

Mindy Ellen Levine Behavioral Health Hospital Celebrates One-Year Anniversary

In the mid-2000's, Carolinas HealthCare System wasn't sure if investing in behavioral health would go down as something historic or visionary, but the System knew it was the right thing to do for the region. Leadership hedged their bets on behavioral health and in April 2014, they opened a brand-new, 66 bed hospital for patients with behavioral health needs. The Mindy Ellen Levine Behavioral Health Hospital is providing effective treatment of mental health needs while becoming a national leader in tackling the mental health crisis. The hospital has many unique programs that have greatly enhanced the overall care and experience for patients and their families. Here are some of the highlights from the past year.

Relationship with the Town of Davidson and the Hospital

The town of Davidson, NC, is a small town full of big ideas. At the heart of the town is Davidson College. But surrounding the college is the globally aware and socially conscious population that makes up this wonderful town. Most small towns might pause and hesitate at the thought of a new behavioral health hospital in their community- but not Davidson. This small town embraced Carolinas HealthCare System and assisted the physicians and leaders in weaving a behavioral health culture into the daily fabric of the town.

The support from the Town of Davidson has been unwavering from the start of the plans to build a brand new hospital dedicated to treating patients with behavioral health needs. When others remained hesitant and even fearful of having such a hospital in their community, Davidson stepped up and welcomed the opportunity. The Mayor of Davidson, John Woods, says the relationship between the town and the hospital has improved and strengthened over the past year.

“We value the wonderful healthcare being delivered every day,” said Mayor Woods. “Our community has embraced the hospital presence in Davidson, greatly respecting the valuable work accomplished there. Our experience confirms that mental health must not be feared due to misunderstanding or lack of knowledge.”

Collaboration between the town and the hospital

- Carolinas HealthCare System is a huge contributor to [Davidson LifeLine](#), an organization dedicated to supporting suicide prevention and mental health awareness - many hospital employees, such as Dr. Tom Gettelman and Joanne Sobolewski, are involved.
- In October 2014, the Town of Davidson held a Parks and Recreation program for the [ReadDavidson](#) initiative at the hospital because the subject matter of the book related to behavioral health. This program was an effective way to get more citizens into the facility to continue breaking down the stigma related to mental health issues.
- The System partnered with [Davidson College](#) so that students can volunteer at the hospital, talk to the counselors to learn how the hospital operates, and paint a mural on one of the hospital walls.

- Dr. Gettelman is a frequent presenter in the community, talking to crowds at rotary clubs and community events.
- [The Davidson Community Players](#), a theatre organization, is working with the hospital to host a five-week series lecture series about mental health, after they performed a play with mental health themes.
- The hospital was “adopted” by a 9th grade Spanish class in Cabarrus county- the students made Christmas and Valentine’s Day cards for patients.

Without the acceptance by the Town of Davidson and its citizens, it would be not be feasible to make such dramatic improvements towards reducing the stigma that exists about behavioral health. By working together on a variety of events and projects and nurturing those relationships, the Town of Davidson and Carolinas HealthCare System have created a community of caring people who believe that mental health is an important health matter affecting all people and is an issue that should be discussed and understood.