The shortage of behavioral health inpatient beds at Mercy and across the state has led to patients seeing a delay in treatment because the appropriate care setting is not always available. Patients requiring admission to an inpatient behavioral health unit are frequently kept waiting in an emergency room setting prior to admission to the Behavioral Health inpatient unit.

To address this concern, a team of physicians – including Hijino Carreon, D.O., co-medical director and vice chair, Department of Emergency Medicine; Adnan Iqbal, M.D., M.B.A., medical director, Behavioral Health; Charles Keller, M.D., chief medical officer; Sasha Khosravi, D.O., department chair, Behavioral Health; and Andrew Zeff, M.D., hospitalist – worked together to determine an innovative solution for patients seeking treatment at Mercy.

As a result, two significant changes will take effect Nov. 6, 2018.

The first change involves the relocation of the Behavioral Health Help Center. As of Nov. 6, walk-in patients seeking behavioral health assistance will be asked to report to Emergency. These patients will be triaged, and a psychiatric evaluation will be completed.

The second change comes with modifications to the clinical decision unit (CDU) at Mercy’s central campus, which will begin accepting clinically appropriate behavioral health patients waiting for an inpatient behavioral health bed on Nov. 6. Colleagues from the Help Center will be located in the CDU and will work in conjunction with CDU staff to provide specialized care to support the needs of behavioral health patients.

“Integrating the Help Center within the CDU will provide behavioral health patients access to more timely assessments and the opportunity to begin treatment prior to admission to an inpatient behavioral health unit,” said Adnan Iqbal, M.D., M.B.A., psychiatric hospitalist at Mercy Medical Center – Des Moines. “This new care model allows the medical and psychiatric teams to work together in one place to collaborate and provide the best treatment plan.”

“These changes are designed to streamline the process for admitting patients in need of behavioral health treatment,” said Mary Thompson, director of Mercy’s Behavioral Health Services. “Patients who can be moved to the CDU will be monitored in a safe, secure environment, leaving more room available in the emergency department for critically ill and injured patients.”

As of Nov. 6, walk-in patients seeking behavioral health assistance will be asked to report to Emergency.

Colleague feedback spurs new development

As one of the leading health care providers in the state, Mercy has a responsibility to deliver the most appropriate level of care to every patient we serve. To that effect, changes are underway to add Progressive Care Units (PCUs) at Mercy’s central campus and Mercy – West Lakes.

The PCUs will provide care for higher-acuity patients who require a level of care in between what is currently provided in the critical care setting and a general medical/surgical unit. Criteria for the admission, transfer and discharge of progressive care unit patients is still being developed, but may include:

- Cardiovascular surgery patients who require closer monitoring;
- Patients requiring higher intensity, short-term monitoring following a procedure;
- Patients with increased oxygen needs;

continued...
Intermediate care options continued from previous page

• Clinically appropriate behavioral health patients needing medical clearance prior to transferring to the inpatient behavioral health unit.

The PCUs were developed as a direct result of physician concerns about patients being held in the Emergency Department, Post-Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU), and Critical Care Units. This valuable feedback led a team of physicians, nurses and other non-clinical employees to evaluate and explore options for making PCUs a reality at Mercy. The team – which includes Blair Westerly, M.D., PCU medical director; Pam Harrison, director, CSICU/interim director, PCU; Karla Kerkove, CRN; Felicia Miedema, associate chief nurse; Diane Cummings, director of plant operations and construction; Sandy Swanson, vice president, planning and business development; and Jen Van Liew, Senior Director of Clinical Services – worked together to coordinate construction, operational logistics and other details required to open new units at each hospital.

The new Progressive Care Unit (PCU) at central campus will be temporarily located on 4 North in the space formally utilized for Inpatient Rehabilitation. It is scheduled to open on Nov. 6 with 6-7 patient beds, with future expansion of up to 12 beds.

At Mercy – West Lakes, the PCU is combining with the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) on the 4th Floor, making a total of 16 beds available for either PCU or ICU use. Several nurses at Mercy – West Lakes will also be cross-trained, allowing the option to care for patients requiring different levels of care. Patients in this unit will be able to move from ICU care, to PCU care to telemetry care without changing rooms. Updates to this unit to allow for PCU patients are expected to be complete by Nov. 26.

Each day, Mercy has approximately 10-15 patients who meet criteria for admission to the PCU. The creation of these PCUs is a critical step toward placing patients in the right setting at the right time, improving patient flow, consumer satisfaction and physician and nurse engagement.

KEY RESULT: Team Engagement

Deming, Public Relations and Marketing team recognized at annual awards ceremony

The Central Iowa Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) chapter held its annual PRIME Awards ceremony on Thursday, Oct. 18, recognizing individuals and organizations for their outstanding contributions to the public relations profession and the community.

This year, Richard Deming, M.D., medical director at Mercy Cancer Center, received the Outstanding Iowa Advocate Award. This award recognizes an individual who has contributed to the enhancement of the state’s regional, national or international reputation. Dr. Deming was nominated for this award because he demonstrates a personal commitment – above and beyond a professional obligation to a client or employer – to the betterment of the state of Iowa and its residents.

Mercy’s Public Relations and Marketing Department was also recognized with two Awards of Merit (second place) and three PRIME Awards (first place) for projects completed during Fiscal Year 2018. Award winning entries included:

- Award of Merit: Media Relations Tactic – Mercy Rehabilitation Hospital Opening
- Award of Merit: Social Media – May the Fourth Be With You
- PRIME Award: Direct Mail – New Mover Outreach Program
- PRIME Award: Internal Communications – 2018 PCA Campaign
- PRIME Award: Event/Observance – Stork Affair

Mercy also received a Best of Show award for a non-profit/government organization for its Stork Affair program.

Welcome new providers!

- Shelby Cranston, DNP, Iowa Heart Center
- Carissa Evans, DNP, Palliative Care
- Peter Grubel, M.D., Mercy Clinics Gastroenterology
- Kaitlyn Hennings, PA-C, Iowa Heart Center
- Greg Isaacson, PA-C, Mercy Clinics Family Medicine Indianola
- Daniel Shivapour, M.D., Iowa Heart Center
- Taylor Sula, DNP, Hospitalist
- May Tee, M.D., Surgical Affiliates

Congratulations to...

- Lindsay Miklo, and Tyler, on the birth of their son, Carter. Carter was born on Sept. 27, and was welcomed home by Xavier, 18 mo.
- Danielle Sandusky, 5 South, on the birth of her son, Henry. Henry was born on Oct. 22 and was welcomed home by Noah, 2.

Sympathy to...

- Monica Gordon, Quality and Patient Safety, on the death of her father-in-law.