

To Connect and Serve:

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHIATRY LAUNCHES NEW TARGETED CLINICAL OUTREACH PROGRAMS



“Historically, our department has created programs to connect to and serve the community in which we live. We want to meet the individual where they are, whether that’s an urban emergency room or out in a rural county.”

— Jill RachBeisel, MD
Associate Professor
Department of Psychiatry

“We go
*where our
patients are!*”

In her role as Vice Chair for Clinical Services, Dr. RachBeisel and her colleagues have taken major steps in recent months to accomplish just that, launching not one but four dynamic programs designed to meet patient needs in the areas of addiction response, inpatient acute care, women’s mental health, and telemental health. *“With each of these initiatives, we’ve intentionally tried to embed ourselves in places and programs where we know these individuals are who need care,”* she notes.

Opioid Addiction Response

The current heroin and opioid addiction crisis ravaging communities across the country has in many ways hit Maryland the hardest. The number of opioid-related deaths in the state increased by 8 percent

between 2016 and 2017, topping 2,000 by the end of last year. What’s more, Maryland has the nation’s highest rate of hospitalizations for opioid use, according to newly released federal data, with tens of thousands of people admitted to hospitals or visiting emergency rooms each year suffering from opioid withdrawal, overdose or complications.

In partnership with The University of Maryland Medical System, the Department of Psychiatry’s Division of Addiction Research and Treatment (DART) under the direction of **Eric Weintraub, MD**, has been instrumental in creating new initiatives to address Opioid Use Disorders (OUD) treatment and prevention. In particular, DART recently added a Maryland SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral, and Treatment) site within the University of Maryland Medical Center’s Emergency Departments at both Midtown and University campuses. Initially funded by the State of Maryland, the SBIRT site provides onsite peer recovery coaches who screen ED patients for substance use disorders. If patients test positive, they are referred to an SBIRT peer specialist counselor who is trained to do a more thorough assessment of the patient’s substance disorder, provide education about treatment, and offer connections to care. *“The goal is to get these individuals connected to the most appropriate care right away,”* says Dr. RachBeisel.

Midtown Renovation

With the creation of a newly established Division and service line led by **Stephanie Knight, MD**, Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, the Department

has assumed management of all behavioral health and inpatient programs at the University of Maryland Medical Center Midtown Campus. As Chief of Psychiatry — Midtown, Dr. Knight is overseeing a \$9 million project to create two new state-of-the-art adult psychiatric units with single room occupancy — one a general acute psychiatric adult unit and the second a dual diagnosis unit for patients with severe mental illness and substance abuse problems. With the number of beds expanding from 28 to 37, partial adult services will be transferred from UMMC to Midtown. Additionally, Midtown, Consultation-Liaison, inpatient, and emergency psychiatry medicine are collaborating to offer psychiatric emergency services. ***“This effort is all about integrating services on the two campuses,”*** notes Dr. RachBeisel. ***“Behavioral Health is leading the charge in that regard.”***

Women’s Mental Health Program

Today, while 1 in 5 women will be affected by significant depression or anxiety before, during, or after their pregnancy, only 10% will seek out and receive proper treatment, further prolonging both the rise and duration of mental health disorders. According to Dr. RachBeisel, the female population is in specific need of personalized mental health care during critical life phases, such as pregnancy and menopause — times when significant hormonal, physical, and mental changes occur within the body. ***“There’s a huge need for specialized consultations, treatment, and access to services for women,”*** she says. ***“And it’s not just women’s mental health, but more to address the larger lifecycle from pregnancy and postpartum issues to menopause.”***

In response, the Department of Psychiatry , under the direction of Dr. Patricia Widra launched the Women’s Mental Health Program in 2016. This collaborative initiative involves the Department’s Divisions of Addictions Research and Treatment, Child and Adolescent, Community, and Consultation-Liaison, as well as faculty from the Departments of Family Medicine, OB/GYN, and Pediatrics.

The program aims to provide top-tier care to patients by bringing together leading physicians and counselors to staff four successful satellite practices are currently in operation. ***“We’ve located our program specialists in areas where we know that there’s a high occurrence of mental health issues, such as the Penn Street Clinic, which is run by the Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology, and Reproductive Sciences that primarily treats young disadvantaged pregnant women,”*** says Dr. RachBeisel. ***“Within that population, there’s a very high rate of depression, anxiety, and addiction.”***

Specialized program services include treating and managing:

- Mood and anxiety disorders in pregnancy and postpartum
- Premenstrual dysphoric disorder or menopausal symptoms
- Mood disorders related to infertility or breast and gynecologic cancers
- Substance use disorders during pregnancy
- Impaired parent/child relationships

The Women’s Mental Health Program also offers educational resources to patients — including pre-pregnancy consultation, medication consultation and management, and support groups — as well as training to other mental health providers.

Telemental Health Program

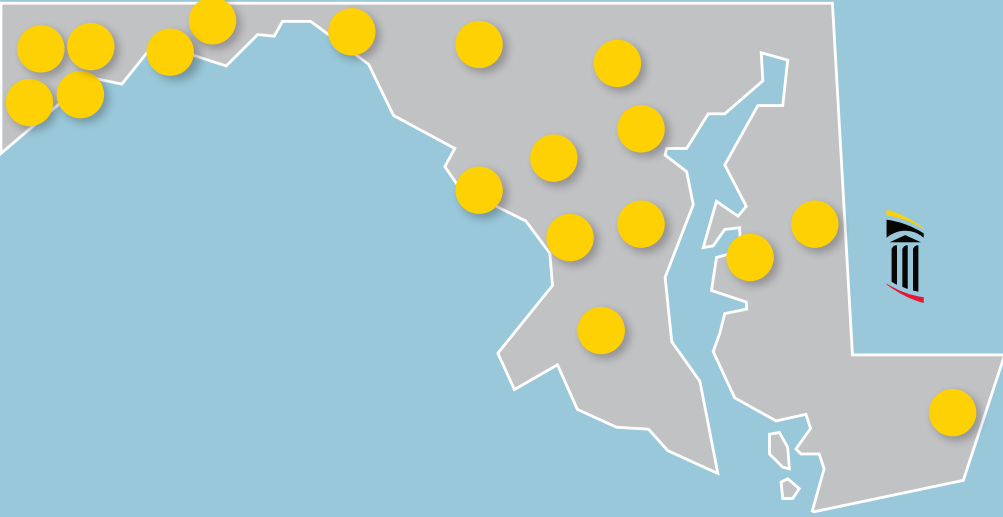
Remote communities throughout Maryland are facing a growing problem — too few local psychiatrists to meet an increased demand for specialty mental health care in their areas.

In response, the Department of Psychiatry has established a new Program of Telemental Health under the leadership of **David Pruitt, MD**, Professor of Psychiatry and Division Director of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. While the department has engaged in telemedicine (video conferencing services) for a number of years, creation of the new Program marks a new level of commitment to and leadership in this technology. ***“The way of our future is telepsychiatry. If there’s any specialty that can do telework effectively, it’s us,”*** states Dr. RachBeisel. ***“Right now, we’re the leaders in tele-psychiatry in Maryland.”***

The Program has been rapidly expanding since its inception and has entered into agreements with Caroline, Garrett, and Worchester counties to provide adult services. In addition, the Program is addressing the opioid crisis by expanding delivery of Suboxone to those in need of Medication Assisted Treatments (MAT) in rural counties. Since its initiation, Dr.Weintraub has expanded this tele-MAT program from four clinical hours per week at one site to 14-16 hours per week in three different sites, each located in three different rural counties — Wells House Treatment Center in Washington County, the Garrett County Health Department, and the Caroline County Health Department.

“All of our programs are efforts to reach out to and support the needs of our surrounding community in Baltimore,” affirms Dr. RachBeisel. ***“As always, we go where our patients are.”***

UM TELEMENTAL HEALTH SERVICE LOCATIONS



For more information about the Department of Psychiatry’s clinical programs, please call (410) 328-5161.

