



Patricia A. Rehmer, MSN
Commissioner

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A Message from the Office of the Commissioner

Transitioning Young Adults from Cedar Ridge to CT Valley Hospital A New Beginning...

This week, as part of the closing of Cedar Ridge Hospital (CRH), DMHAS moved a small number of patients from CRH to Connecticut Valley Hospital (CVH). Last year, the department proposed to close Cedar Ridge Hospital in an effort to improve clinical care, utilize staff more efficiently, and reduce costs for inpatient care. The Office of Health Care Access formally approved our request to close the hospital in late February. I am reminded that closing a hospital like Cedar Ridge affects so many people. Patients, staff, family members, community hospitals and treatment providers have all come to depend on the high quality services that have been provided for years at CRH.

As the first step in closing Cedar Ridge, nine young adults were moved on Monday, March 29th into a newly renovated Young Adult Services Unit at CVH. For continuity of care, staff of the Young Adult Program at CRH was also moved to the new unit at CVH. This new unit at CVH expands our capacity to serve young adults and offers a number of advantages to the people transitioning to CVH. As patients and staff are settling into their new unit, they have been impressed with the physical space and the grounds at CVH. The unit is modern and is built to comfortably provide space for treatment while meeting social and recreational needs. In fact, CVH offers a treatment mall, gym, library, swimming pool, radio station, and athletic fields that are well suited to young adults. Patients will also have opportunities to work if they are interested. All of these advantages will contribute to enhanced clinical care.

When we think of moves we have experienced, they are often filled with mixed emotions, worries and excitement. Successful moves happen because of good planning and management of details. DMHAS has been holding weekly administrative planning meetings in order to keep us focused on all of these details. This involves managing both the physical and emotional aspects of the move.

Staff and patient belongings must safely get to their new destination. Clinical care, medications, and dietary considerations must be carefully coordinated. Patients must get oriented to their new surroundings. Families must be included in the process. At the same time, we must help people to say goodbye to Cedar Ridge and welcome them into the CVH community. Current CVH employees have worked hard to welcome Cedar Ridge patients and staff into the CVH community.

More moves will occur over the next few months as other patients and staff will transition to CVH later in April, May, and June. Patients whose daily living skills will allow them to be more independent will be transitioned to community living opportunities, which have been developed specifically for them.

I understand that change is often accompanied by unforeseen challenges, but I am confident that these moves will be successful. CVH will continue to deliver the same standard of care that has been offered for years at Cedar Ridge. I know we have paid attention to the details and, more importantly, we have paid attention to the people behind the details. I want to welcome patients, family members and staff to their new beginnings at CVH.