



Regions Hospital Foundation

Partners in Health

WINTER 2012/2013 NEWSLETTER

ALSO INSIDE:

Stay on mental health unit gives patient hope

Area health providers collaborate to strengthen services

Community invited to mental health building's grand opening



Transforming Mental Health Care

Mental illnesses are some of our society's greatest health challenges. Regions and HealthPartners have responded by making the largest private investment in mental health in the state's history. Charitable contributions are playing a key role in this initiative.



We want to tell you about a campaign that is close to both of our hearts. Both of us have experienced the heartbreak that a mental illness can cause a family. We have also seen the great good that can result from quality care. Both of us have a long history of leadership at Regions Hospital and have felt the passion of its mental health employees, but we have also seen them struggle to offer the best care in sub-par mental health facilities.

That is why we are excited to introduce the hospital's Campaign to Transform Mental Health Care. The most obvious symbol of the campaign is a new, state-of-the-art building to open in December 2012. The campaign will also include new programming and an effort to tackle the stigma associated with mental illnesses. We want to offer the very best care to our patients and their families. We also want to become a model of best practices for other health providers to follow and encourage people to seek care when they experience a mental illness. To help accomplish these goals, Regions Hospital Foundation is conducting a \$6 million fundraising effort.

A mental illness is not a mark of shame. It is an illness, and everyone who experiences it deserves the best care. As campaign co-chairs, we encourage you to read this newsletter, which is devoted to our mental health initiative. Then, if you would like to donate to the campaign or share your own mental health story, please call the foundation at 651-254-2376. Thank you.

Steve Wellington
Board member, Regions Hospital

Mary McLeod
Former board member,
Regions Hospital Foundation

Pictured on the front cover is Wendi Morin, right, a former patient of Regions Hospital's inpatient mental health units. She is visiting the new mental health facility with Wendy Waddell and John Kuzma, MD, the director and medical director of inpatient mental health services. For more on Wendi's story, turn to page 4.

The need for improved mental health resources

According to government statistics, one in four adults experiences a diagnosable mental illness in a given year and five percent have a serious mental illness. If left untreated, such disorders can take a terrible toll on patients and families, leading to high levels of poverty, domestic violence and suicide. Mental illnesses also cause a tremendous drain on the community, both in terms of lost productivity and increased health care expenses.

In the Twin Cities, many people turn to Regions for their mental health care needs. The hospital's inpatient facility has half of the mental health beds in the East Metro, caring for those experiencing a one-time mental health crisis as well as those with a serious and persistent mental illness.

Yet despite recent renovations to the hospital's current mental health facility, the building itself remains a barrier to providing the best experience to patients. Built in the early 1960s as a dormitory for nursing students, the units are cramped, with no private rooms or showers and limited space for therapy. The Regions facility is not an anomaly; with low reimbursement rates, mental health facilities across the community have fallen behind those that cater to patients with other illnesses and injuries.

"Mental illnesses are some of the greatest health challenges our society faces, yet too often our health care industry treats them like second-class citizens," said Brock Nelson, president and CEO of Regions. "Patients experiencing a mental illness deserve the same great experience as those who have suffered a heart attack or been injured in a car accident."

"With our new mental health building and new programming, we will offer care that is second to none, and hopefully other health providers will follow our lead," Nelson said. "This could be the beginning of a great new chapter in the way our community treats mental illnesses." ■

Did you know...

Individuals living with a serious mental illness face an increased risk of chronic medical conditions. On average, adults living with a serious mental illness die 25 years earlier than other Americans, largely due to treatable medical conditions.

One in 17 adults lives with a serious mental illness such as schizophrenia, major depression or bipolar disorder.

Transforming our mental health facilities

“Creating a supportive, healing environment was our top priority in planning our new mental health building,” said Tom Geskermann, the Regions vice president for mental health.

“When patients are admitted to a mental health hospital, they are in crisis. We want to help them recover from the trauma they experienced and prepare for more fulfilling lives after hospitalization. We want family members to feel welcome and to participate more fully in the care of their loved ones. We also want to collaborate more effectively with other mental health providers as we coordinate the ongoing care of patients and work as a community to improve our mental health care system. Our building was designed with these goals in mind.” Highlights of the new building include the following:

- An eight-story, 115,000 square-foot building
- 100 private inpatient rooms and baths, with the option of finishing an additional floor and adding 20 more rooms (it will be the only mental health facility in the Twin Cities with all private rooms)
- Family-friendly patient care space designed for a range of individual and group therapies
- Space for DayBridge, an intensive, inpatient-like mental health treatment program for adults who can safely return home at night and on weekends
- A multi-purpose space for physical activities and large educational groups as well as a safe and secure outside space



Patrick Kennedy (center front), son of the late U.S. Senator Edward Kennedy and a former U.S. Representative from Rhode Island, toured the new mental health facility at Regions.

- A resource center for patients and visitors to acclimate themselves to the facility and receive informational resources
- A community space where our partners can meet

“We partnered closely with our community in designing the facility,” Geskermann said of the \$38.3 million project. “We visited other mental health hospitals across the country and received input from former patients, their families and other providers. The generosity of donors is also making a big impact on our ability to accomplish our goals. We couldn’t have done this without their help.” ■

According to government statistics, one in four adults experiences a diagnosable mental illness in a given year.

Mental health is among the top five conditions in relation to medical expenditures in the U.S. In 2006, expenditures for mental health equaled \$58 billion.

Mental illnesses are the leading cause of disability for Americans and Canadians ages 15-44. According to a 2008 study, mental health disorders cost the U.S. at least \$193 billion annually in lost earnings.

Despite effective treatments for mental illnesses, there are long delays—sometimes decades—between the first onset of symptoms and when people seek treatment.





Giving hope to patients

A stay in the mental health units at Regions helps patients recover and live fulfilling lives after discharge

Wendy Waddell, Wendi Morin and John Kuzma, MD, visit the new mental health facility. Waddell and Dr. Kuzma are the director and medical director of inpatient mental health services, and Morin is a former patient.

“Regions has been my hospital of choice since 1998 when I was first treated for severe depression,” said Wendi Morin. “The staff really cares about finding what works for me as an individual—medications, talking, writing assignments, exercise, my support system—what can bring back hope to my life. When I don’t have hope, they have hope for me and try to help me find it. When I don’t want to talk, they sit with me and encourage me to write.”

“They have helped me rebuild my life.”

- Wendi Morin

Doctors at Regions have worked continually with Wendi to help her find the right medications for her condition. “I have a lot of allergies to the medications, and this can cause severe breathing problems, rashes and itching that feels like a million mosquitoes are biting me. When my medications are not working, the doctors always come up with another plan even when I don’t think it’s possible.”

Regions also includes Wendi’s husband in her care. “They keep him informed, make him feel like what he says matters, include him in care conferences, and talk to him about his fears about my depression.”

Over the years, Regions has helped Wendi find resources in the community so she could live a fulfilling life after discharge. “Regions has helped me find support groups, financial help, health insurance, a place to live, a job, physical therapy for pain, and places to go for hobbies like sewing. They have helped me rebuild my life.”

Wendi sits on the mental health department’s patient and family advisory council, which is currently helping the hospital create a new model for treating patients experiencing a mental illness (see page 5 for more details). The council has also given advice to the hospital regarding its plans for the new mental health building, which will open in December 2012. “It is a really well thought out place that offers safety and respect to patients and takes away the stigma of traditional institutions,” Wendi said.

According to Wendi, if a person is experiencing a mental illness, “you can trust that Regions will treat you like a person, not an illness. They care.” ■

If you would like to contribute to one of the programs listed in the newsletter or another program, please use the enclosed envelope or call Regions Hospital Foundation at 651-254-2376.

Transforming our model of mental health care

Regions is creating "Circle of Support," a new model for treating patients experiencing a mental illness. As part of this effort, Regions kicked off 16 work teams in October 2011 to consider all facets of care in the mental health facility. The teams are comprised of employees, former patients and their family members and receive input from a variety of other mental health organizations. The following are examples of new initiatives being instituted as part of Circle of Support, as told by people serving on the work teams.

Supporting patients during treatment

Melissa Hensley is uniquely qualified to sit on Circle of Support's patient and family advisory council. Melissa is an assistant professor in the Social Work Department at Augsburg College and has worked extensively with patients experiencing mental illnesses. She has also received inpatient care for bipolar disorder. "If given the proper resources and if treated with respect, patients will use their inpatient experience as a springboard for recovery," Melissa said. "If they are made to feel like their conditions are untreatable, they will give up."



Melissa Hensley

Melissa's team has focused on all aspects of Regions Hospital's mental health care in order to make it more patient-centered. "We are getting patients more involved in creating treatment plans that incorporate their own needs and goals. We will create treatment curriculum that offers new coping skills to help patients improve the quality of their lives. We are emphasizing healthy lifestyles so patients avoid chronic medical conditions such as type 2 diabetes that are rampant among patients with mental illness. But being respectful of patients often goes beyond the care plan, like offering private showers."

Involving a patient's support system in care

"Nobody gets through a serious illness by themselves, whether they have cancer or a mental illness," said Sue Abderholden, the executive director of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) of Minnesota. "Patients experiencing a mental illness need support during inpatient treatment. It can be hard for patients to concentrate when they are hospitalized, so family members and friends can help them process information. And having a strong social support system is a huge part of their ability to live well after discharge."

Sue sits on Circle of Support's patient and family advisory council. One of the team's tasks is to ensure that a patient's support system is fully invited into the care process. Patients decide who to invite. "The mental health staff at Regions will actually listen

to family members and friends, to their history and concerns. Before discharge, patients are encouraged to bring someone along who can receive education about the patient's illness, advice on how to deal with symptoms, and information about community resources. The hospital's mental health units have also extended visiting hours, which has encouraged friends and family members to visit patients during their stay."



Sue Abderholden

Preparing patients for discharge

"The discharge process can play a key role in helping patients live safe, fulfilling lives after being hospitalized for a mental illness," said Jason Sodren, RN, a charge nurse within Regions Mental Health. Participating on Circle of Support's discharge process team, Jason and his co-workers received feedback from patients that the discharge process was overwhelming and that some critical information was not emphasized appropriately.

The feedback is inspiring the Regions mental health department to make significant changes. "We encourage patients to have friends or family members present at discharge to aid in the retention of information. We also plan to hire a peer specialist who will host a discharge group for patients leaving the next day," Jason said. Peer specialists have received inpatient mental health care themselves and are uniquely qualified to answer questions patients may have regarding their ongoing care and lives. "In addition, we've significantly increased the information we share with our patients' ongoing care providers to make sure they have the information they need to provide the best care." ■



Jason Sodren

Transforming how the community thinks about mental illness

"Whether we know it or not, we all have friends or family members who experience a mental illness, and I'm not any different," said Peter Tressel.

Tressel is a creative director with the advertising agency Preston Kelly. He is currently working on a Regions and HealthPartners campaign to fight the stigma associated with mental illnesses. Regions Hospital Foundation is raising money for the effort as part of its larger mental health initiative.

"The campaign will focus less on educating the public about mental illness and more on changing their hearts," Tressel said. "We want to make mental illnesses less scary and more like other diseases. When people experience a mental illness, we want them to know it's okay to talk about it and to seek help. Mental illnesses are treatable conditions and life can get better." The campaign, which will launch in early 2013, will include marketing and media efforts targeting the general

Make It .org

The main message of the Regions and HealthPartners anti-stigma campaign will be "Make it okay": it's okay to have a mental illness, to talk about it and ask for help. It will be okay because we aren't hiding from it anymore.

public as well as outreach to local organizations who work closely with people who experience mental illnesses.

"We at Preston Kelly feel very fortunate to be able to work on this project," Tressel said. "To change people's minds about such an important social issue, to change our corner of the world for the better, is a real opportunity." ■

Area mental health providers collaborate to strengthen services

"Kudos to Regions for reaching out to other health providers as it was planning its new mental health facility," said Roger Meyer, project director of the Mental Health Crisis Alliance. Working with the area's hospitals, health systems, community organizations and government agencies, Regions has been able to benefit from their ideas and spread what it has learned to the whole community. "The facility is going to be a huge asset to the community," Meyer said.

"The close working relationship of mental health providers in the Twin Cities East Metro Area is very unique. They have spent ten years at the same table, building closer relationships and discussing common issues."

The Mental Health Crisis Alliance is itself a coalition of these entities, providing crisis services to patients so they receive the right care at the right time while avoiding emergency room and hospital visits. A roundtable of these partners meets on a regular basis to discuss the state of mental health care in the East Metro. One result of the roundtable has been the Mental Health Drug Assistance Program, which assists patients who temporarily cannot afford their own medications. Regions Hospital Foundation raises money on behalf of this program.

According to Meyer, the close relationship between the area's mental health providers has a direct impact on patient care. "Over time, more than one provider usually cares for a patient with chronic mental illness. By working together on behalf of the patient and making effective referrals to one another, the different health systems feel more like one system. This collaboration works so well because the different providers know and trust each other." ■

Campaign to Transform Mental Health Care—Major Contributors

Donations to this initiative are helping Regions build the most effective mental health facility, develop new programming and address the stigma associated with these conditions. Listed are donors who gave \$10,000 or more to the campaign.

Gifts to Date \$3,161,400
(as of October 31, 2012)

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Greg and Betty Strong
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Barb Tretheway
Waddell and Thompson families
Steve & Kathy Wellington

St. Paul champions support mental health campaign



On August 9, Nancy and Dick Nicholson hosted an event at their home to highlight Regions Hospital Foundation's mental health campaign.

Dick Nicholson has experienced chronic depression and knows the need for quality care. That is one reason why he and his wife, Nancy, gave a major gift to Regions Hospital Foundation's mental health campaign. "In a lot of ways, mental health is more important than physical health, but it's not generally a profit center for hospitals. So while hospitals will build new facilities for illnesses such as heart care, mental health is usually put on the back burner.

"I'm excited by the new mental health facility" at Regions, said Dick, who has toured the building. "I think they did a great job of designing the place. The quality of it is a first for the area. It will allow doctors to give more one-on-one time to patients, and patients will have more privacy. I also like how the facility's resource center will include a library and a representative from NAMI [the National Alliance on Mental Illness] to give information to visitors. Not many people understand illnesses like schizophrenia and bi-polar disorder, so families need information about how to deal with these issues."

On the evening of August 9, Dick and Nancy opened the doors of their historic Summit Avenue home to prospective donors of the mental health campaign. "We do that for anyone we're involved with on a charitable level," Dick said. "We like seeing people who care about St. Paul, and my wife knows how to throw a good party." ■

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If you have a question about these or other programs, please call Regions Hospital Foundation at 651-254-2376.

Community invited to mental health facility's grand opening

On December 7, Regions will host a community grand opening for its new mental health building. "Our staff is really excited to see the building going up," said Wendy Waddell, Regions director of inpatient mental health services. "Our mental health staff members are very loyal, and many have been with us more than 20 years. They have provided great care even in our current mental health facility but feel the quality and quantity of space has held them back from further improving the patient experience."

That will not be the case in the new building, Waddell said. With eight floors, 100 private beds and baths and nearly twice the space of the current facility, "the new building will allow Regions to provide care that is more private, confidential and restful. There will be more space for innovative activities and programming. Family members will also feel more welcome and be given more resources to help support their loved ones.

"I hope our community will come out and see the new building," Waddell said. "It is a huge symbol of the commitment of both Regions and HealthPartners to the care of patients with mental illness." ■



The new mental health facility at Regions

When: December 7, 2012, from noon to 7 p.m.
Where: Regions Hospital campus
For more information: Visit RegionsHospital.com