New Genetic Testing Personalizes Treatment

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Genetic testing has already revolutionized cancer care by giving physicians the capability to create personalized treatment plans based on each patient’s unique genetic profile and physiology. Personalized medicine is at the cutting edge of health care today in many specialties.

Now this same technology and approach is available to outpatients of Princeton House Behavioral Health (PHBH), giving psychiatrists a valuable tool in the treatment of patients with bipolar disorder, major depression, anxiety, schizophrenia, OCD, ADD, and other illnesses.

PHBH psychiatrists at the Princeton Mt. Lucas Road site are currently piloting the use of the Genecept™ Assay, made by the personalized medicine company Genomind. PHBH is one of only a handful of providers in New Jersey where the Genecept™ Assay is available, placing PHBH at the forefront of this emerging new field.

A patient’s need for the test will be based on several factors, including past treatments. The Genecept™ Assay is currently not offered at PHBH’s main inpatient campus, where individuals tend to be in treatment for a much shorter duration than in the outpatient settings. Use of the tool will extend to PHBH’s outpatient locations in North Brunswick, Hamilton, and Moorestown in early 2014.

How It Works

The Genecept™ Assay uses a small amount of saliva provided by a patient to analyze his or her unique physiological and genetic make-up by looking at key indicators, including gene variations, how the body metabolizes medications, and the effects of medication on the patient’s body. Within about a week, a report is sent back to the patient’s psychiatrist to aid in making diagnostic and treatment decisions. Genomind’s psychiatrists and neurologists are available for consultation.

“The emergence of personalized medicine in the treatment of behavioral health issues is very exciting as it offers psychiatrists enhanced ability to decide which medications will work best for each individual patient and at what dosage level,” says David Cordon, M.D., Vice Chairman of the Department of Psychiatry. “The Genecept™ Assay gives us the potential to increase a treatment’s safety and effectiveness, control symptoms, reduce side effects, and lower costs.”

The test, adds Dr. Cordon, also gives psychiatrists new options in treating patients whose illnesses have been resistant to treatment.

“The overall potential of personalized medicine benefits patients by improving their treatment outcomes and enhancing their quality of life,” he says.

For information about Princeton House Behavioral Health’s Outpatient Services, please call 888.437.1610 or visit www.princetonhouse.org.
In the struggle for sobriety, one of the best resources for a patient is someone who has walked the same path.

PHBH’s Addiction Recovery Alumni Program brings together patients who are receiving acute inpatient treatment for alcoholism and/or drug abuse with PHBH alumni who are in recovery. The result is a powerful day of celebration, sharing, advice, and encouragement.

Launched two years ago, the program meets quarterly on the inpatient unit, with the day’s activities built around the season, a theme, and the 12 steps. 2014’s themes will include “Renewal and Rebirth” in the spring, “A Soldier of Recovery” near Memorial Day, “The Work of Recovery” near Labor Day, and “Gratitude” in November at the start of the holiday season.

“The Alumni Program benefits everyone,” says Chris Losch, LCSW, LCADC, Director of Addiction Services. “It gives our current patients a sense of hope, seeing those who have come through PHBH and are having success in recovery. It helps our alumni to remain grounded in their recovery and remember where they’ve been. The program also helps our staff to see patients doing well after discharge in part by applying skills they learned here. Joining our former patients in celebrating their success helps us to continue assisting those in need.”

Six or seven alumni usually return for casual group sessions facilitated by PHBH counselors. Many patients ask alumni questions one to one after the sessions are over.

One alumna, who has been sober for one and one-half years, points out that coming back for the Alumni Program “reminds you that you don’t want to go there again. It’s a way to give back to the recovery community, work my 12 steps, and offer advice.”

“When you are in treatment, you wonder, ‘Why should this work? Why should I do what my counselors say?’” she says. “From my own experience, I can confidently say to them, ‘Your counselors know what they are talking about. Listen to them. Take their advice about further treatment.’”

A craft project or activity that produces a leave-behind tangible object helps patients start the process of building a network within their new setting of sobriety. Last November’s “Tree of Gratitude” remains on the inpatient unit.

“As we create our craft project, patients start to get comfortable interacting with new friends,” says the alumna. “They seek our advice as to how to find the confidence to call people for support and to ask someone to be your sponsor.”

“In speaking from their hearts as to what their lives were like when they were using or drinking, their struggle for recovery, and how PHBH gave them the tools and coping skills they needed to stay sober, our alumni demonstrate how they are always a part of our network of support,” says Kathryn Hostettler, MSW, LSW, Primary Therapist for the Addiction Recovery Program. “When our patients leave, we stress that they can call us at any time and ask for help. Our Alumni Program strengthens this connection.”

Pictured above: Current patients and alumni decorated their “Tree of Gratitude” with leaves inscribed with their thoughts of thanksgiving blessings and new opportunities.
Whether a traumatic event stems from a childhood assault or neglect, a military deployment, first responder critical incident, or domestic violence, each person who experiences trauma does so within his or her unique life context.

Princeton House Behavioral Health’s three distinct trauma treatment programs – for women, men, and first responders – enable each patient to receive treatment unique to his or her own specific needs within a safe environment.

“We are devoted to training and educating our staff to provide high-quality services that are based on research and best practices,” explains Nathalie Edmond, PsyD, Associate Executive Director of Outpatient Services and Director of the Women’s Program. “Our strength-based programs help patients recognize that many of the survival skills they used to cope with their trauma and gain control may no longer be effective for meeting their long-term goals.”

**Just for Women**

PHBH’s Women’s Program offers a Trauma Program and a Trauma and Addiction Program for patients who have co-occurring disorders. The Emotional Eating Program utilizes a dialectical behavior therapy-informed approach to treat women with underlying trauma who have used dangerous eating behaviors to regulate their emotions and mood disorders.

Each program has a strong mindfulness-based component that teaches women to have self-compassion and accept life as it currently is, while at the same time teaching cognitive behavioral skills to make necessary changes in their life. The Trauma and Addiction program utilizes the Seeking Safety curriculum, an evidence-based practice focused on the co-occurring treatment of trauma and addiction. All three programs are offered as a partial hospital program or an intensive outpatient program. Trauma and Trauma and Addiction are available in Princeton, Hamilton, North Brunswick, and Moorestown. Emotional Eating is only offered in Princeton.

“For the past nine years we have collected data based on patients’ self-reports of their symptoms at the beginning and end of treatment,” notes Dr. Edmond. “The data support that patient outcomes are improved with our treatment approach.”

**A Safe Haven for Men**

PHBH’s Men’s Program – one of the first in the U.S. – gives patients a safe, trust-filled environment in which they can share their experiences, learn from each other, and recover from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

“Some of our patients are here because an employer or spouse has urged them to seek treatment. Others recognize that they have reached a point where their lives have become unmanageable, and they need additional support,” says Kameron Cassella, MSW, LCSW, Clinical Manager of Adult Programs. “In addition to PTSD, the men often present with anger, depression, anxiety, and/or substance abuse. Patients also describe struggling with relationship issues and finding it difficult to trust others and ask for help. Here they find a welcoming, supportive environment. They develop trust, a greater understanding of themselves, and a sense of hope.”

The Men’s Program utilizes men-specific coping skills, trauma education, dialectical behavioral therapy skills, cognitive behavioral therapy, and expressive therapies to help patients understand and recover from trauma and PTSD. A partial hospital program and an intensive outpatient program are offered at PHBH’s Mt. Lucas Road site in Princeton.
Helping Those Who Keep Us Safe

PHBH’s First Responder Treatment Services is the first in New Jersey to address the unique needs of police and corrections officers, military personnel, firefighters, paramedics, and EMTs. Confidential inpatient addiction and mental health services are offered at the Princeton location.

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), alcoholism, substance abuse, and other behavioral health issues can inflict a terrible toll on first responders. First Responder Treatment Services include an evaluation and assessment, individual and group therapy, family therapy and education, medication management, expressive therapies, and evidence-based practices. Director of Clinical Services for First Responders Michael Bizzarro, PhD, LCSW, BCD, works closely with each first responder and his or her board certified psychiatrist, therapist, and other members of the treatment team.

“We are all in this together as we emphasize treatment that focuses on the whole person, using the mind-body-spirit connection and one-to-one counseling,” says Dr. Bizzarro, who is a former police officer and veteran of the U.S. Army Reserve.

Each first responder’s return to work and community is facilitated with a recommendation for follow-up care, referrals to 12-step programs or “Bottles & Badges” support groups, and phone calls to a department or union liaison so that a smooth transition can be achieved.

For more information, visit www.princetonhouse.org.
To make a referral to the Women’s Program or Men’s Program, call 888.437.1610. To reach First Responder Treatment Services, call 800.242.2550.

Bottles & Badges Comes to Princeton House

Bottles & Badges/First Responders meetings have begun at Princeton House Behavioral Health, making it the first site in New Jersey to host this 12-step program and the first in the state to welcome all first responders.

Traditionally, Bottles & Badges is an AA meeting for law enforcement only, but PHBH’s First Responder Treatment Services is opening meetings up to also include firefighters, military personnel, paramedics, and EMTs.

Meetings are held on Wednesdays at 7 p.m. in the conference center at 905 Herrontown Road in Princeton.

“Bottles & Badges/First Responders at Princeton House extends our commitment to the entire first responder community and offers a safe place for our brothers and sisters to share their experiences without fear,” says Michael Bizzarro, PhD, LCSW, BCD, Director of Clinical Services for First Responders.

Meetings are open to first responders living in the community and to those receiving treatment at PHBH.

“This is a wonderful way for our patients to embrace the program and to network and make contacts for their aftercare,” notes Jim Schneider, Peer Support Specialist and a 30-year retired Westfield police officer and military veteran.

For more information, call Dr. Bizzarro at 609.497.2697.
Nathalie Edmond, PsyD, Associate Executive Director of Outpatient Services and Director of the Women’s Program, has been selected a member of the 2013-2014 Leadership Institute for Women in Psychology. The institute was established by the American Psychological Association to support and empower women psychologists. Dr. Edmond was one of 30 members selected from among applicants across the nation in recognition of their career achievements and leadership potential.

Chris Losch, LSCW, LCADC, Director of Addiction Services, was selected to the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence-New Jersey’s Advocacy Leadership Program. The program is designed to foster a generation of leaders in New Jersey committed to confronting the state’s most pressing addiction treatment, prevention, and recovery issues.

Michael Bizzarro, PhD, LCSW, BCD, Director of Clinical Services for First Responders, addressed the New Jersey State Policemen’s Benevolent Association’s convention and the American Corrections Officers Association’s Board of Directors and discussed First Responder Treatment Services that are available to their membership.

Jon Brecka, LMST, LCSW, Senior Primary Therapist, received a plaque from the Rutgers School of Social Work in recognition of PHBH’s leadership and commitment to social work field education.

Carla Hammond, MD, is a Staff Psychiatrist in the Women’s Program in North Brunswick. She completed her residency at St. Vincent’s Hospital and Medical Center and fellowships in child/adolescent and addiction psychiatry. She previously held positions at Mount Carmel Guild, the New Jersey Veterans Affairs, On Eagles’ Wings Counseling and Consulting Services, and Somerset Treatment Services.

Arshad Siddiqui, MD, is the Associate Medical Director of the Hamilton outpatient site. He completed his residency at Delaware State Hospital and a research fellowship at UMDNJ-New Jersey Medical School. He was previously Medical Director of the Intensive Outpatient Program at Barnabas Behavioral Health Center, and he worked for the Delaware Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health Program.

Marina Zilpert, MD, is a Staff Psychiatrist in the Women’s and Adult Programs at North Brunswick. She completed a residency in adult psychiatry at Bronx Lebanon Hospital and a fellowship in child and adolescent psychiatry at Brookdale University in New York. She was an attending psychiatrist in Jerusalem and Moscow.

Jim Schneider has joined PHBH as a Peer Support Specialist, working primarily with the First Responder Treatment Services team to bridge the gap between treatment and the process of recovery. Jim is a 30-year retired Westfield police officer and military veteran.

Save the Date
Center for Eating Disorders Care Open House for Professionals

Thursday, May 1, 2014, 4 – 7 p.m.
University Medical Center of Princeton at Plainsboro Education Center

RSVP 609.853.7578

GRAND ROUNDS
www.princetonhouse.org
Visit our website or contact Jonathan Krejci, PhD, at Jkrejci@princetonhcs.org.

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### INPATIENT PROGRAMS

**800.242.2550**  
Fax: 609.688.3779

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### OUTPATIENT PHP/IOP PROGRAMS

**888.437.1610**  
Fax: 609.683.6840

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#### Men’s Program

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#### Women’s Programs

- Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT): 🟢
- Trauma: 🟢
- Trauma & Addiction: 🟢
- Emotion Regulation: 🟢
- Emotional Eating: 🟢
- Supporting Adolescent Girls Emotionally (SAGE) 13-18: 🟢

#### Afterschool IOP

- Adolescent – Psych/Dual/Substance Abuse: 🟢

#### Evening Programs

#### Evening IOP

- Adult Psychiatric: 🟢
- Adult Dual Diagnosis: ❌
- Adult Substance Abuse: ❌
Supporting Adolescent Girls Emotionally

Adolescence is often a challenging time for girls as they develop physically, grow emotionally, and transition into young womanhood. Girls who struggle with trauma, substance abuse, severe loss, and issues involving body image and self-esteem are at risk for engaging in impulsive behaviors, self-injury, and suicidal ideation.

Princeton House Behavioral Health’s new Supporting Adolescent Girls Emotionally (SAGE) program is designed to help girls ages 13 to 18 identify and understand their emotional struggles and impulsive behaviors as they build confidence and develop positive coping skills. SAGE is the only program of its kind in New Jersey to offer behavioral health services specifically for teenage girls.

“Adolescent girls need a safe space where they can open up, discuss sensitive topics, and then work through gender-specific challenges with other girls,” explains Suni Antony, LCSW, Director of Outpatient Services-Women’s Program at Princeton. “Other than our psychiatrist, we have an all-women staff. We believe this creates a safe atmosphere that allows for girls to face difficult and sensitive issues as they work toward reaching their goals.”

In addition to services for girls (see box), SAGE integrates family involvement into the program starting with each girl’s intake assessment and initial evaluation.

“Weekly family therapy sessions and combined groups with the adolescents help family members gain a better understanding of family dynamics and learn how they can support their adolescent’s recovery,” notes Ms. Antony.

The SAGE program is offered on the Princeton campus at 1000 Herrontown Road.

There are two levels of care:

- **full-day partial hospital program:** five days per week, 9:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. with two hours of school instruction
- **half-day, after-school intensive outpatient program:** a family program on Mondays from 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.; Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:30 – 6:30 p.m.

“We have adapted many of the skills-based services and evidence-based treatment approaches of our highly regarded Women’s Program into designing SAGE,” says Ms. Antony. “We are confident that we will also be successful in helping adolescent girls learn healthy coping skills and work through difficult emotional experiences.”

SAGE offers:

- individual and group therapy
- medication management
- evidence-based therapies, including dialectical behavior therapy (DBT), which teaches coping skills through various modules
- psychoeducation
- expressive therapies (yoga, art, music)
- family support and education

For more information about SAGE, visit www.princetonhouse.org. To make a referral, call 888.437.1610. Transportation may be available for the partial hospital program.