



MEDIA CONTACTS:

Cary Corbin, 830-609-1932

Rebecca Helderbrand, 210-582-6442

NEWS RELEASE
For Immediate Release

**CLARITY CHILD GUIDANCE CENTER OPENS EMERGENCY CARE UNIT,
MORE INPATIENT BEDS FOR CHILDREN WITH MENTAL ILLNESS**

***New \$8 million Crisis Assessment Center adds 20 beds
to help fill 65-bed shortage in San Antonio***

SAN ANTONIO – Every year, more than 1,300 children suffering from a mental health crisis are admitted into a San Antonio emergency room, where there is no psychiatric care available for them.

To help redirect children with mental illness to the specialized care they need, Clarity Child Guidance Center has opened a Crisis Assessment Center, comprised of six observation beds and fourteen additional acute care beds. This addition brings the total number of beds on the campus to over 70 at the campus located at 8535 Tom Slick within the South Texas Medical Center.

The new 13,693-square-foot facility on Clarity CGC's 8-acre campus features a separate driveway dedicated to ambulance transport of patients.

The expansion helps fill a portion of the estimated 65-bed deficit in the city, while helping to alleviate the burden on emergency rooms at local hospitals where specialized mental health care for children is not available.

The new center also allows for quick assessments of children facing a mental health crisis. Clarity patients are seen within a 3-hour window, an improvement over traditional hospital emergency rooms, which can have wait times of up to 24 hours for patients who present with a psychiatric condition. Children who are admitted to the observation beds will have the support of a caring medical team to stabilize the child and provide a disposition for treatment.

"This expansion will to help redirect children in crisis from a traditional emergency room setting, which can aggravate the crisis, to a mental health-specific service to address their needs quickly," said Clarity CGC President and CEO Frederick Hines. "With one in five children contending with a mental, emotional or behavioral issue, this is another step forward to help fill the void in care that exists in our community."

The Crisis Assessment Center, like the rest of the Clarity CGC campus, reflects Clarity's unique approach to treating children's mental health disorders.

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For example, most for-profit mental health facilities have a ratio of one caregiver to 6 to 10 children. As a non-profit, Clarity CGC keeps the ratio low, with one caregiver for every two to three children to create a close, nurturing and therapeutic relationship with the child.

The entire campus features play areas, a swimming pool (available in 2016) and additional child-centric features that promote an environment of hope and healing.

The new facility is Phase 1 of a main campus expansion. Future plans include the relocation of Clarity CGC's outpatient clinic to the main campus from its current location approximately two miles away, as well as expanded partial hospitalization space for day treatment, new therapeutic recreation spaces, and additional outpatient clinics outside of the main campus.

More than 1,600 children used Clarity CGC's acute services in 2014, including hospital stays and day treatment. Clarity's acute care services are designed for patients in crisis, and often at risk of harm to themselves or others. The goal of treatment is stabilization of symptoms to bring the patient back to safety.

Another 6,000 children were served through outpatient therapy. Every treatment program is individually structured to meet a patient's specific needs. Treatment length typically ranges from five to 10 days, and includes individual and family therapy, psychiatric management and psycho-education groups. All services are provided by a staff of specially trained professionals, with a minimum of one-to-three staff-to-patient ratio to ensure children and adolescents receive proper care.

Clarity Child Guidance Center offers a full range of services for children and teenagers experiencing emotional and behavioral problems. In addition to 24/7 acute care inpatient treatment, Clarity CGC also offers comprehensive outpatient services; rapid access to treatment through the first Clarity Child Guidance Clinic, located at Highway 151 and Westover Hills Blvd.; and on-campus day treatment for children who experience significant problems at home and school but do not need inpatient treatment.

Last year, Clarity CGC provided treatment to nearly 8,000 kids ages 3-17 in Bexar County. Clarity CGC is the only non-profit mental health treatment center in South Texas, specializing in the treatment of children and adolescents ages 3 to 17, struggling with serious mental, emotional or behavioral problems. As a non-profit organization, Clarity CGC helps children regardless of their parents' ability to pay.

Clarity CGC's care for children dates back to 1886. Visit www.claritycgc.org to learn more.

ABOUT CLARITY CHILD GUIDANCE CENTER

Clarity Child Guidance Center (CGC) is the only nonprofit in South Texas providing a full continuum of mental health care to children 17 and under, including services for acute cases for children as young as three.

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Clarity CGC offers the region's largest concentration of child and adolescent psychiatrists, with its onsite affiliation with Southwest Psychiatric Physicians. In addition, the center serves as a teaching hospital for The University of Texas Health Science Center San Antonio. Clarity CGC provides outpatient therapy for children and families, day treatment (where the child is at Clarity CGC during school hours and then returns home each evening) and acute inpatient hospitalization at its 52-bed hospital, which is growing to 72 beds in 2015.

As a nonprofit, Clarity CGC serves children in need, regardless of their ability to pay, while bringing a multitude of services to children and families through its case managers as a United Way agency.

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