

## **Plans to Reduce Readmissions and Avoidable Utilization**

Brook Lane Health Services is a provider of comprehensive behavioral health services for the western Maryland region with offices in Washington and Frederick Counties. Behavioral health services are provided for all ages thru our 57 bed inpatient unit, 3 partial hospitalization programs and 2 outpatient office locations. Brook Lane programs also include a special education school program for grades 1 - 12 and a short term residential program for children and adolescents.

Areas to be addressed:

Individuals being discharged from inpatient care should see an outpatient provider within 7 days of discharge. This is critical to improve the rate of success for individuals following hospitalization and also keeps them in touch with a mental health professional to monitor the on-going effectiveness of any medications they may have been placed on while in the hospital. Given the shortage of mental health providers, it is sometimes difficult to obtain timely follow-up appointments for individuals being discharged from inpatient care. To address this need, Brook Lane plans to expand the number of group therapy sessions available to these individuals. This plan will require expansions of both of the existing outpatient clinics for additional therapy space.

To address the availability of outpatient individual therapy appointments, we plan to implement a program to offer outpatient therapy/assessment appointments within 48 hours of receiving the call. The hope is that by assessing the individual in a quick timeframe, appropriate referrals can be made and the patient's condition can be addressed in the outpatient setting thus preventing the need for an inpatient admission.

Brook Lane is a member of the Community Advisory Council which is coordinated by Trivergent Health Alliance. Trivergent Health Alliance is the regional partnership between Meritus Medical Center, Frederick Memorial Hospital, and Western Maryland Hospital in Cumberland to provide more effective and efficient healthcare in western Maryland. Mental health is one of the identified areas of need being addressed by the CAC and Brook Lane will continue to play an active part in that work.

Brook Lane has also obtained funding to offer school based mental health services and plans are to have a licensed therapist in each middle and high school in Washington County at least one day each week by the end of the 2015-16 school year. Plans are to expand this program to include elementary schools for the 2016-17 school year. The hope for this program is that by making therapy/assessment services more available and convenient for students and parents, that students will be more consistent in their therapy session attendance hopefully preventing the need for more acute levels of care including hospitalization.

Based on community needs assessments and calls received, Brook Lane plans to license both of the existing outpatient mental health clinics to also offer substance abuse services. By having both mental health services and substance abuse services housed in the same office, it will provide more effective treatment options for patients needing mental health and substance abuse services. The expectation is that this will give those patients better outpatient support thus reducing the need for hospitalization.

Brook Lane will continue to monitor statistics available from internal as well as external sources indicating average length of stay, readmission rates, numbers of admissions from specific age groups and geographic locations, admission denials due to bed capacity, wait times for outpatient appointments and calls for substance abuse services. Brook Lane will continue to participate in community needs assessments and based those assessments, feedback from area providers, and analysis of internal data; these plans and initiatives will be periodically reviewed and revised as necessary.