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New Directions enhances treatment for Opioid Use Disorders with pilot programs in Florida

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – January 7, 2019 – New Directions Behavioral Health has announced two Florida partnerships with Memorial Regional Hospital in Hollywood, Fla. and Gateway Community Services in Jacksonville, Fla. to enhance pilot programs, supporting outpatient treatment for Opioid Use Disorders (OUD) with the assistance of Peer Recovery Specialists (PRS).

Available to Florida Blue members, a PRS helps engage individuals in OUD treatment and supports them in the transition to outpatient counseling services.

New Directions is providing support to Memorial through its Emergency Department, where members with an OUD will have access to Substance Use Disorder screenings and, when appropriate, medication-assisted treatments (MAT) such as buprenorphine while in the ED.

“With the recent increase in overdose rates, effective treatment for Opioid Use Disorder has become a national priority,” said Dr. Lina Reyes, medical director at Memorial Regional Hospital Outpatient Behavioral Health Center. “Research has shown that integrating medication-assisted treatments into hospital emergency departments has been successful in getting more people into needed treatment and decreasing repeat overdosing and emergency department visits. Through this pilot program with New Directions, we are significantly enhancing access to critical resources and treatment options for members in our community.”

Similarly, Gateway has developed programs with St. Vincent’s Hospital Riverside, Southside Hospital and Clay County Hospital to enhance treatment availability for OUDs including ongoing counseling, peer support and MAT services. Through the program, an onsite PRS provides members with education on treatment and MAT options.

“In fact, the PRSs have been a major factor in the success of Gateway’s program,” noted Dr. Raymond Pomm, Gateway’s Chief Medical Officer. “Our program has seen a 68 percent reduction in repeat overdoses. Oftentimes, the initial contact with the PRS in the ED is the make-or-break point for an OD victim. And, the ongoing contact between the PRS the OD victim has also resulted in 50 percent of victims eventually entering traditional treatment services. We

are very proud of our success to-date and hope to expand our program to a total of seven EDs in Duval County.”

“At New Directions, we’re doing everything we can to curb the nation’s growing opioid problem,” said Charlie Freed, M.D., vice president and regional medical director at New Directions. “Our partnership in emergency department programs is just one example of how we are fighting this epidemic that is destroying lives across the country and in our own communities. Without intervention, patients are often only treated for symptoms of an overdose, and not the OUD itself. But with the great services offered through both Memorial and Gateway, members can get the immediate attention, resources and long-term treatment options they need before leaving the ED. In addition, New Directions case managers follow up with members to ensure they are connected to recovery support services.”

About Memorial Regional Hospital

Memorial Regional Hospital is the flagship facility of Memorial Healthcare System and is one of the largest hospitals in Florida. Memorial Regional Hospital offers extensive and diverse health care services that include Memorial Cardiac and Vascular Institute featuring renowned surgeons, Memorial Cancer Institute treating more inpatients than any other in Broward County, and Memorial Neuroscience Institute providing innovative technology and world-class physicians. For additional information, visit mhs.net.

About Gateway Community Services

Gateway is the largest provider of addiction treatment and prevention services in Duval County and the surrounding area. A recognized leader in the treatment of addictive diseases, Gateway provides comprehensive and science-based prevention, intervention, treatment and recovery support services for adolescents, adults and families suffering from addiction and co-occurring disorders. Gateway collaborates extensively with community partners to achieve its mission. Last year Gateway served 5,426 individuals, with over 159,000 patient visits.

About New Directions Behavioral Health

Founded in 1995, New Directions helps people live healthy, balanced lives. The healthcare company provides managed behavioral health services, an Employee Assistance Program, Student Assistance Program, organizational consulting and health coaching to private and public health plans, Fortune 100 companies, large and medium employers and labor groups. New Directions is one of the fastest-growing behavioral healthcare companies in the industry, more than doubling its membership in the last five years to include over 16 million members.