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Press Release



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Governor Hassan, Commissioner Meyers Announce Opening of New Crisis Unit at New Hampshire Hospital

CONCORD – Continuing her efforts to strengthen New Hampshire's mental health care system, Governor Maggie Hassan and Department of Health and Human Services Commissioner Jeffrey Meyers announced that the new crisis unit at New Hampshire Hospital – the 10-bed Inpatient Stabilization Unit (ISU) – opened today, July 5, 2016.

Governor Hassan worked to include funding for renovations for the new unit in the capital budget in 2013 and staffing for the unit in last year's bipartisan compromise on the budget. In the midst of a national health care workforce shortage, including behavioral health workers, she worked this year with the Executive Council to approve a staffing contract and pay raises that made it possible to hire the qualified nurses necessary to allow the ISU to open.

"People with mental illness are our friends, our family members and our neighbors, and we must ensure that we are providing appropriate care at the right place and time," Governor Hassan said. "As we continue working to strengthen community-based mental health, the new crisis unit at New Hampshire Hospital will help relieve overcrowded hospital emergency rooms and provide intensive, short-term care to those in the early stages of a mental health crisis so that we can transition them back to community-based care as quickly as possible. We have been working to build this new unit since we included funding for renovations in the capital budget in 2013, and I am glad that we are opening this new unit now that we have worked together to overcome the staffing and salary obstacles created by the nationwide health care workforce shortage."

The ISU is designed to admit adults 18 years and over who are on conditional discharge, receiving services in a community setting and who are dealing with a mental health crisis and would benefit from a brief hospital stay of three days or less. By providing a therapeutic environment to stabilize patients who would otherwise remain in the community and require stays in emergency departments, the specialized unit will alleviate a portion of the wait list in emergency rooms.

"The opening of the ISU is an important milestone in addressing the needs of people who are experiencing a mental health crisis," said Department of Health and Human Services Commissioner Jeffrey Meyers. "It is designed to assist individuals in getting the treatment they need to safely and successfully return to the community. The ISU is a significant component in the continuum of care that includes community-based services. I wish to thank the Governor, legislators, the Executive Council, NH Hospital staff and our community partners for their effort in supporting the opening of the ISU."

New Hampshire Hospital is working closely with community mental health centers and other community partners to make the best use of the ISU. The staff at the ISU – including qualified psychiatry, nursing and allied professionals – will focus on individual treatment plans to assist patients to live healthy and productive lives in the community.

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