Transition and Occupancy of the New Zucker Hillside Hospital
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Problem: The Zucker Hillside Hospital 221-bed aging facility was out of date and needed to be replaced. Person centered, evidence-based clinical requirements informed design decisions resulting in a new hospital offering an environment that adapts to changing behavioral populations.

Evidence: There is a paucity of literature regarding transition to, or opening of, a new inpatient behavioral health/psychiatric hospital.

Strategy: John Kotter’s theory of change management informed the process of changing the culture necessary for staff adaptation to new approaches in treatment and space utilization.

Practice Change: An inter-professional Transition and Occupancy (T&O) Steering Committee began one year prior to the physical move into the new facility. As transition became imminent, staff was invited to the T&O meetings to make shared decisions about equipment, clinical programming and the logistics of moving over 130 patients in one day.

Evaluation: Transition to the new facility was successful. 131 patients were moved from 9 units in 6 buildings to 10 units in 2 buildings in 7 hours without incident.

Results: Post-occupancy review data comparing performance metrics for the new facility with those from the existing facility will be monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis. Preliminary data has shown a decrease in restraints and assaults and an increase in staff satisfaction.

Recommendations: It takes extreme planning, execution of the plan, and commitment from leadership and all of the staff in the hospital to make a Transition this large successful. Early input from clinicians and continuous, gracious pressure and relentless optimism for all involved are required.

Lessons Learned: In the days following the transition, there were some engineering and environmental issues identified in the physical plant itself, but patient care was never compromised. In hindsight, more rigorous testing of the environment prior to occupation could have helped to avoid some of the environmental/engineering issues. Staff involvement is crucial to success; with such an enormous change, buy-in is critical to achievement.

Bibliography: