

## Advancing Care at the J. Kent McNew Family Medical Center

### Creating a Safe Harbor In a Pandemic

With the uncertainties affecting our community as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic, now more than ever, Pathways and the J. Kent McNew Family Medical Center serve as beacons of hope for those struggling with the diseases of mental illness and addiction. The lifeline is there thanks to the generosity of people like you.

To protect the health of both patients and AAMC staff, the behavioral health team put additional safety measures in place to provide a safe, healing environment for those seeking mental health care. At Pathways and the McNew Family Medical Center, daily universal COVID-19 screening takes place for all entering the building, including patients and employees. The screening involves asking questions about symptoms and possible contact with COVID-19. Mask use and hand hygiene are mandatory.

To better practice safe social distancing, outpatient support groups at Pathway's, the Partial Day Program, and the AAMG Mental Health Clinic have transitioned to virtual meetings via Zoom to limit exposure for all.

### Staff and Training at the J. Kent McNew Family Medical Center

To help prepare the behavioral health team for the opening of the J. Kent McNew Family Medical Center, staff participated in an extended orientation, which included advanced training in:

- Crisis Prevention
- Suicide Prevention
- Active Shooter Response
- Stop the Bleed in partnership with Anne Arundel County Firefighters and Police
- Appropriate Boundaries with How to Run Groups
- Teambuilding

The inpatient team at the McNew Family Medical Center consists of:

- Psychiatrists
- Psychiatric and Family Nurses and Nurse Practitioners
- Physician Assistants
- Social Workers
- Occupational Therapists
- Patient Care Techs
- Nutritionist
- Pharmacist
- Patient Access Representatives

Similar to 'Rounds,' the McNew Family Medical Center team meets daily in 'Treatment Team' to connect about meeting patient care needs, ensuring patient safety, decreasing the occurrence of patient preventable events, and proactively addressing problems before they occur.

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## Caring for Patients Struggling with Mental Illness and Substance Abuse

In the past six months, Pathways has treated **1,300** patients in our inpatient and outpatient program. Additionally, the care team at Pathways has hosted more than **150** substance abuse prevention education presentations for adolescents and Family Wellness workshops for more than **45** families.

Since opening the McNew Family Medical Center in April, more than **300** patients have received urgent inpatient care.

- Patients ranged in age from 18-94
- 42% men and 58% women
- Average length of stay is 6-7 days
- Patient diagnosis include:
  - 52% Major depression
  - 14% Bipolar Disorder
  - 17% Generalized Anxiety Disorder
  - 17% other illnesses including Schizophrenia, psychosis, and suicidal ideation.
  - For many of these patients, these diagnoses are combined with alcohol or substance abuse as a secondary diagnosis.

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## Treatment Modalities

### Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

A psychosocial intervention that aims to improve mental health by focusing on challenging and/or changing unhelpful cognitive distortion, such as thoughts, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors.

### Dialectic Behavioral Therapy

Thanks to your generous support, a member of the clinical team at the McNew Family Medical Center received additional training and her certification in Dialectical Behavior Therapy. (DBT) This form of psychotherapy is helpful in treating mood disorders, suicidal ideation, and change in behavioral patterns, such as self-harm and substance abuse.

### Group Therapy

Patients and their care team gather collectively at the beginning and end of each day to create a better sense of connection. Additional group sessions include:

- Spiritual Group
- Occupational Therapy
- Discharge Planning
- Co-occurring Group
- Life Skills Group
- Relaxation Group



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### Expanding Access to Care with Advanced Technology

Due to COVID-19 safety guidelines issued by the State of Maryland in early spring, AAMC's Partial Hospitalization Program temporarily suspended their in-person program and transitioned to telehealth visits so that patients would have continued access to the support they needed in navigating their mental health treatment. With the success of the launch of the telehealth program and the ability to now host more intimate groups of 5 patients each with social distancing in both the adolescent and adults programs, AAMC's Partial Hospitalization Program will move forward with both in-person and telehealth options, increasing the number of patients we can support at this time to 24.



To date, more than 116 adults and 87 adolescents have received life changing support through AAMC's Partial Hospitalization Program. To help meet the increased need for advanced mental health care in our community, an Intensive Outpatient Program launched at the McNew Family Medical Center in July. This is a step-down program from the Psychiatric Day Hospital that provides patients with additional support for 3 hours a day, 3 days a week.

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### Stories of Hope and Healing

Jo Deaton, AAMC's Senior Nursing Director of Mental Health, shares how the psychiatric care team at the J. Kent McNew Family Medical Center partnered with nutrition services to treat an adult female patient's mental health and physical needs.

"A patient was admitted with extreme paranoia, refusing to eat. Upon arrival, she was significantly malnourished. Through collaboration with the dietician and the treatment team, the patient's mental state improved to a point where she trusted the staff to keep her safe. As a result, she began eating routinely and upon discharge, she increased her body weight with a plan to maintain her physical health."

#### A grateful patient shares her experience:

"Thank you so much for helping me heal and building up my stability! I feel amazing, and I'm back to feeling positive about my future. You are all wonderful, and I am so blessed to have gotten the care and understanding you have all given. It's been life changing, and I feel happier than I can ever remember feeling."

– 19-year-old female patient

As you can see from the stories above, your support of *AAMC Foundation's Lighting the Way to Healthy Minds Campaign* has made a significant difference in the lives of patients struggling with the diseases of mental illness and substance abuse. We look forward to sharing more with you in the months ahead, as your generosity continues to have a meaningful impact on care in your community.

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