

**S.C. MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION
S.C. Department of Mental Health**

**Patrick B. Harris Psychiatric Hospital
Highway 252, P.O. Box 2907
Anderson, SC 29622**

**June 3, 201006
Hospital Presentation**

Attendance:

Commission Members

Alison Y. Evans, Psy.D., Chair
Jane Jones

Everard Rutledge, PhD
James Buxton Terry

Joan Moore

Staff/Guests:

John H. Magill
Brenda Hart
Joe James

Mark Binkley
Kevin Hoyle
Daniel Craft

Robert Bank, MD
Shanna Amerson
John Fletcher

Versie Bellamy
Bill Lindsey
Jeff Ham

The S.C. Mental Health Commission met at Patrick B. Harris Psychiatric Hospital on Thursday, June 3, 2010, at 9:00 a.m. Dr. Evans introduced John Fletcher, Director of Harris Hospital, who, in turn, introduced Dr. Jack Bonner, former Medical Director and Chair, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Medicine at Marshall Pickens Hospital; Becky Ellison, Administrator at Marshall Pickens; and the new chair of Psychiatry at the Greenville Hospital System, Dr. Ken Rogers. Mr. Fletcher said that these individuals would give a presentation on what the hospital system is doing to make Harris Hospital a teaching site for new psychiatry residents.

Dr. Bonner said that the Greenville Hospital System (GHS) has had a relationship with the University of South Carolina-School of Medicine in Columbia in residency training. GHS has decided to move into a four year medical education program because the Upstate has been seriously underserved in the mental health field, not only with psychiatrists, but all clinical specialties. As an example, at one time there were 250 psychiatrists in Charleston, 150 in Columbia and 50 in the Upstate. Greenville Hospital System would like to work more closely with Harris Hospital as Harris has been a good training/teaching site. The goal is to start a medical school in the Upstate, along with a psychiatric residency training program. Dr. Bonner said that historically if physicians are trained in the Upstate, the potential is that the majority of the physicians would remain in the Upstate.

Dr. Bonner then gave a brief history of how Greenville Mental Health Center was a part of Greenville Hospital System, and a little background of how the Department of Mental Health and the hospital system have been linked for many years.

Dr. Bonner said that the federal government is encouraging the expansion of medical schools and the creation of new medical schools. It is hoped to introduce the first medical school class in 2012. Initial class would be approximately 400 students, with the first graduating class in 2016. Residency training would be slightly behind the medical school, with a first class beginning in 2018 and graduating in 2022. First year's residency class would begin with four to six students, expanding the class each year thereafter. John Fletcher mentioned that he has been working for sometime now with Dr. Bonner on this concept. It was through this working relationship that Harris Hospital obtained the services of Dr. Gabriel. It was important to improve the quality of care at Harris in order to attract more of these physicians. It was found that patients were more appropriately discharged into the community. Also, if patients at Harris are found to have a

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medical problem, it has been easier to seamlessly transfer them to medical hospitals without going through the emergency room. Mr. Fletcher said this is the same with Electro Convulsive Therapy (ECT) treatment. Previously, patients had to go to Columbia for this service, where now it can be performed in the Upstate. Mr. Fletcher currently has two Nurse Practitioners employed at Harris Hospital who received their licensing at Clemson and came back to Harris to work.

The problem of employing clinical staff is the same with nurses and social workers. It has been impossible to compete in the workplace with salaries; however, creating a work environment where clinical staff are happy and enjoy their work is just as important as salaries. An internship program at Harris would help in this regard. Through a contract with the University of South Carolina School of Social Work, Harris Hospital has been able to negotiate an arrangement where Masters level Social Workers work at Harris from August through April. The hospital is looking into a similar arrangement with Winthrop University. The last three Social Workers hired at Harris were student interns at Harris. Mr. Fletcher has been doing internships in other fields so that staff want to work at Harris after graduation.

Mr. Fletcher said that many experienced staff at Harris will be leaving in the next five years, leaving the hospital in a critical state. He said he needs to start planning now for the future, and feels the internship programs are the best way to attract people back to Harris Hospital after graduation. Mr. Magill said this situation is not unique to Harris, but throughout the state system. It has been and continues to be difficult to hire, recruit and retain clinical staff. Salaries are always a problem. Mr. Fletcher said that by providing training that cannot be obtained anywhere else, and creating a good working environment where staff want to stay in spite of the money, is important.

Mr. Fletcher mentioned the hospital consortium meeting later in June at Harris. This meeting will include staff from DMH, the USC Medical School and Greenville Hospital System to explore ways to improve medical education in the Upstate, and to look at future manpower needs.

Mr. Fletcher said that Harris Hospital had to create a separate lodge for the children and adolescents away from the adults. The lodge for children and adolescents at Harris was closed and moved to Hall Institute. Likewise, the lodge for alcohol and drug addictions for children and adolescents was closed and the children transferred to Morris Village. Another problem facing Harris Hospital is placement of geriatric patients. Many of these patients are not appropriate for placement in an acute care hospital.

Becky Ellison said that it is important that the right people are available to do the job. There are many young people that have the energy and enthusiasm to do the right thing for the mentally ill. Communication is critical. Approximately 90 percent of the errors in hospitals occur because of a lack of communication. At one time, Marshall Pickens emergency room had 40 behavioral health patients waiting for a bed somewhere in the system. The hospital began the process of communicating with Harris and buying beds. About this time, Dr. Gabriel came on staff. The communication between the two hospitals has been great and has helped to meet the needs of the people presenting for services.

At the end of the presentation, Mr. Fletcher presented a picture of Harris Hospital to Mr. Magill in appreciation for his support to Harris Hospital and its staff.