

Tallahassee Democrat.

NEWS

FSU, Apalachee Center open new treatment clinic for depression, anxiety

Nada Hassanein Tallahassee Democrat

Published 10:00 a.m. ET Jul. 8, 2020 | Updated 4:42 p.m. ET Jul. 8, 2020

A new center for the treatment of anxiety and depression that aims to bridge the gap between science and practice opens Wednesday.

In an effort to bring the latest research to help patients, the center's practitioners will be both faculty and clinicians in training from various Florida State University colleges.

The clinic off Lee Avenue, called FSU BehavioralHealth at Apalachee Center, is launched by FSU's College of Medicine (COM) and the Apalachee Center.

The outpatient treatment center is slated to offer therapy, medication management and diagnostic assessments for adults and children ages 6 and older — whether they're insured, have Medicaid or don't have insurance.

The idea was born out of needs FSU professor Heather Flynn and the Apalachee Center's director Jay Reeve have been hearing from Tallahassee residents.

"We're not trying to duplicate services. We're trying to fill gaps," Flynn said. "There doesn't seem to be one center that really focuses on the most common mental health disorders — depression and anxiety, provides counseling and medication management."

On top of that, as well as a local shortage of psychiatrists and long wait lists, many therapists in town either accept certain insurances or don't take insurance at all.

"It's difficult to find a center that will take all comers," said Flynn, a clinical psychologist who serves as FSU COM's vice chair in the Department of Behavioral Sciences and Social Medicine.

FSU BehavioralHealth at Apalachee Center is launching to help address those needs.

"Folks have been asking for this," Reeve said. "There's a lot of expressed need for this service."

Bridging the 'science-to-practice' gap

It can take years for evidence-based treatment methods to be implemented by clinicians and benefit the people who need them. This is what academics call the "science-to-practice gap," explains Reeve, a clinical psychologist.

"That issue is actually more apparent in behavioral health than anywhere else," he said.

Tallahassee's FSU COM has slowly been opening various clinics whose practitioners are faculty and trainees. These include the FSU PrimaryHealth clinic and another focused on senior care. FSU BehavioralHealth at Apalachee Center joins that list.

The new mental health center is also affiliated with a nationwide network, the National Network of Depression Centers, which aims to inform patient care based on collaborations by researchers and clinicians.

Centers part of the network like this one are "contributing to the science and learning from the science in real time," said Flynn, who also directs FSU's Center for Behavioral Health Integration and helped start the depression treatment center at the University of Michigan.

"Like cancer centers, we're trying to contribute to the models of what is best treatment," she added.

Right now, the center includes professors and those in training from the FSU Colleges of Nursing, Psychology, Medicine and Social Work.

The Apalachee Center will be providing the center's health-care infrastructure, billing and medical record framework.

"The different disciplines work together and infuse best practice... and integrate what we're learning from the science, what we know about excellent training and clinical care together to offer this to the community," Flynn said.

For more information

The FSU BehavioralHealth at Apalachee Center is at 1126 Lee Avenue. Call 850-644-6543 for an appointment, or go to med.fsu.edu/fsubehavioralhealthapalacheecenter/home.

More on mental health:

Two new outpatient mental health programs offer intensive care for Tallahassee teens, adults

Apalachee Center adds telepsychiatry to Bond Community Health Center

Refuge House says decrease in calls amid coronavirus signals domestic abuse increase

Coronavirus and telehealth: Tallahassee social workers counsel foster children remotely

Reach Nada Hassanein at nhassanein@tallahassee.com or on Twitter @nhassanein_.

Never miss a story: [Subscribe to the Tallahassee Democrat.](#)