

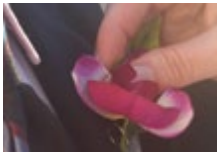
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At the Pointe

Mental Health First Aid

Are you interested in becoming certified? Call Tamioka at 450-4340 to register for the next class.



Contact Your Legislator

AltaPointe encourages staff members to express their concerns about funding mental health services. Names of legislators and their contact information may be found online by going to capwiz.com/state-al/home/ and entering your address or zip code.

Gov. Bentley talks budget crisis, effects on mental health services at BayPointe event

AltaPointe Health Systems welcomed Alabama Gov. Robert Bentley to BayPointe Hospital May 11 along with nearly 200 people who packed the gymnasium to participate in a statewide mental health disability awareness news conference and forum. Co-hosted by AltaPointe and Volunteers of America Southeast, the event gave Gov. Bentley an opportunity to present his \$541 million general fund budget proposal and to emphasize the importance he places on funding mental health services.

The people receiving these services may see them reduced or lose them totally unless the governor and the legislature find a solution to the state's nearly \$300 million budget deficit for next fiscal year. A legislative budget proposal would not increase revenue and would cut funds for agencies such as the Alabama Department of Mental Health.

"You don't have to have a state park," Gov. Bentley said at the news conference. "You don't have to have new roads. But, we have to treat people with schizophrenia. We have to help these children who have Down syndrome... We have to help real people... If we don't solve this [crisis], we are hurting people. And we're here to serve people."

In addition to Gov. Bentley, Tuerk Schlesinger, AltaPointe CEO, and Wallace Davis, VOA-SE CEO and President, shared their concerns about possible cuts. Sen. Vivian Figures shared her strong support of the governor's proposal and funding mental health initiatives. Sen. Bill Hightower also attended.



Conference presenters, from left, Hon. Tim Russell, Probate Judge from Baldwin County; Zina May, President NAMI Mobile; Dave Slawkowski, Alabama Disabilities Advocacy Program; Wallace Davis, VOASE President and CEO; and Tuerk Schlesinger, AltaPointe CEO, listen as Gov. Robert Bentley addresses a crowd of nearly 200 at BayPointe Hospital May 11.

Impact on services AltaPointe provides

An 11 percent reduction in revenue projected in a legislative budget proposal would cause catastrophic problems for AltaPointe, according to Schlesinger. "That would create a \$6.6 million cut that translates into a \$14.5 million loss in revenue when you add in federal matching funds and Medicaid dollars."

Schlesinger cited

the dire consequences of losing essential services such as inpatient hospital care, crisis response teams, bridge teams and assertive community teams all of which treat adults with the most dangerous symptoms.

"Without adequate services there is a huge public safety issue. There is a huge public health issue. And I think this state needs to address it," Schlesinger continued. "We encourage all of our patients, their families, other providers and advocates, as well as our staff members, to express to their legislators the need to continue funding mental health," Schlesinger said.

End of federal Medicaid project cuts adult psych inpatient hospital capacity

Any funding cuts to AltaPointe's revenue can affect delivery of care to patients; however, the unexpected termination April 13 of an approximate \$2 million annual allocation from Medicaid means AltaPointe can no longer provide inpatient, psychiatric hospital crisis services to individuals covered by Medicaid.

Medicaid cuts continued on page 2

Patients deserve compassionate and excellent care



Tuerk Schlesinger,
CEO

Everyone who is concerned about health and well-being has watched with uncertainty as the healthcare landscape has rapidly changed.

Providers have drawn battle lines as they compete more determinedly than ever for funding, not simply to cover their expenses, but to assure their organizations' survival. It would be shameful if during all the negotiating and positioning taking place within our nation's healthcare industry that our attention shifts away from what is our most important

principle: patients deserve and should receive compassionate, excellent care.

We expect each individual in our organization to believe deeply that this principle drives our actions. And, at AltaPointe, we will refuse to let growth and operational challenges steer us away from our main goal – to deliver the best possible service to our patients.

For most of our staff members, providing compassionate, excellent care is second nature to them. Others may not find it as easy to show they care. It is up to me to set the example that illustrates how a culture of caring feels and looks. At the same time, it is my responsibility to put into place a system that continually teaches ways to show caring and encourages us to adopt this value. *(Watch for details about new training coming soon.)*

AltaPraise recognizes customer service performance

One of the most visible ways we celebrate and encourage employees whose customer service performance surpasses expectations is through our AltaPraise program. As part of that initiative, we recognize eight employees as AltaPointe Stars of the Year. Recently, at our annual meeting, with our board members, leadership team and special guests in attendance, we honored the 2014 stars for performing extraordinary customer service.

The stories told that day were inspiring. We heard how others observed these eight individuals putting patients' needs first, how they used innovation to solve problems and break down barriers to good care, and how they asked what more they could do to help patients. What amazing examples they set for the rest of us to follow! *(See the Stars of the Year special edition of AltaNews at AltaPointe.org.)*

For AltaPointe staff members...

We know many of you perform extraordinary customer service; yet we often may not know who you are or the specifics of what you

are doing. We want to know more. When we receive AltaPraises with details of unselfish, caring acts, we can acknowledge the good works of these employees. When our corporate leaders read these submissions, we are encouraged and enjoy acknowledging those staff members who extend extraordinary customer service. *(Go to AltaPointe.org/altapraise for more info.)*

AltaPointe also works hard to provide excellent customer service by developing new programs and services to meet newly identified unmet needs in the communities we serve. For instance, we quickly expanded BayView Professional Associates recently to provide services to patients who suddenly were left with no provider when Alabama Psychiatric Services closed its doors.

Our leaders and staff members worked nonstop making preparations to provide services to these individuals. Within two weeks, the behind-the-scenes work was accomplished so these patients could receive the services they deserved.

In this issue of *AltaNews*, you will read accounts of our staff members caring extraordinarily – putting on a prom for kids that rarely have the chance to feel special, counseling kids inside their schools to help prevent emotional issues from becoming unmanageable, creating a canteen within the walls of a hospital so patients can purchase items that make them feel normal, and learning new ways to manage patients' and residents' anger and difficult behaviors by using comfort versus control.

We remain steadfast to our goal of delivering more and better services even though the landscape for healthcare is changing. In April, we learned that federal Medicaid dollars we counted on to help cover inpatient hospital services for adult psychiatric patients had been depleted. In addition, we may have to plan for reduced revenue from the State's general budget. *(See page one.)*

The old reimbursement methods may be disappearing and causing major uncertainties. And, providers with operational challenges are adapting business approaches like they may have never done.

So you may be asking, "What isn't changing?" The one thing that has not and will not change is how we care for patients. It bears repeating: These patients deserve and should receive compassionate, excellent care. Because it is vital that our staff members understand and carry out this charge, and just in case my message has not been clear, let me say it this way: Caring for patients is our top priority. Please help me spread the word.

Medicaid cuts continued from page 1

A three-year demonstration project, the "Medicaid Emergency Psychiatric Demonstration" (MEPD), funded by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) in Washington, DC, closed nearly three months earlier than AltaPointe administration had expected. Waiver of a federal law was granted as part of this project to allow AltaPointe's free-standing hospitals to provide this previously prohibited treatment.

Beginning in 2012, the CMS program covered the majority of Medicaid adult inpatient, psychiatric hospital services at BayPointe Hospital in Mobile and EastPointe Hospital in Daphne.

"AltaPointe already provides nearly \$8 million annually in unreimbursed inpatient hospital services," Tuerk Schlesinger, AltaPointe CEO, said. "A hit from such a large payer as Medicaid will affect our ability to serve this significant number of indigent patients."

As a result of the project's closing, the BayPointe adult inpatient hospital program was moved into EastPointe Hospital. According to Schlesinger, a priority with this decision was to maintain the employment of staff members whose positions may have been affected by the Medicaid cuts.

BayView expands services, moves to two new locations

BayView Professional Associates has expanded its staff and service provision, moved its Mobile office from 501 N. Bishop Lane and opened a second location in Fairhope at 24190 US 98. The impetus for these changes was the closing of Alabama Psychiatric Services and the need for its nearly 10,000 patients living in this region for a new provider.



Olivia Nettles, Children's Outpatient and BayView Professional Associates Clinical Director, left, and Lesley-Ann Browning, BayView Practice Manager, work together to bring the new expanded team and offices online.

AltaPointe's leadership acted quickly and simultaneously to recruit, hire and train former APS staff members; contract with commercial insurance carriers that APS patients had used; arrange to move into the vacated APS location; and carry out a myriad of other tasks related to expanding BayView.

"Our staff worked nonstop beginning with the APS announcement on Feb. 6 so that we could begin seeing patients Feb. 26 at the Montlimar location," Tuerk Schlesinger, AltaPointe CEO, said of the quick transition of APS to BayView. "We wanted to make

sure these former APS patients could receive care with little or no lapse in service."

BayView now employs more than 50 staff members that work in two offices and includes eight full-time and five part-time psychiatrists, seven full-time and one part-time certified registered nurse practitioner (CRNP), one physician's assistant (PA), five registered nurses (RN), 13 licensed therapists and 15 admissions and office professionals.

BayView opened its doors in 1983 as the private counseling arm of the former Mobile Mental Health Center. Its Employee Assistance Program (EAP) has served hundreds of businesses as their professional counseling service provider in the Mobile Bay region.

CarePointe, AltaPointe's access-to-care call center, has designated (251) 660-2360 for first-time BayView patients to call to schedule initial appointments.



BayView Professional Associates' new Mobile office address is 1015 Montlimar Drive.

Construction nears completion on Admin-A and B

In Mobile, building crews continue to work on the construction of an additions to AltaPointe Administration Buildings A and B located at 5750 Southland Drive.

The main focus of the work in Admin-A is an expansion of the Board Room, which faces the small lake that lies between this building and BayPointe Hospital. Other improvements include a more welcoming main entrance and reorganization of the main hallway. Admin-A houses offices for the AltaPointe Administration and Information Systems departments.

Admin-B improvements include an addition that will provide much-needed office space for the AltaPointe Finance & Accounting Department.



With additions nearly complete on AltaPointe Admin-A Building, above, the changes to the lake-facing rooms are apparent when contrasted with a photo of the former exterior appearance, bottom right.



People & Positions at the Pointe



John Pace, IV

John “Jay” Pace, IV CHFP has joined AltaPointe as the EastPointe Hospital Assistant Administrator. Pace earned a bachelor’s degree in economics from Auburn University and a master’s in business administration degree from Spring Hill College. His experience in healthcare includes serving as the business office director and assistant controller for Charter Academy, an 87-bed, long-term adolescent facility. Pace also served as director of patient business services for Mobile Infirmiry Medical Center, director of ancillary operations for ProData Systems, Inc. and vice president of implementation operations for SSI Group.

Noel Andrews MBA, CPA, has joined AltaPointe in the new position of assistant controller in the Finance and Accounting Office. Andrews most recently worked for IWR Physical Therapy where he was the chief financial officer. He earned a bachelor’s degree in accounting and a master’s degree in business administration degree from the University of Mobile. Andrews will be responsible for the implementation of API Business Analytics and will oversee purchasing and other accounting functions.



Noel Andrews

Emily Edinger has joined AltaPointe as a human resource specialist. She earned a bachelor’s degree in human resource management and business management from Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio. While attending Wright, Edinger worked as a human resource/legal intern at Antioch University Midwest.

Charles “Chuck” Harvey has joined AltaPointe as the corporate compliance and credentialing coordinator in administration. Harvey’s primary responsibilities include organization-wide monitoring of corporate compliance as well as collection and maintenance of data records for reporting and training purposes. Harvey earned a bachelor’s degree in liberal arts from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock.



Tammy Ruffin

Tammy Ruffin has joined AltaPointe as the new contracts administrator, a position that was developed to increase efficiency and management of AltaPointe’s new role in the Alabama Region E Regional Care Organization. Ruffin has a background in the financial industry focused in strategic planning, analysis and compliance. She earned a bachelor’s degree in international studies from Spring Hill College.

Donna Glover has joined AltaPointe as the public relations specialist, a newly created position that is responsible for managing production of publications, tracking projects, assisting with special events and the daily operations of the office of public relations. Glover has more than 25 years of experience in public relations,

including working with local full-service hospitals and their various healthcare practices. Glover earned a bachelor’s degree in communication arts from the University of South Alabama.

Bridget Barnett, CRNP, has joined the BayView Professional Associates clinical staff. She graduated from the University of South Alabama (USA) earning a bachelor’s degree and a master’s degree in nursing. Barnett is board certified as a psychiatric nurse specialist and mental health nurse practitioner through the American Nurses Credentialing Center and is credentialed to treat patients of all ages. She also is recognized as a practicing CRNP by the Alabama Board of Nursing. Barnett received the Director’s Award in community mental health, USA’s Clinical Excellence Award in her graduate program and the National Health Service Corps Scholarship and Loan Repayment Program for Health Care Providers who serve in their respective communities.

Anita Clark, RN, has joined BayView Professional Associates as nurse manager. Clark graduated from Gadsden State Jr. College with an associate’s degree in nursing. She worked in pediatric intensive care and rehab nursing before earning a bachelor’s degree from the University of South Alabama. Clark has experience as a registered nurse in both inpatient and outpatient psychiatric and substance settings

Candace Perry, MD, has joined AltaPointe as a psychiatrist working at EastPointe Hospital. She is a graduate of the University of Mississippi School of Medicine and earned a bachelor’s degree from Agnes Scott College in Georgia. Perry completed her psychiatry residency at Mayo Graduate School of Medicine where she served as the associate chief resident of education and supervised junior residents in weekly chief’s resident’s clinic. She is board certified in psychiatry and psychosomatic medicine and most recently worked as a staff psychiatrist with the US Department of Veteran Affairs.

Shana Evans, CRNP, has joined the AltaPointe Adult Outpatient Services clinical staff. She earned a bachelor’s degree in psychology from the University of Connecticut and a master’s degree in nursing from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Evans’ experience includes work as an emergency department nurse and most recently as a psychiatric nurse with the VA Medical Center in Birmingham.

Cher Livingston, CRNP, has joined the clinical staff at AltaPointe Children’s Outpatient Services. She earned a bachelor’s degree and physician’s assistant certification from Long Island University/The Brooklyn Hospital Center in Brooklyn, New York. Livingston has worked for Beth Israel Medical Center in Manhattan in the surgery department with both general surgery and orthopedic surgery teams. In New York, she also has experience in family medicine and nursing homes. Before joining AltaPointe, she worked at Mobile Infirmiry for IPC.

Bravo! Bravo!



Heather Joseph

Heather Joseph, AltaPointe Chief Administrative Officer, has been invited to serve as a member of the Provider Outreach & Education (POE) Advisory Group by the Cahaba Government Benefit Administrators, LLC. The primary goal of the POE Advisory Group is to assist Cahaba GBA in the creation, implementation and review of provider education strategies and efforts. Cahaba GBA is designated as the Jurisdiction 10 Part A/Part B Medicare Administrative Contractor for Alabama, Georgia and Tennessee by the federal government's Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

Anitra Jarreau, RN, completed the necessary training and testing to become a Medication Assistant Train the Trainer (MATT) registered nurse. Jarreau may now train other nurses to become MAS nurses within our organization.

Darnesha S. Lewis, MS, a therapist with the BayPointe Female Residential Unit, recently graduated Summa Cum Laude with a master of science degree in general psychology from Grand Canyon University.

Mary Caron Downing, MBA, human resources specialist, is now a certified Professional in Human Resources. The certification demonstrates mastery of the technical and operational aspects of HR practices and U.S. laws and regulations.

Miranda Goodwin, a Bridge Team therapist, recently passed the Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) exam.



Edward Turner

Congratulations to **Edward Turner, RN**, a 2015 Edith Mitchell Health Initiative Award recipient. Turner received the award for his work as a "Pioneering Health Educator." The award honors nurses who have made outstanding contributions in their field. Turner was presented the award at a gala April 10 on the campus of Bishop State Community College in Mobile.

Turner has worked in healthcare for more than two decades. He currently works at EastPointe Hospital.

Transitional age residential services held an essay contest as part of The Grafton Model that focuses on trauma-informed care. Behavioral staff members at two locations were asked to express their definition of comfort versus control when caring for residents.

Anika Beamon (Lott Road) and **Sabrina Davis** (Three Notch) won first place for their essays.

Congratulations to **Mae McClure** and **Rusty Hickey**, both of whom retired recently from AltaPointe. McClure, who retired after 30 years of service, worked in many areas of the company, the past

seven years as a clerk in the medical records department at the Gordon Smith location. Hickey joined AltaPointe as part of the merger with Baldwin County Mental Health. He retired in March after 12 years as a therapist.



Red Sash Award winners

AltaPointe is delighted to announce that it has six Red Sash Award recipients for the 2014-15 University of South Alabama College of Medicine academic year. Congratulations to, **seated from left, Dr. James Hart, Dr. Sandra Parker and Dr. Bogan Brooks; and standing, from left, Dr. Bradley Sadler, Dr. Praveen Narahari and Dr. William Billett.** Red Sashes are awarded to the faculty members who have had the most meaningful input into their medical education by USA's College of Medicine Senior Class. The chosen faculty members wear a scarlet sash over their academic regalia and receive special recognition at the USA College of Medicine Honors Convocation this May.

Deon Gatson, COP assistant coordinator of case management services, and **Amanda Boyington**, COP Fairhope children's case manager, have recently received certification in Mental Health First Aid and are now certified MHFA instructors.

As part of AltaPointe's continued commitment to safety and compliance, **Robert Carlock, III, MBA, CHE**, director of Environment of Care and AltaPointe's safety officer, has successfully completed the OSHA 30-Hour Compliance Certificate course.

Patricia Reed, RN, charge nurse on the EastPointe Hospital ICF unit, graduated May 8 with her bachelor of science in nursing degree from Troy State University. Reed met academic requirements for her degree while working full-time at EastPointe and caring for her parents.

AltaPointe introduces trauma-informed care via The Grafton Model

Just as winter gives way to spring, the care we provide for people coping with mental illness is undergoing a transformation, too. Caring compassionately for people who are in the throes of their disease is a tough yet delicate task. That is why AltaPointe has embraced The Grafton Model of trauma-informed treatment that utilizes a comfort versus control approach to care.

AltaPointe has contracted with Grafton Integrated Health Network, a private nonprofit organization based in Virginia, to provide training and consultation of The Grafton Model, which has been recognized by national organizations such as The National Council for Behavioral Health and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

The goal is to develop a trauma-informed approach to care that encourages staff members to employ positive treatment strategies, which minimize using restrictive practices and generate positive outcomes.

Trauma is a risk factor in nearly all behavioral health and substance use disorders. In public behavioral health, more than 90 percent of clients have experienced trauma.

– The National Council

Grafton Champions

BayPointe Hospital and Children's Outpatient Services Transitional Age, a residential program for adolescents, are pilots for The Grafton Model at AltaPointe. **Brandon Swaim**, a transitional age therapist, is one of 12 Grafton Champions, a select group of staff members charged with pioneering this new way of care.

"I believe The Grafton Model will push AltaPointe into a new generation of relationship-driven care and exceptional outcomes for our patients," Swaim said. "As with any paradigm shift in society, this will take time and effort from all staff members. Consistent goals will help motivate the staff to focus on understanding the person rather than just the illness."

Transitional Age program initiates case conceptualization

Swaim cares for patients ages 16 to 22 living in AltaPointe's transitional age housing where the goal of The Grafton Model is to reduce law enforcement contacts, elopements and peer-to-peer aggression. As a therapist for a population that requires a lot of attention, Swaim says he is excited about his role in this initiative.

"Accurate and helpful case conceptualization can be a foundation for improving staff communication patterns," Swaim said. "Therapists can also assist in educating staff on consumer diagnoses, histories and behavioral patterns."

Swaim developed books on each trans age resident to be used for case conceptualization, which takes a patient's interview data to create a model describing the patient's symptoms to help determine a plan of action for treatment.



Grafton Champions play an important role in the success of integration of the model at BayPointe. Champions include, front row from left: Jennifer Burns, Anika Beamon, Sabrina Davis, Yvens Melidor, Tina Frank, Andrea Bozeman and Darnesha Lewis; back row from left: David McCarter, Percy Randall, Dean Logan, Brandon Swaim, Donald McGraw and Shantell Thomas.

"After we started learning The Grafton Model and using case conceptualization, I had a wonderful weekend with the boys living at Lott Road," **Sabrina Davis**, Three Notch transitional age behavioral aide, said. "I enjoyed my time with them."

Trans age staff members are being recognized for using comfort versus control, and transitional age residents are being rewarded for good behavior. The hope is to increase pride and positive accomplishments among staff and residents rather than focusing solely on the negative.

BayPointe rolls out The Grafton Model

BayPointe Hospital is also seeing positive results with The Grafton Model, according to **Jack Lungu**, hospital administrator, who says staff members are engaged and open to restraint alternatives.

"Our staff has been very creative coming up with ways to increase comfort versus control and increase our knowledge of trauma-informed care," Lungu said. "With this knowledge as our fundamental belief, our approaches with our patients will change, thereby reducing the number of restraints at BayPointe."

Lungu says already there has been a decrease in seclusion and restraint. Each accomplishment is celebrated with a pizza party or special treats for units with no restraints. 'Comfort coupons' are awarded to staff members observed providing comfort over control. BayPointe's residential unit reports that residents are encouraging one another.

Jennifer Burns, LeMoyne School coordinator, says case conceptualization cards with information about a student's history help the staff be more "forgiving" of the child. The information provides guidance on how to work with the student, ideas for coping skills, thoughts on what could be triggering the behavior and teaching communication techniques.

"All of the patients within our building have experienced some form of trauma, even if coming into the building is their first experience of trauma," Burns said. "It is time we recognize this and provide services accordingly. I hope this initiative not only brings more awareness to trauma-informed care for the patients, but also for the staff so that everyone becomes more aware and sensitive to each other's needs."

Change in culture

The change in culture hasn't been easy, but the Grafton Champions say they are willing to put in the work to make it work.

"I want to improve the culture of AltaPointe and BayPointe by making it a safer place for patients and staff," **Shantell Thomas**, BayPointe behavioral aide, said. "As a champion, I will do my best to encourage my coworkers to be open-minded and willing to try new things."

In the US, 70 percent of adults have experienced some type of traumatic event at least once in their lives. That's 223.4 million people.

Source: The National Council

Complementary training

Angela Ferrara, BayPointe Hospital Assistant Administrator, was one of 13 AltaPointe staff members who attended the "Trauma Informed Care, Train the Trainer" conference sponsored by the Alabama Association of Child Care Agencies (AACCA) earlier this year.

"That training introduced the trauma-informed care and explained its impact on treatment," Ferrara said. "It dovetailed nicely with Grafton's training that explained the biology of trauma and how experiencing trauma changes the brain." For instance, a child may be so affected by trauma that brain development is altered. "These children, or adults, may be incapable of doing what they're asked to do simply because of the exposure to trauma," she said. "That's an important fact for everyone to understand."

The major difference in the current approaches to behavioral health treatment and the trauma-informed care approach is that employees at every level of care, not just the clinical professionals, are included in the education and training.

"If the behavioral staff, the parents, and anyone that comes in contact with the patients day in and day out, are educated and understand what's happening inside the individual that has been exposed to trauma, it will open their minds to the reasons for those behaviors," Ferrara said.

The Grafton training broke down the information presented into simple pieces and helped the staff members to view patients in a different way. "It helps the non-professionals see that some behaviors are not based on what they may have previously thought were controllable reasons," Ferrara continued, "but, that patients behave the way they do because of physiological reasons."

At BayPointe, this new approach has reiterated the importance of reporting details at shift changes, Ferrara said. "The case conceptualization makes the patient a real person and someone with whom our staff members might identify, thus making the care more effective."

Program Progress

Adult Outpatient Program

Intensive Day Treatment graduates 'take it one day at a time'

"Take it one day at a time," that is what everyone in a treatment program is told. Recent graduates of the Intensive Day Treatment (IDT) program, Markieta Russell and David Youngblood, have been doing just that.

The graduating patients gave speeches recognizing their journeys and saying how proud they were to have proved to themselves able to push through hard times, deal with symptoms and learn how to cope. The next step for the graduates will be attending the Rehab Day Program (RDP) on the AltaPointe Zeigler Campus.

Three individuals who were promoted were acknowledged for making significant effort toward their treatment plan goals. They have accepted additional responsibilities as "peer support" to help new patients get more familiar with IDT and "being there" to listen when others need to talk.

IDT is designed to meet the therapeutic needs of adults age 18 and older who live with mental illness. The program provides a therapeutic setting for individuals with a psychiatric diagnosis and moderately disabling symptoms that require an intensive setting. Indications of these symptoms include limited insight or understanding into the diagnosis, medication or repeated hospitalizations. The IDT program is primarily utilized by group or foster home residents. Individuals living in the community do not qualify for participation in the group.

IDT staff members include **Janet Langley**, assistant director of adult outpatient and the IDT program supervisor; **Jennifer Maxey**, coordinator; **Paul R. Swaim**, therapist and team leader; and **Alecia Jones, Felette Hall** and **Sylvia Lambert**, behavioral aides.

Adult Residential Services

ARS Baldwin restructures

AltaPointe Adult Residential Services (ARS) Baldwin has recently restructured duties dividing responsibilities between an assistant coordinator, to handle the group home administrative duties, and a residential assistant, to oversee other resident-focused duties.

The restructuring has provided new opportunities for two managers. **Courtney Wikle**, who has been with the company seven years, was promoted to assistant coordinator over Bradford, a 16-bed medical group home, and Hillside, 13-bed behavioral group home.

Gerette Bednarz, who has been with the company four years, was promoted to assistant coordinator at Southern Woods, a 14-bed residential care home,



AltaPointe Adult Residential Services staff members gather at Bradford House to pose with their manager, Melissa Ellis, center. They are standing, from left, Gerette Bednarz, Ellis, Wendy Hogan; and seated, from left, Tracy Gradford and Courtney Wikle.

and McMillan, a three-bed specialized home. Both employees have shown great leadership and a positive attitude in their interactions.

The restructure opened two resident assistant positions in the ARS Baldwin group homes. We are still in the process of interviewing for a residential assistant for McMillan to be supervised by Bednarz. The new Bradford/Hillside group home residential assistant is **Wendy Hogan**. Hogan was promoted from her position as a behavioral aide. She recently completed a bachelor of science degree in psychology, graduating with honors from the University of Phoenix. She is currently attending Walden University in a doctoral program in clinical psychology.

Children and teens enjoy 'perfect' night at BayPointe's inaugural spring dance

BayPointe Hospital held its inaugural Spring Formal April 2 for 33 children and adolescents, ranging in age from 7 to 17, who currently are patients in the residential treatment program.

The dance was held in the BayPointe courtyard under a white tent decorated with a handcrafted floral feature that hung from the center of the ceiling. A dance floor gave the dancers a place to waltz or fast dance.

"From the personal flowers for each child to the twinkling lights, formal photos to the heavy hors d'oeuvres, the night was perfect – and so were the children," said **Carla Ladnier**, assistant director of BayPointe Residential Treatment Program. "The children were very appreciative, and the behavior the following day continued to be excellent."

Preparation for the big night began months ago and included teaching the children how to waltz, selecting a special outfit from the many donated items, going to the salon for haircuts and receiving makeovers by Twanna McCants Howell, a Mary Kay representative, and by some of the BayPointe therapists.



Years in the making

"The educational staff has talked about doing a dance or prom for several years, but this is the first time we have attempted to pull off a formal event of this magnitude," **Jennifer Webb**, teacher, said.

Webb says many of the children in the residential program do not have the same opportunities that other kids have in their regular schools.

"They hear about dances, proms, and homecoming activities and realize they are missing out on these special events," Webb added. "Additionally, when interacting with the kids on special activities and field trips, teachers have noticed that the kids often do not know how to act or what to do in a more formal setting."

Many residents have not been taught basic standards of etiquette and have had limited exposure to the world beyond home and treatment programs.

BayPointe staff members believed it was important for the children to have 'normal childhood' opportunities that will teach them to the proper conduct in social settings so they will be more successful adults.

Nutcracker Charity Ball donates \$10,000 to begin fundraiser for BayPointe playground

BayPointe Hospital was the beneficiary of \$10,000 raised by the Mobile Ballet from its 11th Annual Nutcracker Charity Ball held at the Mobile Convention Center Dec. 29, 2014. The funds will go to help build a new playground for the children at BayPointe.

"One of the unique aspects of the Nutcracker Charity Ball is its focus on raising funds for worthy children's charities, as well as recognizing outstanding young women and their families," Karen Kennedy, Mobile Ballet's development director and managing director, said.

Jack Lungu, BayPointe Hospital Administrator, attended the ball, a white-tie affair, and had a chance to acknowledge the generosity of the organization. "I was proud to represent BayPointe and AltaPointe and to toast the debutantes, their families, and the ballet board in appreciation for all they have done for us this past year," Lungu explained.

Each year, the Mobile Ballet Board uses a formal application and selection process to choose a children's charity to receive the proceeds of the ball. In addition, Mobile Ballet's outreach and education programs receive a portion of the proceeds.

Plans for a new BayPointe playground are in the early stages "Outdoor play offers physical benefits and contributed to learning and developing coping skills," Lungu said. "This playground would be a much-needed feature to our approach to treatment."

Gulf States Engineering of Mobile has donated its time and expertise to develop preliminary designs, which integrates creative ways to generate fund-raising into the plan.



Nutcracker helps BayPointe with funds for playground

Present for the check presentation from Mobile Ballet are, from left, Karen Kennedy, Mobile Ballet Development and Marketing Director; Leslie Johnson, BayPointe Hospital marketing executive; Cindy Martin, BayPointe Hospital Assistant Administrator; Becky S. Tate, Mobile Ballet Board of Directors President; and Winthrop Corey, Mobile Ballet Artistic Director.

EastPointe Hospital

'The Canteen' – open for business at EastPointe

Every day at 3 p.m., the Canteen opens for business to EastPointe Intermediate Care Facility (ICF) patients. The Canteen opened in response to requests from patients. "They are typically lined up and waiting when it opens," Amy Conway, LPC, the IFC clinical coordinator said. "But, they have done an excellent job at demonstrating patience."

The Canteen offers a variety of snack food items, soft drinks and candy, and some specialized treats for patients with diabetes. Plans are to offer personal hygiene products in the near future.



Amy Conway, LPC clinical coordinator Intermediate Care Facility, left, and Kelley Chastain, benefits specialist at the newly opened EastPointe Canteen, go over details for the new store.

In addition to providing easy access to supplies the patients want, The Canteen also gives patients an opportunity to learn how to interact with others. "When they leave ICF they will be going into the community to do their own shopping," Conway explained. "This allows them to practice these skills in a safe environment."

Shopping in The Canteen also teaches some basic money management skills. "Each patient receives a specific dollar amount each week," Conway said. "They have to make sure it lasts the whole week."

Children's Outpatient Services

Demand for in-school therapy results in program expansion

Baldwin County Schools Update – Due to an increased demand for its school-based therapist program, AltaPointe has increased the number of in-school therapists to 12 and now provides services in 36 Baldwin County schools.

Therapists are placed in all Bay Minette, Robertsdale, Foley and Gulf Shores/Orange Beach schools. Plans include placing a therapist in every public school in Baldwin County, as needed. AltaPointe also has added three case managers to its treatment teams to allow the provision of more comprehensive treatment.

Mobile County Schools Update – In Mobile County, AltaPointe has nine full-time, school-based therapists and three part-time therapists working with students in 29 schools of the Mobile County, Chickasaw, Saraland and Satsuma public school systems.

AltaPointe has begun working with the United Way to develop a grant that would provide funding for more school-based therapist positions, which in turn would allow AltaPointe to cover more schools.

In addition, AltaPointe has partnered with The Bridge to allow that group to work more closely with high school students and allow AltaPointe to focus on middle and elementary age children.

Both Baldwin and Mobile school-based therapist programs are participating with the Alabama Department of Mental Health and the Alabama Department of Education on the collection of data from the school-based therapist services. In addition, AltaPointe is developing its own data system to measure outcomes that will show the benefits of school-based therapists.

Environment of Care Department

Extreme heat drill helps prepare for actual event

On March 26, temperatures exceeded 100 degrees with high humidity. Well, at least that is how the AltaPointe Environment of Care (EOC) high-heat event drill scenario began. Staff members' responses to this drill will help EOC develop a plan for an extreme-heat event, something that could very well happen along the Gulf Coast.

In case of an emergency such as this, there are several things that would need to be addressed, including communications, resources, assets, safety,



security, utilities management, staff responsibilities and patient clinical services.

"Holding this type of drill allows us to fully understand what steps are needed to ensure the safety of our patients and the employees at all of our facilities," Robert Carlock, EOC Director, said. "If this had been an actual emergency, information would have been available via radio, television news, the employee call line (660-2399), and on AltaPointe.org, our corporate website."

Office professionals make the first customer care impression

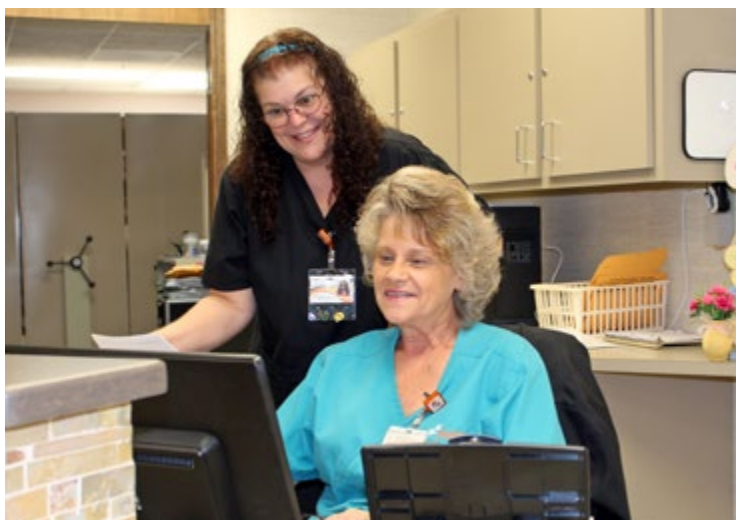
As patients enter the doors of AltaPointe, office professionals are the first faces to set the scene for a positive customer care experience. The work of the office professional is beyond performing tasks efficiently, it's about creating an experience that makes every patient feel welcomed and valued.

"I want everyone who comes through the door, regardless if it's their first time, tenth time or fiftieth time, to feel at home," said **Nancy Grant**, office professional at the AltaPointe Fairhope Adult Outpatient Services office. "It doesn't matter why they are here. I want them to be comfortable."

Throughout the day, Grant's tasks are to notify therapists of patient arrivals, answer phone calls, scan and fax documents and complete intakes among other office duties. But, she says her favorite part of the job is talking to the patients with whom she connects by asking about their day and listening.

"It's important to me to see the patient smile because I've done or said something to make their visit better," Grant said. When they express having a bad day, she tells them tomorrow is going to be better. "It's the little things that make them feel comfortable and make a big impression," she said.

If it's early in the morning, she offers them coffee or water. Before moving to adult outpatient, Grant worked in the AltaPointe Children's Outpatient Services office where she would keep a goody basket for the kids. "When they would come in for the first time and each time thereafter, I would make sure they picked something



Office professionals Nancy Grant and Christine Stacey at AltaPointe Fairhope Adult Outpatient Services prepare for patients to arrive.

from the goody basket. That way the kids had something to look forward to upon arrival for their next visit."

Whether child or adult, Grant views her role in the patient experience as helping to put patients at ease while they wait to be seen. Grant supports a number of therapists, the Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Team, vocational rehab and the nurse practitioner. "I've found that patients want to know who you are, especially if it's their first time at AltaPointe," she said. "We usually don't know their story or why they are here, but getting to know the first face of AltaPointe relaxes them."

The 'power of presence'

Through the power of presence, meaning being present for each customer is what distinguishes a satisfactory experience to one that exceeds expectations. It is then that office professionals can make patients feel their care and concern.

"A parent was irate with me one day because her daughter's prescription ran out," said **Susan Parsons**, office professional at the AltaPointe Bay Minette Outpatient Services office. "She was a spitfire, but I know if we are pleasant, it calms the person down. I kept a smiling face as I helped her and before she left, she calmed down. Until this day, I have not gotten any cross words from her."

Parsons notices patients' body language, tone of voice and facial expressions to help her better interact with them. She recalls a gentleman who arrived irritable. Her greeting and kind words changed his demeanor, and as he was leaving the office he came to the window and told her to have a good day.

"Whatever attitude or impression we give is how patients see the entire organization," Parsons said. "Everything has to be in an upward mode."

She does her best to solve problems and follow through on meeting the patient's needs. "I have got to help people. At the end of the day, I want to feel that my compassion, care and a smile have helped brighten someone's day."

Although a typical day for an office professional is usually nonstop with fulfilling tasks, what patients remember most is the experience. Tasks may be the same each time, but the feeling patients get once they enter the doors is what makes the difference.

"My expectation for the front desk office professionals is that they to treat everyone with dignity and respect," said **Ellen Parker**, practice manager for AltaPointe in Baldwin County. "Their role is so important because they are the first impression and, in some cases, the face of the organization. We are to be kind, considerate, compassionate and helpful in all circumstances."



Susan Parsons, office professional at the AltaPointe Bay Minette Outpatient Services, greets callers with a smile.

Match Day 2015 brings shouts of joy



AltaPointe physician W. Bogan Brooks, III, MD, reacts to the announcement that a University of South Alabama Department of Psychiatry student matched with Harvard University School of Medicine. Also celebrating is Sandra Parker, MD, AltaPointe Chief Medical Officer, at right.

AltaPointe physicians who serve as faculty and administration for the University of South Alabama's College of Medicine-Department of Psychiatry (DOP) came together with medical students at USA's Match Day event April 13. This day is the moment graduating medical students learn if they have been successful in securing a residency position where they will continue their next medical training phase. Of the 74 medical students receiving matches, 10 had chosen psychiatry, an increase of 50 percent over 2014.

"We were so excited to see such a large number of medical students entering the field of psychiatry this year," Luke Engeriser, MD, AltaPointe Deputy Chief Medical Officer and DOP Residency Training Director, said.

"This is a great testament to the dedication of our faculty, fellows and residents to medical student teaching."

Faculty are involved with the medical students in various ways, including, interviewing them during their application to medical school, meeting them during orientation week, serving as competency coaches, teaching during the neuroscience module and clinical and didactic teaching during their third and fourth years of medical school.

"Our psychiatrists really enjoy and even have fun while treating their patients; the medical students see how intellectually challenging, fulfilling and fun working with psychiatric patients can be," Sandra Parker, MD, Chief Medical Officer and vice chair of USA COM-Department of Psychiatry, said. "This generation of young physicians is more concerned about helping others and having a good work-life balance than previous generations and that makes psychiatry a perfect choice for medical students when they match."

Media coverage, community involvement propel AltaPointe as a committed community partner

AltaPointe and its staff have been making news across the state and spreading the good word about our services in a variety of venues between January and the end of April.

Articles published with various print and online news outlets praised AltaPointe for a successful merger with Baldwin County Mental Health, informed readers about the BayView Professional Associates expansion and opening of a second office, and documented the work our adult outpatient staff members perform in the Mobile Bay region.

CEO Tuerk Schlesinger has been interviewed numerous times most recently by Business Alabama Magazine for its April 2015 issue on the state of mental health in Alabama. Schlesinger and AltaPointe Chief Medical Officer Sandra Parker, MD, appeared on local television news following the closure of Alabama Psychiatric Services (APS).

When the federal Medicaid funds for inpatient psychiatric hospital services for adults ended April 13, Schlesinger was interviewed by two TV stations and one newspaper.

Bradley Sadler, MD, provided expert comments to WKRG TV5, FOX10 and Local 15, on the dangerous effects of the illegal drug Spice and the causes of mental illness. Edward Finn, MD, was interviewed by Fox10 about how to talk with and help children who are grieving the loss of a loved one or friend.

AltaPointe has participated in more than 12 community outreach projects in 2015 including health fairs, behavioral healthcare conferences and speaking engagements, all to fulfill its mission of promoting the wellness and recovery of people living with mental illness.

CarePointe™ CORNER

CarePointe calls are showing no sign of slowing down. Ingrid Hartman, CarePointe Assistant Director, says calls increased from 3,691 calls in February 2014 to 6,232 for February 2015. The average monthly calls to CarePointe through February 2015 were 4,170.

Hartman attributes the surge in calls to the closing of Alabama Psychiatric Services. "Our call volume increased when APS started closing its facilities and referring patients to other providers," Hartman said. "Calls to CarePointe related to APS were 50 to 70 a day."

CarePointe has also added a new line for former APS patients and any new BayView patient to meet their counseling and psychiatric services needs. Former APS patients and all new BayView consumers should call (251) 660-2360 to schedule appointments.

CarePointe serves AltaPointe's two hospitals, nine outpatient clinics and 76 programs. It also supports psychiatric services for six acute care hospitals in Mobile and Baldwin counties as well as referrals to four state psychiatric hospitals.

Think about this... Why They Were Successful

Because they were cheerful when it was difficult to be cheerful,

And patient when it was difficult to be patient,

And because they pushed on when they wanted to be still,

And kept silent when they wanted to talk,

And were agreeable when they wanted to be disagreeable,

That was all. It was quite simple and always will be.

- Anonymous

Courtesy of Anne Chipman,
AltaPointe Shining Star of 2014

