

THE BUFFALO NEWS

New Substance Use Disorder Treatment Center at St. Joseph Campus Gets \$2.4 Million Boost

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Rep. Brian Higgins listens as Catholic Health CEO Mark Sullivan speaks at a press conference at St. Joseph Campus on Monday, April 24, 2023. The media event was held to discuss the funding secured for 40 chemical dependence rehabilitation beds for Clearview Treatment Services.

A new inpatient rehabilitation program for those struggling with a substance use disorder will open next month at St. Joseph Campus in Cheektowaga.

The project got a big boost from nearly \$2.4 million in funding that U.S. Rep. Brian Higgins secured in the federal budget, which the Buffalo Democrat announced at a news conference Monday afternoon at the health care facility.

"It touches every community, every neighborhood and every family," Higgins said of substance use disorders. "And too often individuals and families in urgent need of finding inpatient treatment have no place to turn."

The long-planned Clearview Treatment Services at St. Joseph, which is a campus of Catholic Health System's Sisters of Charity Hospital, will have 40 chemical dependence rehabilitation beds on the facility's fifth floor.

The project, which carried a total cost of \$7.9 million, will help meet a need in light of the rapid increase in opioid addiction over the last decade-plus, which has created a situation where demand for inpatient beds is outpacing supply.

As of earlier this year, there were just 132 chemical dependence rehabilitation beds available in the eight-county Western New York region. And 30 of those closed April 1, which is when the Reflections Chemical Dependency Program closed at Eastern Niagara Hospital in Lockport.

Catholic Health also operates a Clearview Treatment Services unit at its Mount St. Mary's Hospital in Lewiston. The health system added 24 more beds there about two years ago, bringing the Clearview at Mount St. Mary's to 69 total beds. Catholic Health also provides outpatient medication-assisted treatment at its Pathways clinics.

"The opening of this new facility is really going to help us to better care for our patients," said Dr. Paul Updike, medical director for substance use services at Catholic Health. "One of the difficulties that historically has been the case is not being able to provide treatment services to those who are in need when they are seeking it. Unfortunately, there is a great need for these treatment services here in our Western New York community, and there is a relative lack of resources to be able to provide that treatment to people."