Outpatient detoxification program available at Butler Hospital

PROVIDENCE – Butler Hospital recently opened an outpatient detoxification unit as an addition to its alcohol and drug treatment services. The ambulatory program provides medically managed safe withdrawal from alcohol and/or heroin, opioid or other prescription medications to adults 18 years or older. “This service allows Butler to expand our ability to support people suffering with the disease of addiction when they are ready to start their recovery process and continue to be there to guide their next step in the recovery journey,” said Alcohol and Drug Program Unit Chief ALAN GORDON, MD.

The addition of outpatient detoxification services to Butler’s recovery program provides another entry point to addiction treatment for Rhode Islanders. The ambulatory program was designed to ensure qualified people are identified, admission and participation in the program is as easy as possible to manage, and transfer to a next level of care is seamless. The program has been designed to meet coverage requirements by most insurance plans popular in Rhode Island.

The treatment team, consisting of a psychiatrist, registered nurse, a licensed clinical social worker and a recovery coach, all specialize in addictions treatment. The program is currently open five days a week, Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on the second floor of Center House, located on the Butler Hospital campus. A person is eligible for outpatient detoxification services if he or she has no history of delirium tremens (DTs) or seizures during withdrawal, is stable with any other medical or psychiatric co-occurring conditions, has transportation to and from the hospital campus, and has at-home assistance to cope with the physical and emotional stressors of detoxification.

Dr. Gordon emphasized that important components of the screening process are ensuring available home support and confidence that there is no abuse of alcohol or substances while participating in the detoxification process. “Generally speaking, the patient needs to be in reasonable general health, without unstable psychiatric symptoms, and to have the needed support at home to assist in coping with the physical and emotional stressors of the process,” he said.

A treatment course is typically three to five consecutive visits to administer medications under nurse supervision. The physician monitors the process to determine the number of visits necessary to enable the patient to safely withdraw. An on-site pharmacy allows patients to pick up prescribed medications before leaving the campus for self-managed care overnight. Patients also have access to emergency support, with the option of transitioning to inpatient treatment if the detoxification is not progressing appropriately. When the patient is sufficiently stable, the team assists with advising and transitioning the patient to the most appropriate next outpatient level of care.

Lifespan, Brown, Care New England, University of Rhode Island, Providence VA Medical Center forge neuroscience research agreement

PROVIDENCE – Lifespan, Brown University, the University of Rhode Island, Care New England and the Providence VA Medical Center have entered into a formal agreement to work jointly on identifying the causes as well as treatments for a wide-range of diseases and disorders, such as Alzheimer’s disease, epilepsy, stroke, traumatic brain injury and autism.

Rhode Island is the only state in the country to have such a statewide effort of all the major institutions involved in this field.

Leaders from the institutions are confident that collaboration will result in larger, more comprehensive research projects, with institutions leveraging each other’s neuroscience work, which includes:

- Lifespan’s Norman Prince Neurosciences Institute
- The Brown Institute for Brain Science (BIBS)
- URI’s George and Anne Ryan Institute for Neuroscience
- The Providence VA Medical Center’s Center of Excellence for Neurorestoration and Neurotechnology
- Care New England’s psychiatry research at Butler Hospital and autism work at Women & Infants Hospital

The institutions’ researchers are excited about potential benefits that include co-funding pilot grant programs, cross-institutional appointments, educational opportunities for researchers and staff, and the sharing of information, equipment and facilities.

Part of the MOU is the creation of the Committee on Coordination on Neuroscience Research within Rhode Island, which will spearhead the inter-institutional initiatives envisioned. Members of this committee are: DIANE LIPSCOMBE, PhD, and R. JOHN DAVENPORT, PhD, from Brown University; JOHN ROBSON, PhD, and ZIYA GOKASLAN, MD, from Lifespan; LAWRENCE PRICE, MD, and STEVEN RASMUSSEN, MD, from Care New England; PAULA GRAMMAS, PhD, and WILLIAM RENEHAN, PhD, from the University of Rhode Island, and LEIGH HOCHBERG, MD, PhD, and BENJAMIN D. GREENBERG, MD, PhD, from the VA Medical Center.