

Partners in Health

Coleman and Quest Recovery Services Reach Stark Clients with Urgent Needs

Coleman Behavioral Health Stark and Quest Recovery Services combined efforts to open Access to Behavioral Health in September of 2013. The partnership and pilot project was facilitated by a grant from the Mental Health and Recovery Board of Stark County to create a centralized intake location for clients with frequent and urgent contact with mental health providers in Stark County.

“Quest Recovery Services was an obvious and great partner to collaborate with,” said Paula Gates, Chief Officer of Behavioral Health Stark. “Quest has a strong presence in Stark County and is well-known for high quality services for those in need of help with addiction.”

Access to Behavioral Health, located on the Goodwill Campus at 408 Ninth St. SW in Canton, provides improved access to services within Stark County. By doing so, the facility decreases wait time, provides referrals to services and offers engagement services to retain clients. Services are available to adults and transitional youths who are Stark County residents in need of urgent – but not emergency – care.

The facility has therapists on staff to assess and diagnose alcohol, drug, emotional and mental health disorders, and case managers to connect clients with preferred providers in the area. Staff members are available Monday through Friday for walk-in meetings and same day or scheduled appointments and can be reached by calling 330-617-4747.

“Partnering with Coleman was an excellent opportunity to develop needed programming within Stark County,” said Keith Hochadel, President and CEO of Quest. “Coleman’s reputation for providing quality behavioral health programming and our common goal of improving urgent access to assessment services for community members made this an easy relationship to build upon.”

Through this partnership, Access to Behavioral Health can meet urgent needs and help clients in Stark County find long-term solutions.



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Ohio Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services

Ohio Department of Health

In association with Allen, Auglaize and Hardin, Portage, Stark, Summit and Trumbull County Mental Health Boards

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“I am Coleman”

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A Note from Nelson

Coleman’s dedication to providing quality care to community members is constant and unvarying, but each case brings a unique set of complexities. We are seeing a heightened awareness surrounding the way care providers interact with clients who have experienced trauma. For those clients, a different approach is often required to assess and treat that trauma in a safe and supportive environment. Addressing those needs is a key concern, and we are committed to ensuring that our clinicians have the skills to work successfully with trauma clients.

As care providers, we are constantly evolving to meet the needs of our clients. We now know that a high volume of individuals seeking treatment for behavioral and mental health concerns are also trauma survivors. Trauma can increase the risk of social, emotional and cognitive impairments as well as the likelihood of risky behavior. To ensure the effectiveness of a trauma-informed approach, clinicians receive training in chosen evidence-based practices. We also work closely with all staff members throughout the organization to assure they recognize and understand the effects of trauma on individuals and families.

To make this endeavor a success, we need to provide an environment where trauma clients feel physically and psychologically safe, and we need to further that feeling through interpersonal interactions that establish trust. By incorporating all of these efforts, we expect improved engagement and follow-through with treatment. To promote health, wellness and recovery in our clients, we have to start at the source, and oftentimes, that begins with treating trauma.

With Gratitude,


Nelson W. Burns
President and Chief Executive Officer



Treating Trauma’s Effects

Trauma can occur in a variety of ways, from sexual assault to military combat to natural disasters. Because of this, developing a definition to accurately describe all instances of trauma is complicated. Defining an experience as trauma depends on how the event, situation or circumstances affected the person involved. What is traumatic for some may not necessarily be traumatic for others.

According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA), 51 percent of women and 61 percent of men in the United States have experienced trauma. Those numbers appear high until they are compared with the 90 percent of behavioral health clients who have experienced a traumatic event. These national figures demonstrate a connection between behavioral health clients and trauma survivors. The implication is that trauma may be a contributing factor in behavioral or mental health concerns, and treatment for those conditions is not effective unless the trauma is also assessed and treated.

To do this, professionals at Coleman have adopted a trauma-informed approach. Sandy Myers, Vice President and Chief Officer of Behavioral Health, explains this change with a simple phrase: “Instead of asking, ‘What’s wrong with you?’ we ask, ‘What has happened to you?’”

One of the first steps to treating trauma is recognizing how common it is and how

it can result in a variety of mental and behavioral health issues, including Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), said Dr. Patrick Palmieri, Director of the Center for the Treatment and Study of Traumatic Stress at Summa Health System. Once that awareness is developed, it’s vital to form a strong therapeutic relationship with trauma patients, where trust and respect are the cornerstones.

Coleman Behavioral Health Summit is working on developing these relationships through a partnership with Summa Health System. By collaborating and sharing resources, such as training opportunities, interns, counselors and the like, Coleman and Summa are both able to offer clients trauma-informed approaches to improve overall care.

In Portage County, Coleman therapists use Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) to work with children and adolescents who have undergone trauma. This approach includes individual sessions for parents and children, adding conjoint parent-child sessions over time. Children learn coping and relaxation skills, while parents learn about psychoeducation and parenting skills. Combining their children’s skills with their own, parents can continue to enhance a feeling of safety and encourage future development.

Coleman will continue to use trauma-informed approaches wherever applicable to ensure we provide effective treatment and lasting solutions for clients. By addressing trauma in behavioral health care, we help clients achieve a higher level of success in overall health and improved functioning in their day-to-day lives. 

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Current News Connection Medicaid Expansion Fills Coverage Gap



would expand to people whose incomes are 138 percent of the federal poverty level, or \$15,860 for an individual. Ohio’s Medicaid system began accepting applications in December for the expansion group – an estimated 275,000 Ohioans. Another 300,000 residents of Ohio are already considered eligible for Medicaid coverage but have not enrolled yet.

About 80 percent of Coleman clients who are indigent would be covered by Medicaid expansion. Currently, contracts with the Mental Health and Recovery Boards in Allen, Auglaize, Hardin, Portage, Stark and Trumbull counties pay for their behavioral health services. Unfortunately, the demand for services is often much greater than the resources available. Through expansion, insurance will cover behavioral health services, medications and physical health services for these clients, thus addressing their overall health needs.

This revised Medicaid eligibility allows Coleman to provide services to the larger community, including those who previously fell in the gray area between Medicaid and federal insurance stipends. It will also position clients for a much higher chance of success, as they will be able to tend to all of their health concerns. 

Coleman’s mission to foster recovery, build independence and change destinies applies to all of the members of our community, but limited resources for clients with little or no income can make our mission more challenging. Coleman anticipates seeing new clients, as the Affordable Care Act will provide low-income workers with federal subsidies to purchase insurance that they couldn’t previously afford. Still, a “coverage gap” would exist for those below the poverty level who don’t qualify for Medicaid.

The Affordable Care Act also allows for Medicaid expansion that would resolve the coverage gap. Decided on a state-by-state basis, coverage

“I am Coleman”

Coleman Helped Me Regain My Future

My name is Linda, and I'm 46 years old. When I was about six, my mother's boyfriend began molesting me. He would come into my bedroom at night, while my mother was working. He told me not to tell anyone because it would ruin our family and no one would believe me. Six years later, my little sister turned six, and I found out he was molesting her, too. I told my mother, but she didn't believe me. She told me not to tell lies about people or I would go to Hell. I was devastated.

I felt alone and thought it was somehow my fault. I started missing school, smoking marijuana and drinking. I was in and out of detention for a couple of years. By 16, I had dropped out of high school. I got pregnant by a guy I thought I loved, but he left me as soon as our son was born. I thought about ending my life but had my son to consider. I went back to alcohol and marijuana to “comfort” me, which led to my inability to hold a job. I became homeless. Soon after, my mother got custody of my son, and I woke up and realized I had to get serious. I got my GED, stopped using drugs and cut back on alcohol. I got my son back and began working as a home health aide. But when stressful events happened, I'd still drink really hard.

I had trouble in relationships, too. It was like I had a sign on my forehead that said, “Abusers and losers, pick me!” I've had so many physically or mentally abusive men in my life. Once after a huge argument with one guy, I got a bottle of pills out of my cabinet and seriously considered overdosing. I hadn't done that for years. I felt like that scared teenager again, like that 12-year-old who was totally alone. I called the pastor at my church, and she told me about Coleman. I started counseling, and my counselor understood what I was experiencing. Thank goodness, because at that point, I didn't.

Through counseling, I've learned that I have had Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

(PTSD) for years. Even though I had been sober for a long time and I was working, my life was still a mess in some areas. Except for work and church, I had cut myself off from people. I'm uncomfortable in public places, but that's starting to get better. I am learning coping strategies, including specific skills to deal with my emotions. I've even learned how to interrupt panic attacks and calm myself down.

I think the best part is that I understand why I did a lot of the self-destructive things

I did, and I am starting to forgive myself. Just coming to understand that I reacted to trauma in a “normal” way has helped my self-esteem a lot.

I'm hopeful about my future again. I'm about to become a grandmother, and I'm really excited about that. My life has improved so much since coming to Coleman. I am strong and growing stronger every day. ☺

True story of a Coleman Behavioral Health – Stark County client.

What's New?

Totally Tuesdays

Totally Tuesdays provides much-needed social programming for adults with developmental disabilities in Portage County. Although it's called Totally Tuesdays, the program actually operates on both Tuesdays and Thursdays. The goal is to spend 50 percent of the time interacting with the community.

Each month, participants visit the Animal Protective League for “Cat Cuddling” and Roberts Conservatory of Dance for dance lessons. They also try to get in a monthly swim at an indoor or outdoor pool, depending on the season. Participants recently visited the 4Cats Art Studio in Kent where they participated in splatter painting.

The program began in February of 2013 and provides services for up to nine individuals on each day. There are currently four open spots for Thursdays. Contact Janet Phelps at 330-296-3214 or janet.phelps@coleman-adulthood.com for more information.

Partnership with Trumbull Memorial Hospital

Since 2006, Coleman Behavioral Health Trumbull has been providing pre-screening services for individuals considered indigent at Trumbull Memorial Hospital. Discussions for expanding the partnership have long been in the works, and those talks recently culminated in the designation of Coleman Behavioral Health as the provider of pre-screening services for all individuals with a behavioral health crisis.

This recent expansion will have a significant impact on how many individuals Coleman is able to help. “We will likely triple the number of persons served by the Access Service,” explained Tammy Weaver, Vice President of Clinical Services for Coleman Behavioral Health Trumbull.

Trumbull Memorial Hospital will also begin using Coleman's Care Navigator program to provide a smoother transition for mental health patients from their hospital stay to outpatient care. The current plan includes one full time Care Navigator at the hospital who will assess patients and determine each individual's needs for follow-up care. ☺

Youth Board Creates Ambassadors Against Bullying



Each month, local students gather to learn about mental and behavioral health through the Coleman Youth Board. Though the topics vary at these meetings, the end goal is always the same – raising awareness about and challenging stigmas associated with mental illness.

Youth Board members recently learned about the damaging effects of bullying. It's a type of trauma that may hit close to home for some of the group, which is comprised of high school students from Kent, Ravenna and Stow. Bullies aren't new, but the way bullying occurs has evolved and adapted to the 21st century. Instead of discussing the playground bully, Youth Board members were learning about the impact of cyber bullying through social media and text messaging.

“The social media sites, apps and other methods of cyber bullying are often unknown to individuals other than the youth,” said Roseann D'Agati, Director of Children and Adolescent Services at Coleman. “Often, children and youths aren't aware or don't consider the impact of bullying or cyber bullying on another child's emotional and mental health.”

The methods for cyber bullying are different from traditional bullying, but the effects on mental health are the same. Those who are bullied may experience feelings of sadness and loneliness, changes in sleep and appetite, decreased academic achievement and loss of interest. They are more likely to skip school or drop out altogether. In severe cases, victims of bullying may have thoughts of suicide or retaliate through violence.

Additionally, victims may feel isolated. Unlike traditional bullying, cyber bullying often happens without any outside witnesses. Parents, teachers and friends might not even realize that it is occurring, and those being bullied may not feel comfortable telling someone else about what they are experiencing.

“It is important that we empower our youth to have a voice,” said D'Agati. The whole community can benefit from educating young people, such as the Youth Board participants, about these damaging effects. Raising their awareness could result in positive changes among other young people. ☺

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Forming a Trauma Team in Summit County

During the past eight years, Coleman Behavioral Health and Summa Health System have developed a strong partnership focused on offering clients high quality treatment and care. One major result of this partnership occurred in 2008, when St. Thomas and Akron City Hospital opened their doors for Coleman Behavioral Health Summit to begin providing services. Most recently, Coleman Behavioral Health Summit has started working with the Center for the Treatment and Study of Traumatic Stress, a program from Summa Health System Behavioral Health.

Through this partnership, resident psychologists at Coleman rotate through the Center to do clinicals in trauma. Coleman also runs the outpatient psychiatry clinic for Summa where psychiatry residents from Summa perform their clinicals by providing counseling services to clients. The Center even invites Coleman counselors and therapists to participate in the trauma training they host.

Monthly collaborative meetings, known as Case Conferences, are a distinctive element of the Coleman/Summa partnership. Staff members from both organizations, including trauma experts from Summa, gather to discuss three to four complex client cases that involve trauma. They analyze the complexities and trauma influences present in each case, while reviewing the progress of the client through treatment. They also spend time discussing barriers to care and best practices for treating trauma.

These efforts are essential to staying up to date with the latest findings in mental and behavioral health care. An awareness



is emerging throughout the field about the frequency of trauma. Patrick Palmieri, Director for the Center for the Treatment and Study of Traumatic Stress, explained that awareness is also developing about the difficulties of treating mental and behavioral health without treating trauma. “There is a growing understanding of how traumatic stress can complicate other mental, behavioral and physical health problems as well as impede efforts to address those problems.”

While it's clear that the partnership is beneficial to the residents, counselors and therapists involved, Becky Dempster, Chief Officer of Coleman Behavioral Health Summit, added that it is mutually beneficial to clients. “It benefits each individual case when we all know each other and are speaking the same language.”

The trauma rotation described above is fairly unique, and it allows Coleman and Summa residents to learn how to create

therapeutic relationships with clients founded on trust and respect. These relationships are essential to an open dialogue with patients. Through conversations, care providers can help uncover any underlying trauma contributing to current mental and behavioral health concerns and ultimately provide higher quality care to clients.

Next academic year, there are plans to implement a trauma-focused group. It will be co-facilitated by a resident in psychiatry and a post-doctoral candidate, who is currently working with Coleman to provide counseling services. The main function of the group will be to allow for more specific trauma training for residents.

By working together on trauma-informed care initiatives, Coleman and Summa are addressing culture, policies and clinical practices and developing a safer, more sensitive environment for those clients who have experienced trauma. ☺

The Facts

To assess and treat clients effectively, care providers need to consider whether trauma is an underlying element for other mental and behavioral health concerns. SAMHSA offers key principles for use in a trauma-based approach.

Five key principles include:

- **Safety:** All individuals need to feel physically and psychologically safe, including the physical setting and interpersonal interactions.
- **Trustworthiness and Transparency:** Operations and decisions are conducted with transparency and the goal of building and maintaining trust among all individuals involved.
- **Collaboration and Mutuality:** Partnering and “leveling power” among all clients and staff members, while recognizing that relationships, shared power and decision-making promote healing.

- **Empowerment:** Recognizing, building on and validating individuals' strengths. Then, developing new skills as needed.
- **Voice and Choice:** Strengthening the experience of choice for all of those involved and implementing an individualized approach for each client.

Coleman's approaches to trauma treatment include SAMHSA's key principles. To see the other key principles, please visit the SAMHSA website at www.samhsa.gov/traumajustice/traumadefinition/approach.aspx.