

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT: Suzanna Cisneros, suzanna.cisneros@ttuhsc.edu
(806) 743-7605

**Texas Tech Physicians Psychiatry Partners with Covenant Health to Provide New
Chemical Dependency Intensive Outpatient Clinic**

For those struggling with chemical dependency, making a step towards treatment can be challenging and often filled with uncertainty. Texas Tech Physicians Psychiatry has partnered with Covenant Health to offer a new Chemical Dependency Intensive Outpatient Clinic (IOP).

IOP is a substance use disorder treatment program appropriate for those who are not in need of medically-supervised detox or residential level care. Sarah Wakefield, M.D., a psychiatrist at Texas Tech Physicians and director of the IOP clinic, said with the stress of the COVID-19 pandemic, now more than ever, there is a crucial need for mental health care and clinics such as this. Wakefield said this pandemic has brought increased frustrations that are causing more stress and anxiety and for many people a resurgence of excessive drinking issues and other addictions.

“Studies have found that people in drug and alcohol recovery are more likely to relapse following crises and the coronavirus pandemic is a disruptive situation,” Wakefield said. “The fourth wave (mental health needs) starts as soon as the pandemic hits and it doesn’t come back down until long after the pandemic ends. The mental health response starts immediately and just grows and grows for a long time for many reasons. This clinic is here to provide treatment and resources for our community.”

The misuse and abuse of alcohol, tobacco, illicit drugs and prescription medications affect the health and well-being of millions of Americans. According to the World Health Organization, 31 million people suffer from drug use disorders.

“This clinic could not have opened at a better time,” Covenant Children’s CEO Amy Thompson, M.D., said. “Many in our community suffer from these kinds of addictions, and we need to provide the resources for them to get help. We are proud to partner with Texas Tech Physicians on this initiative.”

The program, which offers care to individuals who are unfunded or underfunded, provides a comprehensive, 16-week program that follows a decreasing intensity model.

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The program is open to adults, ages 18 and older, whose primary diagnosis is a substance use disorder. IOP groups are offered in the evening to allow participants to take care of their work responsibilities during the day.

This level of care allows the individual to be part of the recovery program on a part-time yet intensive schedule designed to accommodate work and family life. With this program, a person can participate while living at home while addressing family, career or educational issues during recovery.

The IOP uses the Matrix Model, a comprehensive multi-format program that covers six key clinical areas:

- Individual/Conjoint therapy
- Early recovery
- Relapse prevention
- Family education
- Social support
- Urine testing

The clinic, located at 4000 22nd Place, is for those who are new to recovery and would prefer not to enter an inpatient facility for an extended period of time. For more information, call (806) 725-7145.