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The Unity Center for Behavioral Health will be located on Legacy Health's Holladay Park campus in northeast Portland.

Mental Health Center to Open

Unity Center for help, hospitality and hope

The first and only dedicated psychiatric emergency room in Oregon will open this month in northeast Portland, a community-focused collaboration between Adventist Health, Kaiser Permanente, Legacy Health and OHSU to create a comprehensive psychiatric emergency care facility for people facing a mental health crisis.

Located on the Legacy Health Holladay Park campus at 1225 N.E. Second Ave., the new Unity Center for Behavioral Health will operate as a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week health facility "where people find help, hospitality and hope," said Dr. Chris Farentinos, Unity Center vice president.

Across the U.S., people experiencing a psychiatric emergency cannot always get the help they need, when they need it. Too often mental health issues go untreated, which can lead to homelessness, loss of employment, broken relationships, incarceration and suicide.

The Unity Center will combine vital emergency care and short-term inpatient services to drastically reduce the amount of time people suffering a mental health crisis have to wait to get appropriate care compared to a conventional hospital emergency room, officials said.

People facing a mental health crisis, including children ages nine to 18, can be delivered to the Unity Center by family or friends, self-check-in, or be transported by ambulance. If no crime has been committed, a patient may be safely delivered by law enforcement officers. Patients can be voluntary or involuntary.

The Unity Center's care model is based on Trauma Informed Care that promotes trust, safety, collaboration, peer support, choice, and the inclusion of cultural, historical and gender issues.

Patients will receive compassionate emergency psychiatric care by highly qualified physicians, behavioral therapists, nurses and staff. Patients also have available strong peer support personnel onsite. Having themselves recovered from a mental illness, these peers are on hand to help guide patients as they navigate the

treatment and recovery process.

"Unity is going to change lives, it's going to matter, it's going to make a difference," said Brenda Mitchell, a peer wellness specialist.

Unity Center staff will also work with dozens of community partners to offer transitional support services. With personnel located inside the center, these organizations will help to coordinate continued support for patients after they are discharged. These support "navigators" will aid patients with ongoing outpatient care and life resources, such as job and housing assistance, addiction treatment, legal aid, family counseling and long-term inpatient care.

"The Unity Center is an investment that will dramatically improve the lives of individuals and families dealing with a mental health crisis and lead to a healthier community," said Marcia Randall, co-trustee of the Robert D. and Marcia H. Randall Charitable Trust. The Trust donated \$20 million to help establish the center.

The public is invited to tour the Unity Center on Thursday, Jan. 5 from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. No reservations are required, but public parking is limited.



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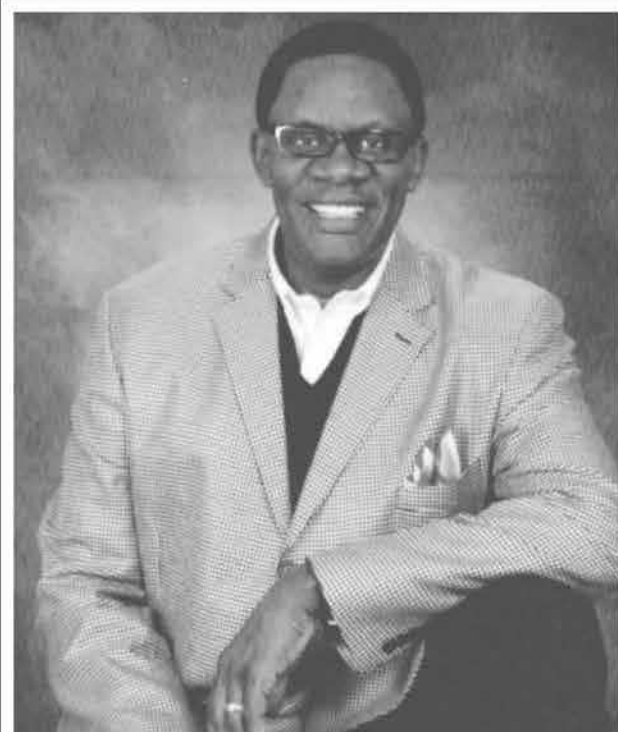


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