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Mental Health Resources Unveils Dual Diagnosis IOP

BY GLORIA BUTLER BALDWIN

Mental Health Resources (MHR), PLLC, a multidisciplinary group practice providing intensive outpatient services, has announced the opening of a dual diagnosis/substance abuse intensive outpatient program (IOP).

For more than a decade, MHR has been providing psychiatric care for the depressed, suicidal and anxious. Now the group is adding substance abuse and dual diagnosis to their menu of services.

MHR has been nationally recognized as one of the only empirically validated programs in a private practice setting in the country; several outcomes have been published in national peer review journals.

MHR's Dr. Edward Wise said the new program came at the request of national behavioral health insurance organizations, managed care companies and employee assistance programs.

"We do a lot of work with national managed care companies and local employee assistance programs which have asked us to provide treatment for their employees with substance abuse," Wise said. "We've already started getting referrals and seeing these patients. We are the only program in town publishing evidence based outcomes of our treatment in peer reviewed, professional journals so everyone can see the science behind our treatment. This puts us on the cutting edge of behavioral health treatment. We have adapted what we're doing with the psychiatric patients to our dual diagnosis program and are expecting similar outcomes."

MHR was developed to accommodate the ever growing trend toward

reduced hospital stays and alternative levels of care for intensive treatment in an outpatient setting.

On average, MHR's IOP patients start treatment with more severe symptoms than both locally and nationally hospitalized patients. At discharge, the patients consistently demonstrate significant symptom improvements on all symptom scales. Between 56 to 88 percent of patients achieve both statistically reliable change and clinically significant improvements.

Wise said the MHR program is different than most other IOP programs in several ways. First, it is based in a private setting rather than a hospital or agency setting. Secondly, patients are not required to adhere to one model of treatment, but rather multiple forms of treatments are available for them depending upon their need.

"We take them where they are in contrast to other programs," Wise said. "We don't insist that a patient adapt to our model. They love our program because we keep people out of the hospital unless they have to go there, so it saves the company, insurance companies and patients money. Our program is the only one in the city where they know what they're getting."

Nancy Manire, LCSW, with the CONCERN Employee Assistance Program, a program which is part of the Baptist system but contracts services out to over 50 companies, is thrilled to have the dual diagnosis program available.

"In this day and age, it is very difficult for someone to go inpatient. Medical criteria is so strict," Manire said. "What you



Dr. Edward Wise

need are outpatient facilities. For a long time, Lakeside has been the only game in town. It's nice to have a program that can be more individualized. It's a good location, easy to get folks in and out and the big thing is the personal attention they get.

As soon as I have an opportunity, I will refer someone. They've got awfully good clinicians as well. Lakeside does a great job, but it's a little more cookie-cutter. There are certain basics everyone has to adhere to, but with Mental Health Resources it's geared more to individual need."

Memphis psychologist Tim Faris, PhD, said although the dual diagnosis program at MHR is new, he feels confident it will be an outstanding program.

"The program doesn't have an extensive history, but based on other programs, I can say it will be ultimately the best treatment at the lowest cost, which is a powerful combination compared to inpatient hospital programs," Faris said.

He continued, "(Dr. Wise) evaluates as he goes, which means that strategies are research validated and that's an important factor for people that refer. The beauty in having this person in charge of the program is that at the 2005 Washington, D.C. conference of the American Psychological Association, Dr. Wise was named the most outstanding psychologist in the United States. That award is bestowed only on the true titans of the field. He is a true scientist-practitioner. I'm sure a significant part of the new program will also involve many of the same factors including in the prior ones, and like the others it will be an outstanding program."

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