

Press Release



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Serving People with Intellectual
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HARC's Behavioral Health Clinic Receives Renewed License from State Dept of Public Health . . . with a Perfect Score

(Hartford, CT) HARC's Behavioral Health Clinic has received a renewed license with the perfect score of "no deficiencies" from the CT Department of Public Health. This renewal is based on a review of the accurate and up-to-date record-keeping of the entire HARC organization. HARC's Clinic is one of the few behavioral health clinics in the country to specialize in treating clients having the dual diagnosis of intellectual disability and mental health issues.,

HARC's Clinic, which was first licensed in 1997, was initiated to address the unique psychological, emotional and behavioral problems of people with intellectual and developmental disability who live and work in our community. Years ago, these individuals were hidden in residential facilities.

HARC's President/CEO, Dr. Stephen Becker, of Glastonbury, reflects on past misunderstandings of this specialized field of mental health. "It was common to believe that mental health problems were part of intellectual disability. This practice, later called "diagnostic overshadowing," resulted in a lack of appropriate diagnostic tools and treatment interventions to address the unique needs of this population."

There are currently 105 clients receiving treatment from the HARC's Behavioral Health Clinic, many of whom receive other services from HARC, such as day programming, and residential or employment services. The Clinic also serves clients who have no other connection to HARC: they might be living at home in the community with their families or in other residential programs, or they might have been referred to HARC's Clinic by their CT Department of Developmental Services case manager.

According to **Doreen Dusza** of West Hartford, **LPC, and Clinic Director**, "Often we are able to work with HARC residential staff on developing a behavioral

program for one of the residents of our group homes, and we are able to train the staff in the correct implementation of the program.”

Jennifer Galvan of Berlin, **MSW, and Clinical Social Worker** adds, “Our clients come to us in a variety of ways and we’re very pleased that we are able to fill a real need both in the community, and within HARC. While we see many clients individually for issues specific to them, we also conduct small group sessions focusing on a particular topic such as anger management, social skills, bereavement, relationships, and both men’s and women’s issues. We really try to tailor these small groups to include people we think will benefit from the group experience. It’s a wonderful way for many of our participants to have a chance to express their thoughts, exercise their social skills and develop friendships with others.”

The third member of the Behavioral Health Clinic team is **Dr. Carol Starr** of West Hartford, **psychiatrist and Medical Director of the Clinic**. Dr. Starr currently prescribes medication for approximately 70% of the clients seen by the Clinic. According to Dr. Starr, “Our clients represent a wide range of intellectual and cognitive capability. The work we do at HARC is so rewarding. We can make such a difference in the lives of our clients and their families.”

For more information on HARC’s Behavioral Health Clinic or to inquire about services contact the Clinic Director, Doreen Dusza, (860) 218-6017 or ddusza@harc-ct.org.

HARC is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives of people with intellectual disability and their families. It was founded in 1951 by parents of disabled children, and is now a strong advocate for civil rights and opportunities, and a major provider of clinical and supportive services which span the entire lifetime. HARC currently operates 11 group homes and condominiums and 25 supported employment sites throughout Greater Hartford. HARC is a Community Investment Partner of United Way of Central and Northeastern Connecticut and serves Greater Hartford.

Photo Caption:

**Standing left to right: Doreen Dusza of West Hartford, and Jennifer Galvan of Berlin
Seated: Dr. Carol Starr of West Hartford**