reciting self-written poems and stories as audience members cheered and encouraged the participants to reach new heights. In all, 14 Rushford clients receiving care in departments across the organization took part in the event, which was meant to give them an outlet to show off their creative skills in an encouraging environment.

The show featured the following performances, which were all met with resounding applause:

- The National Anthem, sung by Kim
- The spiritual song “In the Garden,” sung by Val
- The Beatles classics “Eleanor Rigby” and “Strawberry Fields Forever,” performed on the clarinet by Peter
- A version of the song “Wait” by the band Steelhouse,

Continued on page 10

Steve plays “Tangerine” by Led Zeppelin during the inaugural Rushford Talent show Wednesday, Sept. 21, at Rushford in Meriden. Participants from Rushford programs offered singing presentations, instrumental acts, poetry readings and creative stories.
The Treasure Trove is a free classified ad section for the benefit of Behavioral Health Network employees, retirees, medical staff and volunteers.

We welcome your submissions, which you can submit by emailing matt.burgard@hhchealth.org or amanda.nappi@hhchealth.org.

The deadline for submissions to be included in each Friday’s BHNews is Tuesday at noon. BHNews will include community events for not-for-profit organizations that are open to the public and free of charge. We do not accept ads for real estate, firearms or personal ads.

WANTED

VENDORS — Divine Providence Church is seeking vendors for its Harvest Festival/Flea Market to be held on Saturday, Oct. 22. For more information call 860.718.5921.

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 Fire Safety Complex, Goshen Hill Road, Lebanon. Sponsored by Lebanon Volunteer Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary. Call 860.208.3554.

EVENTS

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 djewell@sbcglobal.net.

MULTI FAMILY TAG SALE — Saturday, Sept. 24, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at 921 Route 87, Lebanon Center.

NFA CHEER CAR WASH — Saturday, Sept. 24 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the front of the Norwich Free Academy Tirrell Building.

ANNUAL SCARECROW FESTIVAL — Saturday, Sept. 24, at Preston City Congregational Church, Preston. Call 860.887.4647 or e-mail scarecrowfestival@nfacrafters@hotmail.com for more information.

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.

WILLIAM B. STANLEY LECTURE SERIES — Saturday, Sept. 24; Saturday, Oct. 8; and Friday, Nov. 4. Presented by The Norwich Historical Society and the Slater Memorial Museum. Free and open to the public. Call 860.425.5563 for complete details.

LISBON LIONS CLUB — Monday, Sept. 26, 6:30 p.m. at the Lisbon Senior Center. There is a new Lions Club being formed in Lisbon, this is an informational/organizational meeting to discuss the new Lisbon Lions Club being formed in this growing town where there is currently no service organization to partner with children, seniors, or social services. If you are in the Lisbon area, are community-minded and are interested in changing lives for the better, please join us. Call 860.531.9468 for any questions.

$ thetreasuretrove

The Treasure Trove is a free classified ad section for the benefit of Behavioral Health Network employees, retirees, medical staff and volunteers.

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