

# Regional Integrated Collaborative for Healthy Youth

RICHY: Interim Report

July 2015

## *RICHY: Interim Report*

January – June 2015

The RICHY collaborative received a grant from the Dorothy Rider Pool Health Care Trust to implement an integrated, interdisciplinary health initiative designed to connect the residents of one Independent Living Program within Valley Youth House (VYH) to the healthcare

access to health care services for their population of adolescents.

As an independent living program, there was also a strong need to teach the residents how to manage their own health and to build relationships with healthcare providers. In response to this

*Through the collaboration of two local universities, a local healthcare system, and Valley Youth House, the goal of this initiative is to use the Integrated Behavioral Health model to provide health prevention and promotion services to the residents at Great Beginnings in order to improve their health, well-being, knowledge, and self-advocacy skills, teaching the residents the skills they need to appropriately utilize the healthcare system and manage their own health and well-being.*

system. Valley Youth House has been providing community-based services for teens within the Lehigh Valley, including an Independent Living Program, for over 40 years. They identified a need for easy and continuous

need and with support from Lehigh Valley Physician Group's Family Health Center (FHC), Valley Youth House's Great Beginnings Program has become a clinical placement site for DeSales Family Nurse

### Collaborative Agencies



DESALES UNIVERSITY

THE DOROTHY RIDER POOL  
HEALTH CARE TRUST



Marywood  
UNIVERSITY



Practitioner (FNP) graduate students as well as a field placement site for DeSales Community and Public Health undergraduate students and Marywood MSW interns. This partnership for integrated care

includes weekly time for the FNP student and MSW intern (FNP-BH team) to meet with the residents one-on-one to provide preventive health services and behavior health services, as well as group health promotion

education sessions led by an undergraduate DeSales nursing student and clinical therapist. **This report is the first interim report, presenting findings from the first 6 months of implementation.**

## *Highlights from the Initiative*

***Innovative Collaboration across Sectors.*** This initiative is a collaboration between individuals from the healthcare sector, academic institutions, and non-profit agencies to address an identified need in a select segment of the community, i.e., adolescents who have experienced multiple past traumatic events and who were at-risk for homelessness. Since the FNP-BH team has been on site twice a week, **the residents at Great Beginnings have engaged in 41 visits.** Providing a unique training opportunity for incoming health professionals, this initiative has served as a field placement for three family nurse practitioner students and one social work graduate student, giving them access to hands-on experience providing care in the community with a difficult to engage population. This model also provides the residents with integrated behavioral health and physical care for both themselves and their young children.

***Empowering Adolescents to Manage Their Own Health.*** During the resident's intake visit with the FNP-BH team, she completes the Patient Activation Measure, evaluating her ability to advocate for her own health and implement health behaviors. The scores on the measure align with one of four levels of patient activation. Four residents were at a Level 1 or 2, 7 residents were at a Level 3, and 3 residents were at a Level 4, suggesting room for growth in activation and empowerment. **Seventy-eight percent of the 41 visits that occurred have focused on health management for residents.** The residents reported that this initiative has provided them with an opportunity to have health-related conversations with health professionals that they would not have had otherwise. They also learned additional health information through group education sessions led by the DeSales undergraduate nursing students and clinical therapist.

***Access to the Primary Care System and an Emphasis on Appropriate Healthcare Utilization.*** Of the 21 adolescents who have resided at Great Beginnings in the last 6 months, all but one resident has a designated primary care provider. **Ten of the 21 designated the Family Health Center as their primary care provider, and eight of the ten have attended at least one visit at the FHC since January.** Fifteen visits total have occurred at the Family Health Center by VYH residents. In addition, only one Emergency Department (ED) visit occurred for the adolescents between January and June as well as three for the children of the adolescents. Notably, through data from the visits on-site, it was determined that five ED visits were avoided by having access to the FNP-BH team and the 24-7 hotline that the Family Health Center provides.