Lifespan, Care New England partner to provide mental health support to health care workers statewide

PROVIDENCE, R.I. – In an effort to support health care workers throughout Rhode Island and its neighboring communities during the COVID-19 pandemic, the state’s two largest health care systems have come together to offer a mental health support line specifically for health care workers. Launched on Thursday, April 30, the line is staffed by behavioral health experts from Care New England’s Butler Hospital, The Providence Center, and Women and Infants Hospital and Lifespan’s Division of Adult Psychiatry and Behavioral Health at Rhode Island, The Miriam and Newport Hospitals.

Callers to 401-606-6000, Monday through Saturday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., will be immediately offered an appointment for support, free of charge, with an individual health care provider. If services are required beyond this support call, the caller will be referred for appropriate treatment. In keeping with best practices for inhibiting virus transmission by limiting contact, Lifespan and Care New England providers alike have nimbly moved behavioral health services to telemedicine formats, providing appointments by phone and by video chat, and appointments are readily available.

“During this time of COVID-19, health care workers are concerned for the health of their patients, their colleagues, and their families,” said James K. Sullivan, M.D., Ph.D., chief medical officer of Butler Hospital and chief of psychiatry, Care New England. “With the uncertainty of viral transmission, no doubt these workers are apprehensive about their own well-being as well. However, they march into duty each day to fight this pandemic. The stress of this responsibility is tremendous. With this resource, our goal is to offer professional support to Rhode Island health care workers during this unprecedented time.”

“Lifespan is proud to partner with Care New England to offer this service to our fellow health care workers during COVID-19,” said Jody A. Underwood, M.D., psychiatrist in chief for Rhode Island Hospital, The Miriam Hospital and Lifespan Physician Group. “This is a vital service that we’ve been offering to our own staff, ensuring that those who care for others are also being cared for. Collaborating with Care New England’s behavioral health professionals now enables us to reach beyond our own respective walls, supporting our counterparts in other hospitals, nursing homes, EMS, private practices, home care, and all health care workers who may need our services as we weather this pandemic.”

About Care New England
Care New England Health System is a trusted organization that fuels the latest advances in medical research, attracts the nation’s top specialty-trained doctors, hones renowned services and innovative
programs, and engages in the important discussions people need to have about their health and end-of-life wishes. Care New England is helping to transform the future of health care, providing a leading voice in the ongoing effort to ensure the health of the individuals and communities we serve.

CNE was founded in 1996, and today it is the parent organization of Butler Hospital, Kent Hospital, Women & Infants Hospital of Rhode Island, Care New England Medical Group, the VNA of Care New England, The Providence Center, and Integra, a certified accountable care organization (ACO). Care New England includes 970 licensed beds and 216 infant bassinets. Through Butler, Kent, and Women & Infants hospitals, Care New England has a teaching and research affiliation with The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University. Kent is also a teaching affiliate of The University of New England College of Osteopathic Medicine.

**About Lifespan**

Lifespan is a five-partner not-for-profit health system based in Providence, R.I. Formed in 1994, Lifespan includes three teaching hospitals of The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University: Rhode Island Hospital and its Hasbro Children’s Hospital; The Miriam Hospital; and Bradley Hospital, the nation’s first psychiatric hospital for children. It also includes Newport Hospital, a community hospital offering a broad range of health services, and Gateway Healthcare, the state’s largest provider of community behavioral health care. Lifespan teaching hospitals are among the top recipients in the country of research funding from the National Institutes of Health. The hospitals received $92 million in external research funding in fiscal 2019. All Lifespan-affiliated partners are charitable organizations that depend on support from the community to provide programs and services.

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