Addiction, in all its apparent randomness, is ruthlessly non-discriminatory. As if Jeff Hatch didn’t know.

“This is my truth,” he says in the hours before a recent Hartford HealthCare Behavioral Health Network community forum on addiction in Enfield. “At 22 years old, I had signed a multiyear, $1 million contract with the New York Giants, I had graduated from the University of Pennsylvania, I was dating Miss Maryland and I had won the President’s Award [for work with the homeless]. I had checked every box that I thought success was. I was 22 and I was completely miserable.”

Hatch, now 37, works for The Granite House, a substance abuse treatment facility in Derry, N.H., a long way from a trajectory that began with only two years of high school football at Severn, a prep school in Severna Park, Md. Hatch became a Division I-AA All-American offensive lineman at Penn, drafted by the Giants in the third round (78th overall), with a future seemingly as big as his 6-foot-6, 302-pound physical presence. He now speaks to students in local schools, at community forums like the BHN event and wherever else he can offer, as he describes it, service to his fellows.

“That’s the thing that brings me the most joy,” he says.

Even before the NFL draft, Hatch was filmed as part of a CNN documentary — and was featured in another by ESPN as a rookie — yet he played only...
four games with the Giants, his career finished two years later in 2005. He endured multiple injuries, including a debilitating spinal fusion that ended his career. Along the way, the drugs that aided his physical recovery also fueled an addiction.

“The bottom line,” he says, “is that there’s a huge problem with opiates in the NFL. You’re asked to be superhuman and you have 300-pound men running into each other at full speed 65 times in a row. A lot of people end up on opiates to help control the pain they’re in.”

He never played in the Super Bowl, but he won’t forget the 2006 game: He watched from a Florida hospital bed, recovering from a drug overdose.

“It was one of those light-bulb moments,” he says, “that was so powerful, so in my face, that I couldn’t hide from it. There were a few of those moments.”

Hatch’s drugs of choice were opiates and alcohol, but he says the drug is less consequential than the addiction.

“My disease was in me long before I had a drink or took a drug,” he says.

Hatch sought help after the 2006 overdose at a Louisiana substance abuse facility, which offered him a job when he completed treatment. When he bought a house in the area, a symbolic achievement as he rebuilt his life, his parents shipped some of his belongings in storage from the Annapolis, Md., area, where he grew up.

“One of the things that I found was a sketchpad from when I was 11 years old,” he says. “I open the sketchpad and there are three drawings in it. The first drawing was a man hanging from a cliff. The second was a man behind a cage screaming. The third was a half-devil, half-person. That’s when I was 11.”

Even at that age, the indications now seem obvious that Hatch viewed himself as an outcast, as someone who didn’t fit. He acknowledges he would have become an addict even if he hadn’t played a down in the NFL.

“Absolutely,” he says. “I’m an addict and an alcoholic. Opiates was the substance that made me the most comfortable in my skin, which is the ultimate goal for those of us who have the disease. That’s what we’re looking for.”

How addiction is viewed, and how it’s treated, are evolving. Addiction is not a choice, but a disease whose only comfort is drugs or alcohol.

“For us,” says Hatch, “that’s the only answer. It’s almost like a survival mechanism. . . . It’s not a disease of bums and junkies. It’s a disease that affects everybody, across every social, racial and economic spectrum.”

Patricia Rehmer, the Behavioral Health Network president who moderated the forum and appeared with Hatch earlier in the day on FoxCT, says public perception prevents many addicts from confronting their disease.

“This is not only about stigma, which is how the person feels about their addiction and the shame they experience,” she says during the FoxCT segment. “It’s really about discrimination. There’s not a city in Connecticut that has not been connected by this. It’s still something people are not willing to talk about and share.”

Connecticut public health officials estimate more than 830 deaths this year from substance abuse overdose, an increase from 700-plus in 2015. The best hope for those who do seek help, says Rehmer, is medication-assisted treatment.

“We see some peoples struggle with this for 10 years, as Jeff did,” she says. “There’s an 87 percent better chance of getting into recovery and staying in recover if at least initially — it’s not a lifetime commitment — if you’re treated with some medication that helps you stay away from drugs and alcohol.”

Recovery, and sobriety, has its own rewards — different, perhaps, from a $1 million contract but in some respects more rewarding.

“I’m grateful for the experiences I’ve been through,” says Hatch, “because I can’t tell you as a man today if I would feel that way if I hadn’t had the opportunity to be gifted those material things and to have achieved that success. Only seeing it through those eyes did I realize that, ‘Oh, wow, this isn’t really anything. There’s so much more.’”
It’s National Breast Cancer Awareness Month!

We’re Connecting You to Healthier with lots of activities, including the Pink Party, the Night of Lite Laughter, support groups, and mobile mammogram locations.

Find details about these events and more at www.hartfordhealthcare.org/breastcancerawareness
Eating disorders program split into youths and adults sessions

The Institute of Living Eating Disorders program announces newly split adolescent and adult tracks accepting both males and females and are now accepting referrals in both programs.

Adolescent programming includes PHP Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. and IOP on Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays from 2:30 - 6 p.m. These new times will allow teens to return to school.

Adult programming continues to include PHP Monday though from Friday 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. and IOP for 3½ hours (between 8 a.m. and 2 p.m.) for 3-5 days per week.

Stay tuned for future expansion of our outpatient services with aftercare groups.

To learn more, please contact Cheryl Grezlik, LCSW at 860.545.7878. For referrals, please call the Assessment Center at 860.545.7399.

Remote access now available for IOL Grand Rounds

The Institute of Living's Grand Rounds weekly lecture series is now available remotely through the HHC Virtual Meeting Room (VMR) technology.

With advancements in VMR technology and the invaluable assistance of Joe Stevens in our Audio Visual Department, we are very pleased to now be able to offer others in the BHN and HHC access to the IOL Grand Rounds via VMR.

To view the VMR, participants will need to have the HHC VMR software on their computer or phone and use the following address: meet.iolhartford@video.hhchealth.org.

For a full schedule of the IOL’s Grand Rounds, which generally run every Thursday at noon, visit http://instituteofliving.org/health-professionals/training-education/grand-rounds.

Intersectionality: Working with Both/And/All of Me

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

$5 Students • $10 Professionals

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.

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.
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.** 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.

**Alcoholics Anonymous.** Oct. 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.

**Social Support Group — LGBTQ Issues (Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender/Questioning).** 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.** Oct. 12, 19, 26 (Every Thursday), 7 - 8 p.m. One hour topic discussion.

**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.

**Depression Bipolar Support Alliance Group (DBSA).** Oct. 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.

**Bipolar: An Introduction To The Disorder.** Oct. 18, Dec. 13, 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.

**Support Group For Families Dealing With Major Mental Illness.** Oct. 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. 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.

**Yoga.** 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

**Depression: An Introduction To The Disorder.** Oct. 25, Dec. 6, 6:30 – 7:45 p.m. This program is for family and friends of individuals who suffer from depression. It will present a basic understanding of major depression, its treatment, and ways in which family members might better cope with the illness.

**Dementia Support/Educational Group Meeting.** 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.

**Managing Schizophrenia.** Nov. 1, 6:30 – 7:45 p.m. This presentation will discuss the impact that symptoms of schizophrenia have on everyday activities, and provide tips on what you can do to make things better at home.
Annual meeting shows family’s strength

Natchaug Hospital hosted its 62nd Annual Reception on Thursday, Oct. 6, at the HHC East Region System Support Office in Norwich.

Joe and Tammy de la Cruz, co-founders of a community advocacy group, gave the evening’s invited remarks where they shared the inspiration behind their organization — family members who had been impacted by addiction. In the case of the de la Cruz family, it was their son Joe.

“Before my son got involved [with opioids], I had an uncle involved, I had a cousin that had died of addiction, but it hadn’t hit me,” said Joe de la Cruz. “It hadn’t hit me to the point where my knees buckled, where you couldn’t breathe or you couldn’t stop crying. When your son or daughter gets addicted, that’s what really brings you into it.”

The organization, founded by de la Cruz, his wife and others impacted by addiction, is starting a grassroots effort in southeastern Connecticut to provide resources and support for families with loved ones fighting addiction.

Pat Rehmer, ACHE, MSN, president of the Hartford HealthCare Behavioral Health Network, commented on the progress that organizations like Natchaug Hospital and Community Speaks Out are having on the epidemic in her opening remarks.

“People are beginning to view addiction for what it is — a disease; not a personal flaw or moral failing,” said Rehmer.

Joshua Center Enfield School Leaders Club

The Joshua Center Enfield School Leaders Club is participating in the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention Out of the Darkness Walk in Hartford to help raise awareness and funds for suicide prevention on Oct. 15. If you would like to donate to the team, visit http://bit.ly/2dsR04P.

The Leaders Club will also be making Halloween bags for children at the domestic abuse shelter in Enfield. These enthusiastic teens are continuing to plan other ways to give back to their communities — stay tuned to learn about their future projects.
Rushford welcomes large class of interns

Rushford is continuing to expand its role as a regional leader in behavioral health services by welcoming a class of 35 interns from colleges in Connecticut, Massachusetts and New York to work in departments across the organization beginning this fall. The intern program began two years ago with just three interns, and the program’s evolution is a sign that it is becoming mutually beneficial for the interns, Rushford staff members and the clients in their care, said Amy DiMauro, Rushford’s clinical director for adult and adolescent services and prevention.

“We realize that this program provides tremendous teaching opportunities for the students, and tremendous teaching opportunities for the staff,” she said. “We’re finding when you take the time to coach and mentor a student, you are growing personally and professionally.”

The 35 new interns who are beginning their work at Rushford this fall are contributing to clinical and non-clinical departments in numerous areas, including adult and child and adolescent areas and an administrative intern in the Human Resources Department. DiMauro said the students come from a range of colleges including the University of Saint Joseph in West Hartford; the University of Connecticut; Southern Connecticut State University in New Haven; Fordham University in New York, Springfield College in Massachusetts; and Quinnipiac University in Hamden.

Julie Danetz, Rushford’s Human Resources Business Partner, said the addition of an intern in her department is already proving beneficial just one month since it began. The department’s intern is Jaida Burke from Southern Connecticut State University.

“We are pleased to have Jaida as our Human Resources intern this semester to be able to share our HR passion and knowledge with her. She is a wonderful addition to our team to assist us with projects and tasks that can add value to our employees and we hope to give her experience and tools to prepare her for her future career after graduation,” Danetz said.

DiMauro said the internships allow staff members more time to focus on their roles, while giving interns a chance to explore Rushford as a possible place to work after they graduate. The program also enhances the organization’s stature as a teaching resource for students exploring careers in behavioral health.

“One of our former interns, Peter Doria, is now a full-time member of our staff, which is really one of the best things about the program,” she said.

A closer look

- Rushford is welcoming its largest-ever class of interns this year, with 35 college-aged students from across the region. Meet two of them:
  
  Shannon McGrane, Intern, Rushford Child & Adolescent Program
  Student, Masters Program in Social Work, University of Saint Joseph
  - Shannon began her internship in the Rushford adolescent program in early August and will continue through May, when she graduates. She has completed four previous internships working with various behavioral health populations, but this is the first one focusing on adolescents. Shannon said did not envision pursuing a career working with adolescents, but after a few months here, she said she is changing her mind. “The day is packed with many different types of opportunities, and you can make a real impact,” she said. She is helping the unit run group sessions and with intake and documentation. “I have been drawn to this field for quite some time, and I look forward to making a difference,” she said.

  Jaida Burke, Intern, Rushford Human Resources Department
  Student, Communications Major, Southern Connecticut State University
  - Rushford’s Human Resources Department chose Jaida to fill its new internship position earlier this year, and in just a few weeks, she has proven to be a great asset. In her role, she helps enable aspects of orientation for new hires, helps with administrative functions and also contributes to talent acquisition functions. “I really enjoy the wide range of responsibilities and opportunities here,” said Jaida, who views the internship as a way to see if it would be a good fit for her career goals. “It’s definitely rewarding, especially because I can see how this organization has core values that relate to my own.”

  McGrane
  Burke
Get your flu shot

All Hartford HealthCare employees who have not been granted exemptions need to get their flu shots by Nov. 1. Flu shot clinics are scheduled at Rushford in October on the following dates and locations:

**RUSHFORD FLU CLINICS**

**Silver Street in Middletown**
- Monday, Oct. 17  9 a.m. – noon  Staff kitchenette Room, E 140A
- Wednesday, Oct. 19  1 – 4 p.m.  Staff kitchenette Room, E 140A

**Paddock Avenue in Meriden**
- Wednesday, Oct. 26  9 a.m. – noon  Back of the cafeteria
- Friday, Oct. 28  1 – 4 p.m.  Back of the cafeteria

The Hartford HealthCare Influenza Prevention Program strives to achieve nearly 100 percent vaccine coverage and significantly reduce the risk influenza poses to our most vulnerable patients, while also protecting our co-workers and families.

Talent Show can be seen on the Intranet

Rushford clients showcased an impressive range of talents at the inaugural Rushford Consumer Talent Show 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 sang a variety of songs, played instruments including clarinet, harmonica and guitar and recited self-written poems and stories. Check out the show on the Intranet at https://intranet.hartford-healthcare.org/news-events/rushford/inaugural-talent-show-brings-out-rushford-s-best

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@hhhealth.org.

Rushford
A Hartford HealthCare Partner
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.

FOR SALE
MISC. ITEMS — Mid Century modern dressers, one chest and one bureau in good condition, $150 for both. Rustic style solid wood desk with hutch, $60. Dirt Devil upright vacuum, works great, $25. Please call in the evenings 860.389.7121.

HAY BALES — 250 bales of local second cutting. Call Justin Maschka, 860.617.5955.

EVENTS
LARGE MOVING SALE — Saturday, Oct. 8 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at 6 Laura Jane Lane, Lily Pond Estates, Griswold. Antiques, 47-piece blue historical dishes, Spode china, framed signed and numbered prints, pottery, lamps, 8-foot inflatable boat with oars, four life jackets, rugs, mirrors, Brighton and Vera Bradley handbags and wallets, toy collections, doll houses, furniture, movies, electronic games, books, scooters, bicycles. No early birds please.
CAR WASH/BAKE SALE — Saturday, Oct. 8, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 80 W. Town St., Norwich, weather permitting. Proceeds will benefit Huntington School fifth grade.
WILLIAM B. STANLEY LECTURE SERIES — 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.
OTTIS LIBRARY BOOK SALE — Friday, Oct. 21 and Saturday, Oct. 22 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 23, from noon to 3 p.m. Early bird preview Friday, Oct. 21, from 9-10 a.m., $10.
JOSHUA CENTER TRUNK OR TREAT — Friday, Oct. 28, from 4-4:45 p.m. in the parking lot of the Joshua Center, 11A Stott Ave., Norwich. Peanut free zone, volunteers provide candy, cars can be decorated, costumes worn. If you would like to donate treats please call Kerri at 860.823.5353 or email kerri.sisson@hhchealth.org.
ALL-YOU-CAN-SAMPLE 'SOUPER' SUPPER — Oct. 29, 5-7 p.m., at Central Baptist Church, 2 Union Square, Norwich. Try five delicious homemade soups and dessert. Basket and 50/50 raffles at 6:30 p.m. Limited seating. Reservations required. Call 860.889.8313 or email central.baptist@snet.net. Tickets: $10.

We care about you!
Health & Wellness Fair
for Rushford clients and staff
Featuring more than a dozen health and wellness agencies from across Connecticut
Tuesday, Nov. 8 | 10 am–1 pm
Rushford Cafeteria
883 Paddock Ave, Meriden
Door Prizes and Raffle • Refreshments will be served.

We are cordially invited to attend our:
Peer Recovery Group!
Every Tuesday! Beginning: November 1, 2016
Time: 10:00am–11:00am.
Rushford MediQuick, Room #1, Paddock Avenue, Meriden.
*Featuring Topics such as...
• Mindfulness
• ”Pick a stick”
• Dealing with stress...
And many more topics that together as a Peer group we will come up with!
*For more information, or any questions, contact:
Sarah LaBarre-Recovery Specialist: (203)634-7073
Kaye White-Recovery Specialist: (203)630-5391
Leslie Fort-Recovery Specialist: (203) 630-5224
John Oyola-Recovery Specialist: (203)634-7048

"Together we will guide our recovery!"