Mike Ragain – UMC Health System

How is UMC making a positive impact in the community with mental health?

00:06

UMC participates in a variety of ways around care of patients with mental health issues. Really, if you think about it from the beginning of an episode all the way through the first part of the episode ems often will be involved in the transport of those patients. And so, UMC operates the local EMS service, and so they're very much involved on the front end, in mental health. And then, through the emergency room, we deal with mental health crisis. So patients who are either attempting suicide or unstable from a mental health standpoint may find themselves in our emergency room. And we have mental health professionals who are responsible for caring for those individuals and then planning for a disposition for them to either a mental health hospital or being released into the community with follow up. Sometimes patients have medical issues that require them to be admitted. And so a patient perhaps who has attempted suicide might end up in our ICU. And so we very much are a part of that system. And then on the receiving end, we're close partners with the star care team, locally, and they have an inpatient facility and they also have a observation facility and we help support them financially to operate that. We feel like you should choose the best partners to work together to care for patients in the community and the local mental health authority star care are experts in that field. And so we work to transition from the acute care setting into the mental health setting with them.

What is UMC's role in this initiative?

01:56

So we're one of the founding parties in that initiative, and we want to continue to work with the other parties to improve the health of our community. We identified a number of things in the report that are going to be very important to work on. And we have a part in to play in those different initiatives and want to see that improve. You know, one of the goals we have is to take great care of our community. This is an opportunity to help in that.

Why is collaboration important in addressing mental health?

02:32

40% of our patients have a comorbid mental health issue. It may be the primary issue, or maybe a secondary issue. So it's very prevalent. The resources heretofore, have not been adequate to serve the needs of our community. And the report points out a variety of those things. And no one organizations an Island, we all work together in partnership. And so it's very important that we work together to improve these issues. I think that the prime example is our partnership with star care, it has been very beneficial to help care for patients in a very effective way. In particular, the crisis stabilization unit has really put forward a very nice step forward in terms of caring for patients with serious mental illness.

Why are community partners so important?

03:30

One of the benefits of working together is that we have kind of a unified voice. And particularly when you're trying to find resources, it's very helpful to have a community voice across the whole community. All of the key players involved, saying the same thing. That unified message really helps in terms of trying to build support for mental health initiatives.