



## **New Young Adult Program Meets Changing Needs of Young People**

Research shows that the more a treatment program can meet the specific needs of each individual, the more effective it will be in helping that person achieve sustained recovery.

Pavillon's senior clinical team saw the need to launch a new program this spring that focuses on the unique and changing needs of young male adults seeking treatment for addiction and alcoholism.

Because of increasing awareness of the needs of this younger generation of 18-28 year olds, Pavillon implemented a specialized track designed to effectively engage this particular group.

The Young Adults Program, currently geared toward men, meets the needs of patients who are not fully independent yet not completely dependent on anyone else.

"Treatment that can be responsive to the issues relevant to any patient group will be better received, and therefore better accepted by patients," said Steve Millette, Executive Director of Treatment Services.

Research indicates that developmental milestones, once thought to be completed by the end of adolescence, actually continue well into early adulthood.

This phenomenon is driven by the tendency for more young people to enter college, delay marriage and family, and seek "identity defining experiences" before settling into a more traditional "adult" lifestyle. People are "younger" longer and addiction is particularly damaging to this process, Millette explained.

If a young person leaves home, enters college and tries to 'launch' from the nest while developing an addictive illness, these stages of development are delayed and their issues become entwined in the recovery and treatment process. As such, the new program helps young men who are half-adult legally speaking, and half-adolescent, emotionally speaking.

The program incorporates key elements that make the services more relevant and acceptable to this group. Included is an age-specific curriculum with separate groups two days each week.

The curriculum incorporates the following elements:

- Experiential processes incorporating teams, rites of passage and life skills
- Young Adult Alumni Mentoring Program to introduce a positive peer culture
- Physical wellness/recreation
- Mapping Enhanced Counseling – an evidence-based counseling process to enhance the effectiveness of sessions with the young adult person
- Emerging Adult Developmental Assessment to guide individualized treatment and continuing care planning

"We believe parents are a particularly important aspect of treatment within this group," Millette said. Thus, family involvement is critical to effective outcomes.

The following program elements are emphasized in the Young Adults Program:

- Required family involvement
- Education about addiction, the family disease and family recovery
- Regular family meetings with the patient and counselor to address treatment engagement and change
- Emphasis on facilitating a young adult's successful transition from dependency to recovery focused independence

Note: Pavillon plans to expand the Young Adults Program to women later in the year.