

UPDATE

April 2018

Four Winds Partial Programs: Acknowledging the Value of Addiction Education

Addiction education is a key component of treatment in the adult and adolescent Partial Programs at Four Winds. It is not uncommon for adults and adolescents struggling with mental health issues to battle with addiction issues as well. While addiction can take many forms (self-injurious behavior, gambling, etc.) the comorbidity of drug and alcohol addiction and mental health issues is high for both populations. The Four Winds adult and adolescent Partial Programs offer addiction education to all program participants. A Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) approach has proven particularly successful in helping program participants develop skills to manage addictive behaviors.

Program Director, Jane Mazza-Howat, has placed an emphasis on providing programming for patients with co-occurring disorders. According to Mazza-Howat "We recognize that so many people who are using substances also have mental health issues." She reports that there are instances in which the program might not be appropriate for a particular patient for example, if an individual is using substances daily and to excess. "Then we might take the position that the patient would be better served going to a substance rehabilitation program; but that does not happen frequently."

Mazza-Howat highlights that a focus of treatment with patients is to help them understand the difference between



self-medicating with drugs and/or alcohol, versus being appropriately evaluated for medication to help alleviate symptoms. "For many participants it is the first time they have allowed prescription medication to help them; this allows them to recognize that there is a big difference between using medicines and not taking substances. That is a journey in itself."

Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner, Donna Draper, NPP, Assistant Director of the Partial Program advises participants to abstain from using substances upon entering the Partial Program. She additionally recommends that they commit to abstain for at least six months so that they can give the psychiatric

medication a chance to work in their brains and bodies. Mazza-Howat reports that most patients take this advice to heart and make a commitment to be substance free, as reflected in the results of random urines collected over the course of program participation.

Mazza-Howat happily reflects that the feedback from both adults and adolescents regarding addiction education has been quite positive. She reports that the participants get so much out of these groups that they are requesting more of them. The next edition of the Four Winds Update will focus on the road to recovery.

Four Winds Hospital
800 Cross River Road ● Katonah, New York 10536 ● 914-763-8151
www.fourwindshospital.com

1978-2018

Celebrating 40 Years of Clinical Excellence in a Caring Environment