



## Caregiver Guide

### Welcome and Introduction

#### *Welcome to Children's Behavioral Health at the Ireland Center*

Not every caregiver has the same reaction to his or her child's hospitalization. You may be frightened, upset, or have a hard time coming to terms with this experience. You may be relieved that you and your child are getting much-needed help. You may feel guilt, sadness, anger, or shame about your child's mental, emotional, or behavioral health problems. **All of these feelings are completely normal.**

The hospital environment, especially the Behavioral Health unit, can be very overwhelming and intimidating. This can also be a very stressful time for caregivers and other family members. Here at Children's Behavioral Health, we want to provide you with the **information, resources, and support** you need to understand and cope with your child's challenges and hospital stay.

**You are an important part of your child's treatment.** You know your child best and have the greatest understanding of how your child responds to stress. You also know what has been helpful in the past. We encourage you to keep a list of questions and important information that you want to talk about with us.

We hope this Caregiver Guide will help comfort you, prepare you for what to expect, and empower you to be an active partner in your child's care.

#### *Who we are*

The Children's Behavioral Health unit is a 34-bed, secure inpatient psychiatric unit. We treat children and adolescents through 18 years of age.

Every patient comes to us struggling with something. Many of our patients are having trouble managing strong emotions. Our unit is designed to help patients who are going through an acute crisis. Inpatient treatment will be brief for most patients (typically 7-10 days), but may be longer if needed.

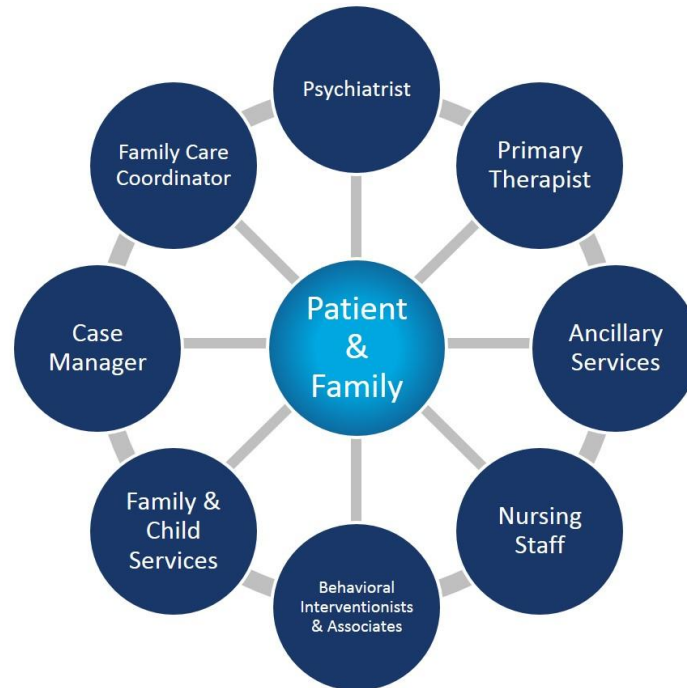
Our primary goal and focus of treatment is to provide for the **safety** and **stabilization** of all patients. We do this by helping patients and caregivers learn **new skills** they can use to cope with triggers and strong emotions. We may recommend medication that can help decrease the signs and symptoms your child is experiencing.

You will learn more about our treatment approach and treatment team in this Caregiver Guide and in the C.A.R.E.S. (Caregiver Advocacy, Resources, Education, and Support) classes you will attend soon after your child is admitted to our unit.

## Your Child's Hospital Stay

### *Treatment Team*

You may wonder who is taking care of your child while he or she is in the hospital. Assigned to your child's care is a **Treatment Team** made up of mental health professionals who each play a unique role in caring for your child.



Detailed information related to each team member's role, what to expect from each team member, and how the team works together to care for your child will be provided during the C.A.R.E.S. Expectations Class.

### *Treatment Approach*

Your child's treatment team uses various treatment methods that are individualized to best meet your child's specific needs. Each day, your child will participate in a number of groups and activities designed to develop skills to support a successful return home.



**Milieu Information and Daily Schedule**

“Milieu” refers to the physical, social, and therapeutic environment of our unit. The milieu includes activities and groups that your child will participate in while they are here. Our milieu philosophy is “Respect self, others and the community.” Every activity and interaction we have with your child flows from that philosophy.

Our unit's daily schedule is structured to provide time for individual sessions with the psychiatrist, individual and group therapy, group activities, student enrichment, group meals, visitation with caregivers, self-care and free time.

In general, we follow the same basic schedule each week day (Monday-Friday):

6:30am	Wake up, get ready for the day
7:30am	Breakfast
8:30am-11:30am	Individual session with Psychiatrist, individual and group therapy, group activities, student enrichment, individual assessments
11:30am	Lunch
12:30pm-4:30pm	Individual session with Psychiatrist, individual and group therapy, group activities, student enrichment, individual assessments
4:30pm	Dinner
5:15pm-6:30pm	Visiting Hours <i>(Monday-Friday)</i>
6:30pm	Free time, evening group activities, shower, self-care and relaxation time
9:00pm	Bedtime

*\*Weekend (Saturday & Sunday) and Holiday schedules vary, with visiting hours being 2:00pm-4:00pm.*

**Unit Guidelines and Patient Expectations**

We expect our patients to be respectful of themselves, others, and the community. In light of this expectation:

- Patients will use respectful language.
- Patients will show respectful boundaries around others.
- Patients will wear respectful clothing.
- Patients will demonstrate respect for staff, unit rules, and their families/caregivers.



## Your Involvement and Participation

Caregiver involvement is **critical** to your child's treatment. **You** have the greatest understanding of how your child responds to stress and what has been helpful in the past. Therefore, mental health treatment outcomes are drastically improved when caregivers are **active participants** in the treatment process. You are an **important member** of the treatment team.

Your involvement will include:

- ❖ *C.A.R.E.S. Inpatient Classes:*
  - **Expectations Class** – Provides information to help you understand and manage expectations related to your child's treatment.
  - **Safety Class** – Provides information about how to make your home environment safer for your child's return after discharge.
  - Both classes are offered on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons.
  - The Family Care Coordinator will contact you the day after your child's admission to schedule these classes.
- ❖ *Family Meetings with Primary Therapist:*
  - One or two during your child's hospitalization, depending on need
  - Designed to include you in your child's individual therapy
  - Your child's primary therapist will contact you to schedule these meetings.
- ❖ *C.A.R.E.S. Planning Sessions:*
  - Crisis Prevention Planning (may happen during Family Meeting with Primary Therapist)
  - School Re-Entry Planning
  - Each is designed to further prepare you for your child's return home.
  - These sessions will be scheduled with you when you attend the C.A.R.E.S. Classes.
- ❖ *C.A.R.E.S. Support Group:*
  - Designed to provide a safe space for you to share your experiences, emotions, successes, and concerns related to caring for a child with a mental or behavioral health condition.
  - This group meets weekly on Thursdays at 4:00pm-5:00pm.
- ❖ *Daily Visiting Hours:*
  - Monday – Friday, 5:15-6:30pm
  - Saturday, Sunday, and Holidays, 2:00-4:00pm