

TOP OF MIND

News from Portage Path Behavioral Health

PPBH STAFF SPEAK AT CHANGE DIRECTION EVENT



From L to R: Sean Blake, LPCC-S, VP of Clinical Services, Candace Pallante, RN, LSW, VP of Psychiatric Emergency Services, and Tony Ingrahm, Chief Probation Officer of the Akron Municipal Court.

Portage Path has received the following generous gifts from foundations thus far in 2018

KEYBANK FOUNDATION -

\$5,000 FOR DUAL DIAGNOSIS PROGRAMS

KENNETH L. CALHOUN CHARITABLE TRUST -

\$5,000 FOR GROUP TREATMENT

DOMINION ENERGY CHARITABLE FOUNDATION -

\$2,500 FOR DUAL DIAGNOSIS PROGRAMS

**Thank you to these foundations
for your generous support!**

On Wednesday, January 31, Tracy Yaeger, Ph.D., Candy Pallante, RN, LSW, and Sean Blake, LPCC-S attended and participated in the “Cross Systems Conversation for Faith and Behavioral Health Leadership,” as part of the Change Direction initiative in Summit County. Sean represented Portage Path on The Mind Panel, alongside other mental health community leaders outlining services available at PPBH as well as how we address faith and stigma in the course of treatment of our clients.

Candy participated on The Family Panel providing valuable information about Psychiatric Emergency Services and her role in the community to get people the help they need. Additionally, community faith leaders utilized The Spirit Panel to discuss their interactions with congregants needing mental health treatment. Many community representatives expressed appreciation for mental health resources, especially Portage Path.

This event provided many opportunities to interact with mental health and faith leaders in addressing similar concerns and looking toward solutions for improving the referral and communication process across providers. Portage Path was well represented and attendees provided very positive feedback about their interactions with Portage Path and the high quality services we provide. Portage Path will be hosting interesting faith leaders for a visit and tour in early march.



FILLING THE GAP: DUAL DIAGNOSIS

Portage Path Behavioral Health is in the process of **obtaining state certification of its fully integrated Dual Diagnosis Program**, which provides simultaneous care for mental illness and substance use disorders. The certification process takes from 12 to 18 months. Thorough state reviews will examine our clinical certifications, group and individual programs, our on-site MAT for addiction, and the intensive outpatient program for addiction. Roughly **50 to 70% of our clients (5,000 to 7,000 people annually) have dual diagnoses**, and this new program fills a gap in treatment for these clients.

Three programs will serve as the foundation for the innovative Dual Diagnosis Capabilities:

Crossroads

Crossroads is currently operating as a day treatment program, and is moving towards its ultimate destination as an Intensive Outpatient Treatment Program for people who need an extra level of care above simple outpatient treatment, but not severe enough to require hospitalization.

Bridges

By combining care for both issues into one treatment plan, Bridges helps clients make faster progress and avoid relapses. PPBH has licensed chemical dependency professionals working on our treatment teams to provide an optimized program of care.

Medicated Assisted Treatment (MAT)

MAT for Opioid addiction allows clients to regain a normal state of mind more quickly, allowing them to avoid withdrawal symptoms and start on the path to recovery through education, counseling and other treatments that focus on the behavioral aspects of addiction. Portage Path's MAT program is built on a total team treatment model, with skilled and well-trained professionals providing this compassionate and effective care program.

Dual diagnosis (also referred to as co-occurring disorders) is a term for when someone experiences a mental illness and a substance use disorder simultaneously. Either disorder-substance use or mental illness can develop first. People experiencing a mental health condition may turn to alcohol or other drugs as a form of self-medication to improve the mental health symptoms they experience. However, research shows that alcohol and other drugs worsen the symptoms of mental illnesses.

-NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness)



CLIENT SUCCESS AT PORTAGE PATH - MEET LYN

LYN IS A CLIENT AT PORTAGE PATH AND HAS COURAGEOUSLY AGREED TO SHARE HER STORY...

My story of recovery doesn't start until adulthood, but looking back now, all of the problems started as a teenager. I had trouble dealing with a lot of things and relating to people. I wasn't very energetic or involved with things – I held back a lot. Back then, nobody talked about this stuff. It wasn't until my 40's that I started hearing people talk about mental health. That's why I am sharing my story – to let others know they aren't the only ones struggling and you can get better.

Before things really got bad for me, I was an adult. I was married with a daughter and didn't recognize how I was feeling. I was starting to realize I was depressed more and more when I couldn't handle certain situations. I knew I had to do something about it because of my daughter. Even though I felt I was doing the best I could, I am sure she could recognize at times that I wasn't myself.

When my marriage fell apart after 20 years, my daughter and I lost everything - including our home. We went to live with my parents and I just kept pushing on because I had to be there for my daughter and the hardships she was facing personally with her mental health. I also had to care for my mother and I was spreading myself too thin worrying about everyone else that I forgot about me.

As women, we are used to being the fixer for everybody else. It may sound selfish in your mind, but when you're there for that one hour of counseling, all you need to talk about and focus on is yourself. It really builds strength. Hearing your words back at you changes your perspective.

As I got older, I started getting worse. I started seeing a psychiatrist, but wasn't talking to a psychologist or therapist. I now know they go hand in hand, and it's often best to utilize both resources if you can.

At one point, I tried to take my own life. It's like this dark, ugly thing inside of you that you have no control of. I was taken to the hospital and placed in an outpatient program. That program helped but I eventually stopped going. After seeing my family doctor for medication, I was advised to come to Portage Path. I could tell things were going downhill for me again by not talking to somebody regularly so I made an appointment at the Barberton office.

We are like fine-tuned machines, sometimes you need to make adjustments. That's one of the biggest things counseling taught me – you have to take responsibility for your self-care. In times of darkness, it's so much easier to pull the covers over your head and deny that things are bad – but in order to make any changes, you need to do something about it.

Since I started coming to Portage Path, I feel better than I have in a very long time. I haven't felt this strong in a long time, either. I laugh more, my sense of humor is back, and it's just good all the way around. The care, the help, even the warm welcome from the receptionist - they don't know how much even that small interaction means to us.

I have now been at Portage Path for over a year and it has been the greatest experience. I hope to help others in the future by mentoring people through their recovery journeys. I want others to know they aren't alone. That's why I am sharing my story – to let others know that they aren't alone, weird or different.

You can get better.



To read more stories like Lyn's - visit <http://www.portagepath.org/success-stories/>

