

White Plains, St. Vincent's Hospitals to Open Integrated Behavioral Health Center

White Plains Hospital, in partnership with St. Vincent's Hospital in Harrison, said it will begin seeing patients June 3 at a new 18,000-square-foot family health and behavioral health center in White Plains.

Both hospitals are affiliated with Montefiore Health System.

The center is designed to support an integrated program to address the high prevalence of mental illness—particularly depression—in people with chronic diseases, the hospitals said. It is meant to serve children and adults in White Plains and surrounding communities in primary and urgent care for acute illness as well as behavioral health care.

Many people in the area suffer from chronic diseases such as asthma, diabetes, hypertension and obesity.

"Many patients who are high utilizers—coming to the emergency room and being admitted—also have concurrent behavioral health issues," said Dr. Michael Palumbo, executive vice president and chief medical officer at White Plains Hospital. "Even if you provide them good access to primary medical care, if you don't address their behavioral health needs, you aren't able to really impact them."

St. Vincent's, which operates a psychiatric and addiction rehab hospital in Harrison, is a division of Saint Joseph's Medical Center in Yonkers.

The concept for the integrated family health and behavioral health center started with the state's Medicaid redesign efforts through the Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment program, Palumbo said.

The partners ultimately applied for and were awarded a state grant of \$7.5 million for the center based on embracing the DSRIP concept of expanding access to behavioral care and co-locating primary care and behavioral care in the same site. The grant covered about 50% of the center's cost; the rest was financed by operating funds.

The center is projecting about 50,000 patient visits per year.