

# Good Samaritan Medical Center

A STEWARD FAMILY HOSPITAL



## Collaborative Care Committee

Our needs assessment brought several key health issues to light, among them a pressing concern to help frequent users in our Emergency Department (ED):

- Community data confirms discouraging statistics on drug abuse, mental illness and chronic disease in Brockton, manifested in frequent and excessive use of the ED
- Symptoms related to mental health, homelessness, and chronic conditions – disease, alcoholism, substance abuse and pain – bring people to the ED time and again
- Poverty, unemployment, and language and insurance barriers amplify the health challenges for these patients, who rarely show signs of improving health despite repeat visits

This vulnerable group often has complex needs and great difficulty navigating the health and social service systems. Respect for human life and dignity compels us to seek ways – through our Collaborative Care Committee – to provide lasting and appropriate care for the people who turn to us for help.

We believe we can make a profound difference for at-risk patients in our ED by coordinating treatment and services around social determinants of health – factors such as poverty, housing and language proficiency.

Our Collaborative Care Committee brings all parties to the table to orchestrate care with the greatest respect for patient privacy and confidentiality. We partner with others seeking to help these same individuals: homeless shelters, health centers, social service agencies, treatment centers and more.

Initial results bring success and great hope. Among our top 20 most frequent patients, we have reduced ED use by 51 percent.

This extraordinary turnaround involves innovative steps and shared community effort:

- Our Collaborative Care Committee reviews patient data, identifies medical and social issues and charts strategy
- Patient by patient, we look at what can be done to provide the best possible care in the most appropriate location
- New software technology unique to Good Samaritan creates a real-time data base of at-risk patients for immediate review and analysis, and individualized care plans that address clinical, social, spiritual and legal concerns as needed
- Most importantly, we involve community partners at all levels, on interventions such as locating a primary care physician, assisting with insurance or transportation, or making referrals to other services

We believe we can empower people to receive care through the most appropriate channels, and to avoid hospitalization when possible. Working together, we are improving health outcomes for our most fragile patients by increasing routine care and decreasing expensive, and often less-effective, emergency intervention.