

Just In Time: Office Assistant Hope Roberts (left) gives a “Just In Time” scheduling card to Kendal Lillard, a Registered Nurse with NRVCS’ Psychiatric Services. Under the new scheduling system, patients of psychiatric services are being asked to call a week prior to their next desired appointment. (Photo - M. Wade/NRVCS)

New scheduling system aims to reduce “no show” rates, improve patient access

By **Mike Wade / NRVCS**
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The practice of scheduling appointments months in advance is not uncommon among health care providers, but officials at NRVCS have discovered over time that it is a process that is far from perfect.

According to Interim Executive Director Rosemary Sullivan, roughly 40% of scheduled follow-up appointments with NRVCS’ Psychiatric Services were not being kept.

“Typically, when scheduled appointment dates are scheduled too many months in advance, the individual will either not know their schedule that far out, or something has come up that will prevent them from keeping the appointment, or they’ve completely forgotten about it,” explains Sullivan. “This left a large number of patients

who needed to be seen without that opportunity.”

Under the new scheduling system, known as Just In Time (JIT), - which launched earlier this fall - patients are being asked to schedule their own follow-up appointments a week prior to the week of their desired appointment. Sullivan notes that once the call is made, the patient is provided an appointment within 3 - 5 business days.

Patients are given a card at the closure of their appointment that indicates when they should call to set up their next appointment. Sullivan says this process will help prevent patients from running out of medication because they will be seen in a time frame that they should still have medication in their possession.

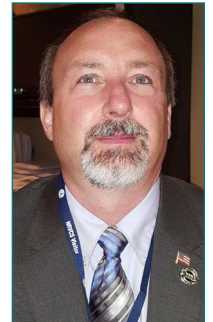
As part of the new system, Sullivan adds

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Radford City Council appoints Gropman to NRVCS Board of Directors

RADFORD - Robert Gropman, a member of Radford City Council, was recently appointed to the NRVCS Board of Directors.

He fills the seat left vacant on the NRVCS Board by Bob Nicholson, who stepped down at the end of June after completing his third term.



Gropman

First elected to City Council in May of this year, Gropman is regional supervisor for a vending company. He has been a resident of Radford for over 26 years and is actively involved in a variety of civic activities.

Gropman is one of two Radford representatives on the NRVCS Board of Directors. Vicky Collins, Director of Radford’s Department of Social Services, holds the other seat.

Upcoming Holiday Closings

NRVCS offices and clinics will be closed on the following holidays:

Friday, November 11 (Veterans Day)

Thursday, November 24 &
Friday, November 25 (Thanksgiving)

Friday, December 23 &
Monday, December 26 (Christmas)

Monday, January 2, 2017
(New Year’s Day)

NOTE: These dates do not apply to our 24-hour/residential programs.

Familiar, new faces join NRVCS administrative team

Two veteran members of NRVCS' workforce and a pair of newcomers have recently joined the agency's administrative team.

Leslie Sharp, who has been with the agency since 2006, was recently named Quality Assurance Administrator. A native of Giles County, the majority of Sharp's tenure at NRVCS has been spent working directly in children's services. She has been



Sharp

a provider of direct care and also served as both a program supervisor and coordinator.

Sharp is a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) and holds an undergraduate degree from Virginia Tech and has a Master's degree in Counseling and Human Development from Radford University.

Angela Scott has been tapped to develop and supervise NRVCS' newly created Office of Peer Supports and Recovery. She first joined NRVCS in 1987 as supervisor of a residential crisis unit and has since held a variety of positions within the

agency's Adult & Family Services Unit, working with programs that serve individuals with both mental illness and developmental disabilities. Scott has been supervisor of intensive case management services, Waiver services, community living services, and crisis services. An LPC, Scott has provided clinical consultation and supervision and most recently worked with NRVCS' Program for Assertive Community Treatment (PACT) program.



Scott

Scott completed her undergraduate work at James Madison University and holds a Master's in Mental Health Counseling from the University of Virginia.

Valanda "Val" Nelson joined NRVCS as its Client Advocate in July. Originally from the New River Valley, Nelson has worked in various capacities within the behavioral healthcare industry in the state of North Carolina. She has provided direct clinical services, advocacy services, and executive

level leadership and management throughout her career.

Nelson is a Licensed Clinical Addictions Specialist and Certified Clinical Supervisor in North Carolina and is a Board-Certified Music Therapist. She holds a Bachelor's and Master's degree in Music Therapy from East Carolina University, and a second Master's in Public Administration from The University of North Carolina at Wilmington.



Nelson

Cody Simpkins

is the new Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board. A native of the area, Simpkins will graduate this fall from Bluefield College with a degree in Business Management and Leadership. He previously worked at Virginia Tech.



Simpkins

NRVCS promoting diversity throughout Virginia



Deborah Whitten-Williams, NRVCS Director of Financial & Administrative Services, presents to the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Services' Office of Cultural & Linguistic Competence's state committee at their August 11 meeting in Staunton. Since that time, NRVCS diversity trainers have also provided trainings to the staff of the Virginia Department of Health's Henrico County Health District and the Board of Directors for Community Housing Partners at their corporate offices in Christiansburg. (Photo - M. Wade/NRVCS)

Delegate Joseph Yost offers remarks during the inaugural graduation ceremony of the Pulaski County Adult Drug Court Treatment Program. Looking on are (from left) Probation Office Dana Manns, NRVCS Drug Court Program Coordinator Lori Trail and the Honorable Marcus H. Long, Jr., 27th Circuit Court Judge. (Photo - M. Wade/NRVCS)



Pulaski County Drug Court holds inaugural graduation

By Mike Wade / NRVCS
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It's unusual to find a courtroom filled with smiling faces, but that was precisely the scene on September 29 as the Pulaski County Adult Drug Court Treatment Program recognized its first two graduates.

The Honorable Marcus H. Long, Jr., 27th Circuit Court Judge, described the occasion as "the best day of my legal career" as he welcomed guests to the ceremony.

Delegate Joseph Yost praised both men for their effort and commitment to recovery and presented each with an American flag.

The two graduates were each given an opportunity to share their thoughts and both expressed heartfelt gratitude for the program and the unyielding support of those involved.

Launched in December 2014, the Pulaski County Drug Court Program has just completed the first year of a three-year grant through the Bureau of Justice Assistance totaling \$345,617. The program has also grown from two participants to ten currently.

According to NRVCS' Lori Trail, coordinator of the program, projected cost savings for the Pulaski County Drug Court based on sentencing guidelines is \$183,258.

Trail says the cost savings realized solely from the two recent Drug Court graduates is \$78,842.

Drug Court participants have also completed 1,850 hours of community service. With the minimum wage of \$7.25 applied, this equates to \$13,412.50 in free labor that is given back to the community.

Five participants have become employed since beginning Drug Court and one participant has successfully maintained his employment while enrolled in the program. Trail notes that one participant has

enrolled in a GED program, while another participant has started taking classes at New River Community College and successfully completed one semester.

"I think this proves just how effective the Drug Court program truly is," Trail adds. "It's not only having an impact on the lives of our participants, it's benefitting the entire community."

Similar Drug Court programs have started in both Giles and Floyd counties within the past year.

SCHEDULING

that designated members of staff are able to monitor schedules and determine when patients are running low on medications. If that patient has not called to schedule their follow-up appointment by a certain date, designated staff will notify both the patient and his or her case manager.

Sullivan went on to say that NRVCS is also beginning to provide walk-in appointments in order to get patients in quickly when needed. Most of the agency's providers have opted to dedicate a portion of their day to "walk-ins" and those appointments typically last 30 minutes each. Sullivan stresses that is not intended for routine use

and is instead designed to serve those individuals with the most pressing needs.

The agency is also implementing nurse-led appointments for medication refills and will no longer refill medications over the phone. Sullivan says this allows NRVCS to provide a safety precaution for patients because they are being seen in person by a medically-trained staff who can note signs and symptoms that might not be conveyed over the phone. As with walk-in appointments, these types of appointments should rarely be needed since seeing patients through scheduled appointments is the preferred method of care.

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follow nrvcs    

NRVCS implements new Electronic Health Record system

NRVCS rolled out a new Electronic Health Record (EHR) system, known as Credible, on July 1, 2016.

The selection and implementation of Credible was managed by a cross functional team with representation from across the agency. Team members carefully weighed a number of options but a key factor in the decision was Credible's successful track record with other Community Service Boards in Virginia that utilize the product.

According to NRVCS Information Systems Coordinator Chip Tarbutton, implementation of the new EHR took more than a year and required countless hours of behind the scenes work by a dedicated project team. The project also required the agency to undertake the massive logistical challenge of training approximately 700 users on the new system.

Tarbutton indicates that the implementation has gone well thus far and that Credible offers mobile options and reporting capabilities that will enhance the agency's ability to meet client needs.



Training session: NRVCS team members got their first "hands-on" experience with the agency's new Electronic Health Record system during a series of training sessions held earlier in the year. The new system, Credible, went live on July 1. (Photo - M. Wade/NRVCS)