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The Apalachee Center, FSU partner to provide necessary mental health care



The FSU Behavioral Health at Apalachee Center clinic is the first of its kind in the state and helps provide mental health services to anyone in the community. (WCTV)
By [Emma Wheeler](#)
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TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (WCTV) -The uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic can take its toll on mental health. The Apalachee Center and Florida State University have teamed up to help bring the necessary mental health to better serve the community.

The FSU Behavioral Health at Apalachee Center clinic is the first of its kind in the state and helps provide mental health services to anyone in the community.

The center opened last summer in the middle of the pandemic offering virtual mental health care. Health officials say demand was high right off that bat, especially for psychotherapy services. Now offering both virtual and in person care, health experts expect the need to keep growing.

The FSU Behavioral Health at Apalachee Center clinic brings together experts from all across the FSU medical programs, like the College of Medicine and the FSU Mood and Anxiety Center for Excellence.

That center is part of the National Network for Depression Centers, a nationally recognized network that provides mood and mental health care based at Johns Hopkins University.

Dr. Jay Reeve, President and CEO of the Apalachee Center says most of the national network centers are nested within academic institutes, which can make it difficult to reach people in the general public who are in need of care.

“The issue there is that you got folks that aren’t paying, you’ve got some folks that need help in the community who can’t get through to where the help is,” Dr. Reeve said. “So by bringing it out in the community we’ve made it that much easier, again for anybody.”

Dr. Reeve added that what makes this program so unique, it allows the public to have access to care from the FSU experts, while utilizing the resources and funding opportunities available through the Apalachee Center.

This makes it a sustainable clinic without relying on grant funding. It also allows the center to treat patients regardless of insurance status.

The center is one of several initiatives recently launched by the Apalachee center, others through partnerships with the [City of Tallahassee](#) and [emergency response agencies](#).

These services could be needed more than ever.

The Apalachee Center says it saw a huge uptick in calls for services last spring. But another wave of COVID cases and hospitalizations could lead to another spike in mental health needs.

Dr. Reeve says that for those who may experience low levels of anxiety or depression, going through a crisis like the COVID pandemic could make those struggles worse.

The center says mental health and mood disorders typically get worse after a disaster, rather than during.

Before the Delta variant caused another surge in cases, the center saw an increased need, especially among children.

But as hospitalizations and COVID cases started to rise and the community was again dealing with the immediate impacts of the virus, those calls actually started dropping.

“An emotional response to that was kind of on hold,” Dr. Reeve said. “What I’m anticipating is as the peak diminishes, as things start to feel maybe less acute physically, I’m anticipating another wave.”

Dr. Reeve says the best advice for people is to stay informed and to have the important conversations about COVID.

He says to seek advice from trusted medical experts, but to remember to take a break because it can be easy to feel overwhelmed.

It’s also important, he says, to try and keep family routines as normal as possible.

More information about the FSU Behavioral Health at Apalachee Center can be found on the [clinic’s website](#).

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