Designing a Healing Mental Health Campus to create an Accessible Continuum of Compassionate Care

Historically patients with long term mental illness have been warehoused away from the local population. Driven by stigma, lack of understanding, and marginalized resources, citizens with mental health concerns were often isolated further in facilities separated from the community. Access to care is often limited, and the continuum of care has been disjointed. It can take 5 years for a patient to reach their place as a functioning member of society, managed and stabilized. How does this fit into a system that focuses on short-term solutions, or otherwise long-term isolation?
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Carrier Clinic has been a pioneer in overcoming this dilemma. From a farm based, grassroots initiative, Carrier, in conjunction with NK Architects Behavioral Health Design team, has designed and developed a truly unique healing campus. Combining patient-designed care in unison with community-based initiatives, and integrated leadership has resulted in the construction of a system of compassionate care that is helping to break-through this stigma, and is designing a continuum of accessible compassionate care into the community, and beyond.
The maximum in-hospital treatment, the minimum in-hospital atmosphere.

— Dr. Robert Garber
Medical Director in 1958
Cultivating Wellness + Wellbeing
Visions for Years 1, 2 & 3
THE JOHN & JOYCE SHERIDAN GREEN HOUSE

NEW GREEN HOUSE

NEW HERB GARDEN

GARDEN CAFE

NATURE + HEALING + GROWING + HORTICULTURE THERAPY
"We are writing a new chapter for the treatment of mental illness and substance use disorder as we integrate Carrier's proven services into our network's robust behavioral health care,"

Robert C. Garrett, CEO of Hackensack Meridian Health. "We must truly integrate behavioral health into health care and expand treatment options as our state battles an opioid epidemic that has claimed too many lives and devastated so many families."

The merger – a rare partnership in the U.S. of a behavioral health provider and a multi-hospital network – will enhance care in several ways:

1. New addiction treatment centers will open in New Jersey.
2. Urgent care centers will offer behavioral health services on site – a first in New Jersey.
3. A $25 million investment will update Carrier's Belle Mead campus.
4. A multi-disciplinary team of experts including primary care physicians, psychiatrists, and advanced practice nurses would closely coordinate all needs – addiction treatment, routine care, mental health issues – to provide optimal treatment throughout the 17-hospital network.
5. The merger will enhance research to improve behavioral health care and provide additional opportunities for the network’s growing psychiatry residency programs, including the creation of a child adolescent psychiatry fellowship.

"This plan will create exceptional, comprehensive care at a time of great need for expanded, enhanced, and innovative behavioral health services,"

Donald J. Parker, president of Carrier Clinic.

About half the increase in emergency room visits in New Jersey were related to patients' behavioral health issues. The state is facing an opioid epidemic that is on target to claim 3,000 lives this year, up from 2,200 lives in 2016. Beyond improving care, the merger will also result in more coordinated, cost-effective care. The joining of Hackensack Meridian Health and Carrier Clinic would also provide greater access and choice to New Jersey residents who often seek treatment out of state, away from their family and support network.