Westchester Medical Center
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CENTER

ADULT UNIT WELCOME BOOK
Welcome to the Behavioral Health Center of Westchester Medical Center. Our staff is committed to providing you with outstanding care and service which is comprehensive, courteous, and compassionate. We appreciate that this time of your life may be difficult, and pledge to give you quality medical care in a friendly and supportive atmosphere.

As we get to know you and other important people in your life (i.e., family members, clinicians, community resource providers), we would like for you to become familiar with our program and daily routines. We hope that the following information will help you to have a better understanding of what you can expect during your stay.

WHAT IS THE MILIEU?

The milieu (mil-you) is the community or environment that you will be a part of while on the unit. It is a highly structured therapeutic setting that is under direct and continuous supervision by staff.

Milieu therapy is the therapeutic modality we use on all of our inpatient units to offer patients a sense of security and comfort. The formal and structured aspects of milieu therapy include therapeutic groups and programming, unit activities, unit rules, and the overall unit environment. The less structured features of the milieu include interactions that occur among patients and staff, between patients, and with visitors. Our staff makes frequent rounds to ensure the safety of all patients and the unit, and are available continuously to provide you with support and encouragement. You will find that the milieu can serve as a place to learn about yourself and practice skills that will help to prepare your for a safe and successful discharge.

THE TREATMENT TEAM

Working proactively together is a very important part of treatment. All treatment services are designated to restore patients to the
optimal level of functioning in the community, utilizing the least restrictive methods appropriate to meet the patient’s needs. We are very proud of our highly qualified and dedicated staff. The following is an overview of the roles of different team members.

**Unit Chief:** The Unit Chief a psychiatrist who is in charge of the unit. The Chief oversees all of the treatment on the unit and supervises residents and trainees during their rotations.

**Attending Psychiatrist:** The Attending Psychiatrist is a psychiatrist who will talk to you about medication options and course of treatment, including your discharge plan.

**Residents:** Westchester Medical Center is a teaching hospital and your doctor may be a psychiatry resident finishing his/her training. A resident functions as a psychiatrist and receives direct support and supervision from the assigned supervisor (a psychiatrist).

**Nursing Leadership:** The Nursing Care Coordinator (NCC) and Assistant Nursing Care Coordinator (ASNC) are the nursing leadership on the unit. They are in charge of all of the nursing staff, including the nurses and Patient Care Technicians (PCTs). They work closely with the team to ensure that safety and quality of care is provided.

**Registered Nurses and Licensed Practical Nurses (LPN):** The nurses and LPNs will conduct group therapy sessions and meet with you individually throughout the day. They will ensure that you are safe, receive your medication and education, are supported and cared for, and have someone to talk to.

**Patient Care Technicians (PCT):** The PCTs will work closely with you to provide for your daily needs, address crises should they arise, talk to you, lead group activities, and ensure safety on the unit in conjunction with the nurses.

**Mental Health Therapists:** Our licensed social workers and mental health counselors are called Mental Health Therapists here at BHC. A Mental Health Therapist will be assigned to work with you, your family, and treatment providers.

**Case Manager:** The Case Manager works closely with you and all members of the treatment team to help in coordinating your discharge plan. The case manager may speak with outside providers and agencies on your behalf to arrange for housing, aftercare services, transportation, or any other needs that you may have.

**Expressive Therapists:** Expressive Therapy groups are conducted daily. The groups are designed to help you to improve your self-esteem, reduce stress, and learn effective coping skills. These groups also help you to develop insight into your feelings and behavior.
Recreation Therapists: Recreation Therapy provides opportunities for socialization, physical activity, games, music, and arts & crafts to promote improved self-esteem, elevate mood, enhance coping skills, learn wellness activities, and develop healthy leisure interests.

TREATMENT PLANNING

Your individual physician, nurse, and a mental health therapist will be assigned to you shortly after admission. A Certified Recreation Specialist or a Licensed Creative Arts Therapist will meet with you as well. You will meet with all members of the treatment team to discuss your goals and determine your initial treatment plan. Treatment plans are reviewed and updated on a weekly basis.

This is the time to discuss your needs and concerns, why you are here, how the team can help you, and your goals for this hospitalization. Your discharge plans will begin to be discussed.

SSA AREA (SPECIFIC TO B3)

B3 is the only unit with a special area for medically compromised patients. This area holds up to 6 medical beds for those patients so they can be monitored more closely by nursing staff. Some of these patients may be bedridden, on IV medications and at risk for falls. The need for the SSA area is assessed on a daily basis by the treatment team to better serve the patient’s need.

PERSONAL CARE

Hygiene: 7:30AM-9:30AM  6:30PM-9:00PM

Patients are strongly encouraged to shower daily. Shower articles such as soap, shampoo and other toiletries are available on the unit. Relatives and friends may bring you your own personal toiletries. All personal grooming items are kept in the ADL (Activities of Daily Living) closet while not in use. A Staff member will provide you with disposable razor upon request. All shaving must be supervised by staff.
Washer/ Dryer:

A washer and dryer are available for laundering your clothes. A staff member will be happy to open the laundry room for you and provide supervision. See your specific unit for scheduled times and sign up.

Meals: Breakfast: approximately 8:30AM  
Lunch: approximately 12:30PM  
Dinner: approximately 5:00PM  
Snacks: approximately 11:00AM, 3:30PM, and 8:30PM

Coffee and tea are available prior to breakfast and at about 3:30PM.

All food and beverages must be consumed in the dining room unless otherwise directed by staff. Please note that staff is not permitted to store snacks and other food or drink items on the unit.

REST AND LEISURE

Upon admission you will be assigned a room, based upon your individual needs and safety. During your hospital stay it may be necessary to change your room due to overall patient needs on the unit. However, we will try to make you as comfortable as possible during your stay.

Establishing healthy sleep patterns are important to your recovery. As such, we encourage you to be in your room for rest and sleep by 11:00PM. With the exception of scheduled group activities, the television may be used between the hours of 7:30AM and 11:00 PM.

TELEPHONE CALLS

There are pay phones available for incoming and outgoing calls between the hours of 7:00AM and 11:00 PM, with the exception of scheduled unit activities. If you are unable to make phone calls due to lack of funds, please ask a staff member to help you to make your call.

Patients are permitted to make two [2] phone calls per day from the PCT desk. Additional calls are permitted at staff discretion. We ask for you to please limit each call to no more than 10 minutes. This allows all members of the community to have shared access to phones.
VALUABLES

For your own benefit and safety, personal belongings should be kept to a minimum and will be checked by nursing when you are admitted. We generally advise you not to keep valuables with you. Please send home excessive clothing. Items such as cash, phone, electronics, jewelry, ID/credit cards and other valuables will be sent to the hospital safe by security. Receipts are keep in you chart and available upon discharge.

UNIT SAFETY: ITEMS NOT ALLOWED

Unit room searches are routinely conducted and as the need arise to ensure there are no dangerous objects or restricted items on the unit.

Belts/suspenders, hoodies/pants with drawstrings, razors, neckties, pocketbooks, cigarettes, lighters, matches, glass, mirrors, metal, aerosol cans, sharp objects, spiral notebooks, metal utensils (i.e. tweezers, nail clippers, safety pins, etc.), chewing gum, electronic devices, items that contain alcohol or harmful chemicals (i.e., mouthwash, bleach, hair dye or hair removal products), cameras, cell phones, scarves, pantyhose, Q tips, hangers, cords, batteries, bobby pins, tooth picks, heavy/steel toed boots, medications of any type, baseball caps, and doo-rags are some of the items that are not permitted on the unit. Patients are not allowed to have water bottles and soda cans in their possession. NO plastic bags are allowed on the unit. Please note that we are a peanut and tree nut free facility.

This is not an all inclusive list. Some items may or may not be permitted depending on individual and unit safety needs.

SMOKING POLICY

For your health and safety, WMC BHC is a smoke free environment. Patient Education on Smoking Cessation is offered and encouraged. Nicotine Patches can be ordered by your physician.

UNIT CLEANLINESS

Please be responsible for keeping your room and common areas of the unit neat and clean. Clothes should be kept in the cubbies that are provided in your room. Please keep your floor and window sill clear so that housekeeping may clean all rooms thoroughly.

We ask that food not be kept in your room. We request that visitors bring in food in amounts that can be consumed in one sitting due to our inability to store food and drink.
items. Please note that only decaffeinated soda is permitted. Family bringing in food should have it in non-glass containers.

In order to ensure that rooms are kept neat and safe, Environmental Safety Check is done daily and as needed by nursing staff. You may be present during these checks if you wish.

**PATIENT SAFETY AND IDENTIFICATION**

Accurate patient identification is vital to your safety. To accurately identify our patients, an identification band is placed on every patient’s wrist on admission. This band must be worn to help ensure our patients receive the correct meals, snacks, medications and treatment. We encourage you not to remove it for your own safety.

**UNIT PROGRAMMING**

Your recovery is important to us. All patients are expected to participate actively in their treatment plan. This includes participation in unit programs, activities, groups, medication, and individual and family sessions with the treatment team.

There are many types of therapy groups conducted throughout the week. A weekly schedule is posted across from the Nurses Station on each unit, and a daily schedule is posted on the unit dry-erase board.

**SOCIAL CONTACT**

This is a time to focus on your treatment issues and involvement in your therapy. Patients are encouraged to socialize in public areas. **We ask that you do NOT enter the rooms of other patients.** NO physical contact or sexual activity between any persons, patients or staff is allowed. Additionally, please be certain to respect the privacy of others at all times.

**DISCHARGE PLANNING**

Discharge planning is a vital part of patient care that begins at the time of admission and continues throughout your stay. At the time of
your discharge, the nurse will provide discharge instruction sheets that include: prescriptions for all medications, follow up appointment, a safety plan, and important contact information. We encourage you to continue in supportive and outpatient treatment to help you maintain the progress you have achieved during this hospitalization.

GRIEVANCE PROCESS AND RESOURCES FOR PATIENTS AND FAMILY

Patients and/or their family members have the right to air grievances they have concerning their treatment. Patients may speak with the clinical team, MD and administrative and clinical leaders in BHC to discuss their concerns regarding any aspect of patient care. The following additional resources are also available:
1) Behavioral Health Administration: (914) 493-1149  
2) Patient Representative for Westchester Medical Center: (914) 493-8877  
3) Mental Hygiene Legal Service: (914) 592-4275  
4) New York Office of Mental Health: (518) 474-4403  
5) NYS Commission on Quality of Care: (800) 624-4143  
6) Alliance for the Mentally Ill of Westchester: (914) 592-5458  
7) Mental Health Association’s Mental Health Conciliation Services: (914) 949-1212  
8) NYS Office of Mental Health Customer Relations Service:  
   • 1-800-597-8481  
   • 1-800-210-6456 (Spanish speaking)  
   • 1-800-597-9810 (TTD)  
   • 1-800-473-2653 (Outside of New York State)

VISITING INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES

Friends, family and significant others are an important part of patients’ lives and are welcome to visit with your consent. Our goal is to maintain a safe, secure and health promoting environment for patients, visitors, and staff. As a visitor, it is important that you assist us in helping your loved one by adhering to these guidelines.

Please note: All visitors must be over twenty-one (21) years of age. Visiting takes place in the dining room or day room on the unit, not in patient rooms. Staff may need to temporarily deny or curtail a visit due to a patient’s condition or a concern such as:
• Visitors arriving under the influence of alcohol or drugs  
• Visitors violating unit rules or disrupting unit activities  
• Patients have the right to refuse a visitor or terminate the visit
DAILY VISITING HOURS
1:30pm – 3:00pm and 6:30pm – 8:00pm

UNIT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Nursing Station</th>
<th>Pay Phones</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>(914) 493-7176</td>
<td>(914) 592-9572</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2</td>
<td>(914) 493-7184</td>
<td>(914) 592-9361, (914) 592-9595, (914) 592-9470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B3</td>
<td>(914) 493-7186</td>
<td>(914) 592-9054, (914) 592-9302</td>
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We hope that our handbook has been helpful and answered many of your questions. We are committed to providing you with the best possible patient and family centered care available. Please do not hesitate to let us know if there is anything that we can do to help you feel more comfortable during your stay.