

RCPA Innovation Award Winners

REHABILITATION & COMMUNITY PROVIDERS ASSOCIATION



Forever Home

In 2012 The Arc of Centre County, Pa., Inc., announced an exciting program initiative designed to provide progressive quality care to individuals who have an intellectual disability and Alzheimer's disease or dementia. This initiative had long been a vision of The Arc's then CEO and now President Effie Jenks. The goal was to create a licensed, community home with environmental and programmatic design that showcased best practices in the care and support of persons with these challenges. In order to identify specific modifications, The Arc worked closely with well-known and respected professionals including Dr. Kathy Bishop, Rochester University, and The Arc of Schenectady, New York. The Arc unveiled the Forever Home in January 2013. Modifications such as a second handicap accessible bathroom and other subtle but necessary changes to lighting, paint, and hardware help to provide a more secure environment and will limit situations which may cause confusion. Each modification that helps to decrease confusion and increase independence takes us closer to our goal. In addition to environmental changes, program planning (e.g. Life Story Books), sensory activities (e.g. FurReal® pets), and behavioral supports (e.g. Dementia Support Plans) are tailored to meet the needs of the individuals living in their Forever Home. It is our hope that the successes of Forever Home will have a greater impact on the future of care for people with an intellectual disability and Alzheimer's disease or dementia.



NHS Dual Diagnosis Treatment Team

The NHS Human Services' Dual Diagnosis Treatment Team (DDTT) program is a voluntary continuum of care service delivery model for individuals with mental illnesses and intellectual and developmental disabilities that addresses not only the clinical needs during acute episodes, but also during periods of transition back to the community. This continuum provides more effective and consistent supports during various stages of the individual's personal rehabilitation and recovery. NHS has been leading the way with this innovative program by assisting individuals who are dually diagnosed (an historically extremely costly population) to remain in

the community during acute episodes of crisis as opposed to entering inpatient facilities. The NHS DDTT program continues to strive for excellence in quality of service delivery, and has been recognized by payers, medical communities, and county officials as being a valuable, crucial, and cost-savings resource for individuals with dual diagnoses.

Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic of UPMC

Child and Adolescent Bipolar Services Program (CABS)

The CABS program is dedicated to the assessment and recovery of children and adolescents with severe mood problems who have or are at risk of bipolar disorder. CABS also has an academic mission to perform research to learn more about pediatric bipolar disorder and to educate others about bipolar illness in youth. Pediatric bipolar disorder is being recognized as a significant public health problem that increases the risk for suicide, psychiatric hospitalizations, and poor psychosocial functioning. We developed a novel multi-layered assessment approach that is accurate, practical, and replicable for early identification of bipolar disorder and our program has become a national referral center for youth with "difficult to diagnose and treat" problems. We opened the nation's first inpatient pediatric bipolar unit in 2010 with 14 beds, aiming to bridge inpatient with CABS outpatient services. It was awarded the best patient care in 2011 by the Hospital Association of Pennsylvania. We implemented consumer-oriented, family-focused, and developmentally appropriate and culturally-sensitive intervention approaches and wellness programs aiming to decrease the burden of illness, improve recovery, and maximize resilience, cognitive-emotional development, and psychosocial functioning of youth. Our evidence-based model of integrated outpatient-inpatient care provides positive outcomes and is insurance-reimbursable and replicable. We disseminate our experience through conferences and publications and provide education to national and international students, clinicians, and consumers. Our several federally-funded research studies contribute to the understanding of pediatric bipolar disorder that can lead to improved diagnosis, recovery, and prevention.