

September 19, 2013

UPMC Mercy
Development Office

1400 Locust Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
T 412-232-5828
F 412-232-5546

Mr. Mark S. Bibro
Executive Director
Birmingham Foundation
2005 Sarah Street, 2nd Floor
Pittsburgh, PA 15203

Dear Mark,

On behalf of UPMC Mercy, thank you for the opportunity to submit a \$10,000 grant request to the Birmingham Foundation. These funds will be used to support a range of activities at UPMC Mercy that focus on suicide prevention, a priority area for our behavioral health care team as well as the family of Thomas Brown Alton. Some examples of the activities that will be supported with grant funds are detailed below.

Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training

Grant funding will support training and education for staff at UPMC Mercy in ASIST – Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training. This is a two-day intensive, interactive, and practice-dominated course designed to help clinical, as well as non-clinical, caregivers recognize and review risk and intervene to prevent the immediate risk of suicide. It is the most widely used, acclaimed, and researched suicide intervention training workshop in the world. Trainers are certified by Living Works, Inc. and are accomplished practitioners in suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention.

ASIST prepares caregivers to provide suicide first aid interventions by providing training on how to help persons with thoughts of suicide in ways that increase their suicide safety. At the end of the two-day course, participants will be able to:

- Identify people who have thoughts of suicide
- Reach out and offer support
- Understand how beliefs and attitudes can affect suicide interventions
- Seek a shared understanding of the reasons for thoughts of suicide and the reasons for living
- Review current risk and apply a suicide intervention model
- Link people with community resources

Art Therapy

Art therapy is a form of expressive therapy that uses the creative process of making art to improve a person's physical, mental, and emotional well-being. The creative process involved in expressing oneself artistically can help people to resolve issues as well as develop and manage their behaviors and feelings, reduce stress, and improve self-esteem/coping skills and awareness.

Patients on the Behavioral Health Unit will be encouraged to create a laminated card that can be used as either a magnet, wallet size note card, or key chain. On one side of the card, the suicide hotline number, Re:Resolve Crisis number, and other numbers of individuals the patient listed on

their crisis plan will be printed. The other side of the card will feature art made by the patient with guidance from the Unit's art therapist. This might include the patient's personal art, pictures or quotations that have meaning to him or her, symbols, etc.

The care team works on very detailed crisis plans with our patients that are often several pages long. The likelihood that patients will carry this plan with them at all times is nil. Having an abbreviated version that is portable and easily accessible, similar to the membership perk cards offered by grocery stores and other businesses, will be a convenient and creative reminder of their recovery.

Cooking as Therapy

Cooking as a form of therapy is something we would like to increase on the Behavioral Care Unit. Physically, it requires motor coordination, range of movement, and muscle strength in the arms, hands, and legs. The cognitive processes involved in problem solving and following directions can boost memory and attention. Cooking can also provide opportunity for social interaction. It can increase self-esteem, creativity, competence, pride, and a sense of accomplishment. A favorite recipe can get one in touch with certain emotions and can be a time of reminiscence and comfort.

In sum, a grant from the Birmingham Foundation to support staff training and patient activities will enhance UPMC Mercy's ability to intervene and support individuals in crisis. Importantly, it will also honor Tom's legacy by improving the care the team at UPMC Mercy is able to provide to some of the most vulnerable patients we serve. We appreciate your willingness to consider this request and would be happy to provide any additional information you might require.

Sincerely,



Sam McCrimmon
Executive Director of Clinical Development