



## New outpatient rehabilitation facility in Washington Township aims to address substance abuse issues in local community

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on July 06, 2013 at 7:00 AM, updated July 08, 2013 at 11:29 AM

Michael DiMarco, director of admissions, and Donna Roland Leipold, director of substance abuse treatment, at Behavioral Crossroads Recovery in Washington Township on Wednesday, July 3, 2013 (Staff Photo by Lori M. Nichols/South Jersey Times).

From driving while intoxicated arrests to home burglaries, **local police department crime logs** are peppered with incidents involving people with drug addictions.

Often, it's a familiar story: A young or middle-aged adult from the suburbs gets hooked on pills one way or another, eventually turning toward darker drugs, heroin or crack cocaine.

While television shows and celebrity rehab attempts showcase in-patient "get-away" centers in sunny locales, there are a range of options for people who need help but can't afford either to go away to the posh spas or to let the rest of their lives come to a grinding halt.

Places like Behavioral Crossroads Recovery, a brand-new facility that just opened on the Black Horse Pike (Route 168) in **Washington Township**. The new rehab center will hold an open house on July 24 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

With a location servicing patients' substance abuse needs in Egg Harbor Township for the past five years and mental health issues for five years before that, the opening marks the first time Behavioral Crossroads has moved further into the communities it serves the most.

Director of Admissions Michael DiMarco said outpatient rehab is a way to provide people with a range of treatment options while allowing them to work, take care of their children and be near family and friends who support their recovery.

"Sometimes people don't realize they need help until it's too late," DiMarco said. "This is an option to get help while working and getting back on their feet."

Offering outpatient services with 1 to 3 hours of treatment a week or more intensive outpatient services with 9 hours of treatment a week as well as partial care services of 5 to 6 hours of treatment daily, the staff is able to work with clients' needs so "they can go about their daily lives without having to

disconnect and leave," DiMarco said.

While all three treatment plans include group and individual counseling, the partial care model is preferred by people looking for intensive care in their own communities, said Director of Substance Abuse Services Donna Roland-Leipold.

"It's cheaper than residential," she said. "It's the wave of the future."

There's definitely a need in the South Jersey area, said Leipold, who added that the company kept the specialized needs of their clients in mind when choosing their newest location — a quick walk to NJTransit bus stops, and on a major highway that traverses both Gloucester and Camden counties.

"The area is so diverse, and we're so close to big urban areas," Leipold said, adding that the center wants to be accessible for people who don't drive or have a suspended driver's license. "There's a real demand for good treatment."

With the economy recovering slowly, there's also a demand to get that treatment as close to home and to places of work as possible. DiMarco said they've partnered with local organizations like the Gloucester Regional Addictive Substance Prevention, or GRASP, Coalition to get the word out about their services.

"We found there's a need to actually bring this program into the community," he said, adding later that, with substance abuse problems often leading to run-ins with law enforcement, it's a way to help people stay supported and not slip back into old habits.

"Many end up in treatment by unfortunate means, after being arrested for burglary or theft," DiMarco said. "It makes more sense to rehabilitate people in their community than in jail, especially when jail doesn't address their substance abuse issues."

Behavioral Crossroads in Washington Township only accepts private insurance at this point, but hopes to reach those dependent on some government programs in the future.

"Treatment should be available to all people, not just people who can afford it," DiMarco said.

The key to getting anyone into treatment is ensuring that people are as comfortable as possible and feel that their own individual issues are being addressed, Leipold said.

"We let everybody know they're in a safe place where they can share," Leipold said. "We all require feelings of respect and safety. They're our primal needs."

No matter whether the program is around the corner or 2,000 miles away, for any substance abuse treatment to be effective, a client has to want to get

better.

“Treatment only works if you believe in treatment and invest in it,” DiMarco said. “If you’re in denial, it’s going to be a long road.”

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