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MHS receives CMMI grant to provide comprehensive healthcare to people with severe mental illness

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Montefiore Health System (MHS) today announced receipt of a four-year, \$9.6 million grant from the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (CMMI) to fund a unique patient-centered approach to providing comprehensive healthcare to those with severe mental illness (SMI). Under this new initiative developed by the Montefiore Department of Psychiatry, a Practice Transformation Network (PTN) with a centralized care management program will be rolled out to support clinicians providing services to those with SMI, focusing on evidence-based treatments and relapse prevention interventions.

The PTN will be formed by mental health providers, group practices, hospitals providing inpatient psychiatric care and others that join together to serve as trusted partners to provide clinicians with quality improvement expertise, best practices, and operational practice transformation support. The co-principal investigators (PIs) directing the work through this grant are Scott Wetzler, Ph.D., vice chairman, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, and professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences, Albert Einstein School of Medicine, and Bruce J. Schwartz, M.D., Deputy Chairman & Clinical Director, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, and professor of clinical psychiatry and behavioral sciences, Einstein.

"People with severe mental illness cannot navigate our complicated healthcare system," said Dr. Wetzler. "In addition they suffer from chronic medical problems which often go untreated and shorten their lives. This Practice Transformation Network, which focuses on severe mental illness can improve their medical and behavioral care."

According to New York State Department of Health, 80% of patients with the highest annual medical costs in NY State have a diagnosis of SMI. By providing increased wraparound care for people with SMI throughout the Hudson Valley and the Bronx, clinicians can focus on quality of care improvement initiatives for patients with disorders like schizophrenia, bipolar disorder and depression. The model can also lead to improved care outcomes and avoiding costly re-hospitalizations.

The initiative will be supported through a robust technology platform aimed to enhance communication between providers and across institutions. The data-driven learning collaborative will also support clinicians in implementing the newest evidenced-based practices. Montefiore received this CMMI grant as a sub-grantee under the umbrella of the National Council for Behavioral Health (NCBH), a national organization of 2,300 community mental health and addictions treatment organizations serving more than eight million adults and children. North Shore LIJ Health System is also a NCBH sub-grantee and will partner with Montefiore on several aspects of this program, including the propagation of care guidelines.

Source:
Montefiore Medical Center
