

Press Release

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Barnabas Health Ambulatory Care Center Hosts The Children's Institute To Provide Better Environment for Patients With Autism Spectrum Disorder

Livingston, NJ - Medical professionals at the Barnabas Health Ambulatory Care Center (ACC) in Livingston now have a better understanding of patients with autism spectrum disorder and how they can treat them and prevent any problems from occurring.

Val Triano and Megan Maguire, two Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBA) from The Children's Institute (TCI), a pioneer in the field of special education, presented a program on people with autism spectrum disorder at the ACC on October 21. TCI specializes in the education of preschool, elementary, middle and high school students as well as young adults ages 18-21 on the autism spectrum disorder at its campuses in Verona and Livingston. TCI also serves adults on the autism spectrum at its Center for Independence in Livingston.

A second program will be offered Nov. 11 from 3-4 p.m. at the Ambulatory Care Center.

"We are so fortunate to have TCI here to prepare our staff in various departments throughout the Ambulatory Care Center," said Susan Garrubbo, President and CEO, Barnabas Health Ambulatory Care Center. "We want to continue to provide the best care possible to all of our patients. TCI's education of our staff enables us to create a welcoming environment for the autism spectrum disorder population and their families."

The Barnabas Health Ambulatory Care Center (ACC) includes an outpatient surgery center; a full-service Breast Center; an Imaging Center; the Matthew Morahan III Health Assessment Center for Athletes; the Kogan Celiac Center; Hearing Center; Speech Center; Pain Institute; Sports and Physical Medicine Institute; a full complement of rehabilitation services; MS Comprehensive Care Center; Osteoporosis

Center; Refractive Surgery Center; Craniofacial Center; Vascular Center; and the Siegler Center for Integrative Medicine.

“We hope that this program will help individuals with autism undergoing medical procedures in any one of the centers to avoid problems,” Triano said.

Triano and Maguire also developed a comprehensive training guide for medical professionals, which they presented to all department heads at the ACC participating in the program.

“We want to provide the hospital staff with as many antecedents or preventative interventions in an effort to prevent challenging behavior from occurring,” Maguire said.

Recently, a high school student at TCI had his wisdom teeth removed at the ACC’s Ambulatory Surgery Center, Triano said. Anesthesia was needed for the procedure. A nurse from the Center contacted Triano and asked her for advice on how to make the patient’s visit as comfortable as possible.

As part of their presentation, Maguire and Triano presented a video featuring interviews with several students at TCI including the student who had his wisdom teeth removed. They also interviewed his mother to get her perspective on the situation and TCI school psychiatrist Dr. Mark Faber, who has worked with TCI’s staff and families for more than two decades. The video was made by students enrolled in the TCI Film Program.

“We need more awareness and education for doctors (about autism,)” Dr. Faber said.

“With the overwhelmingly large increase of individuals diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders especially in New Jersey, which has the highest rate of autism in the nation, there is an absolute need for increasing community awareness, the understanding of challenges and experiences for families with ASD,” Triano said.

Before their presentation, TCI Executive Director/Superintendent Dr. Bruce Ettinger spoke to ACC supervisors about TCI. “Our school has been growing in leaps and bounds,” he said. Dr. Ettinger also spoke about the growing number of children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder which went from 1 in 15,000--- years ago to one in 88 in New Jersey.

Ettinger told the 40 professionals attending the program that TCI opened a second campus in Livingston to accommodate the growth of the program and opened The Center for Independence, a new program for adults ages 21 and up.

“I think this program is incredibly important because a doctor’s office can be a terrifying place for an autistic kid,” Maguire said. “I think anything that can be done to support the students, their families and the medical professionals to better serve autistic an individual is always a great thing.”

The educational program for medical professionals can help TCI support its families, Triano said.

“We are excited to be partnering with TCI to bring the next level of care to our Center,” said Garrubbo.

“We are looking forward to collaborating with Barnabas Health to continue their medical expertise with our behavioral expertise to ensure they receive the best treatment possible,” Triano said.



Photo Caption: Pictured here: Valerie Triano, M. ED., BCBA, TCI Behaviorist; Susan Garrubbo, President and CEO, Barnabas Health Ambulatory Care Center; Megan Maguire, M.ED., BCBA, TCI Behaviorist; Dr. Bruce Ettinger, Executive Director/Superintendent of The Children’s Institute.