



The Nord Center

Comprehensive Behavioral Healthcare

For Immediate Release

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Nord Center Launches Team-Based FIRST Program For First Episode Psychosis

Lorain, OH– The Nord Center has partnered with the Lorain County Board of Mental Health (LCBMH), and the Best Practices in Schizophrenia Treatment (BeST) Center in the Department of Psychiatry at Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED) to establish FIRST Lorain County, a comprehensive, team-based, early identification and outpatient treatment program for individuals with schizophrenia spectrum disorders.

Many people who show early signs of a psychotic illness delay seeking treatment. Yet research suggests the earlier identification and treatment of psychosis, the better chances for a faster, more complete recovery. FIRST Lorain County is designed to meet the needs of those between the ages of 15-40 experiencing early signs of psychosis.

FIRST Lorain County is a team-based integrated, comprehensive early identification and outpatient treatment program for schizophrenia. The program provides support and education for not only the client but for their family in order to improve recovery, set future goals and reduce chances of relapse.

“We’re excited to bring this program to Lorain County,” stated Amy Denger, Nord Center CEO/COO. “Psychosis typically appears in the late teens, early twenties. If left untreated, it can cause great disruption to a person’s ability to study, work, make friends and interact with others. Our goal is to help these individuals go on to lead fulfilling, independent lives.”

Although the course and features of schizophrenia and related disorders vary from person to person, schizophrenia includes periods when an individual experiences psychotic symptoms, meaning that there is some loss of contact with reality. Schizophrenia is characterized by hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that others do not), delusions (firmly held false beliefs, such as paranoia), disordered thinking, social withdrawal, limited emotional expression, problems with attention and certain types of memory, and loss or decrease in the abilities that allow people to plan and organize.

Anyone between the ages of 15 and 40 who is experiencing these symptoms and/or who has been taking an antipsychotic medication for less than a total of 18 months may contact FIRST Lorain County team leader Kathryn Maimone, at 440.204.4200.

FIRST Lorain County treatment services are based at The Nord Center, 6140 S. Broadway, Lorain, OH 44053. To learn more, please visit www.neomed.edu/bestcenter.

***The Nord Center** is a private, non-profit agency providing comprehensive behavioral and mental health services to children, adolescents and adults in the greater Lorain County area. Our Child and Adolescent Services (CAS) offers a broad range of individually tailored services for children, adolescents and families experiencing emotional, behavioral and/or relational problems – from everyday challenges to severe and persistent mental illness. For more information, please visit www.nordcenter.org.*

***The Lorain County Board of Mental Health** is the local public agency that plans, funds, monitors and evaluates a system of services for residents with mental illness in Lorain County.*

***Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED)** For more than 40 years, Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED) has worked in collaboration with its educational, clinical and research partners to successfully train health professionals and medical researchers who serve and impact the region and beyond. The University trains students in a team-based, interprofessional environment and offers doctor of medicine (M.D.) and doctor of pharmacy (Pharm.D.) degrees, in addition to master's and doctoral degrees and research opportunities in other medical areas. www.neomed.edu.*

***The Best Practices in Schizophrenia Treatment (BeST) Center's** mission is to promote recovery and improve the lives of as many people with schizophrenia as possible by accelerating the adoption of evidence-based and promising practices. The BeST Center works with mental health consumers, family members, expert consultants, policy makers and clinical partners to offer training, consultation, evaluation, education and outreach activities to build the capacity of local systems to provide state-of-the-art care. The BeST Center was established in the Department of Psychiatry at Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED) through a generous grant from The Margaret Clark Morgan Foundation in 2009. To learn more, please visit www.neomed.edu/bestcenter.*

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