Southern Oaks
Geropsychiatric Unit

Grove Hill Memorial Hospital
“A Better Life, A Better Way!”
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Welcome

Welcome to Southern Oaks at Grove Hill Memorial Hospital.

This handbook has been developed by the staff to help answer questions about our services and will provide you with important information regarding your admission and treatment, as well as safety guidelines.

Southern Oaks will assist you in learning ways in which you can manage your illness, allowing for an improved quality of life.

Southern Oaks strives to provide the following therapeutic goals for each patient:

- A stable, therapeutic environment and a structured, supportive treatment program for diagnosis and treatment of acute psychiatric symptoms or decompensating clinical conditions that severely impair daily functioning.
- An intensive psychiatric treatment aimed at improving or maintaining a patient’s level of functioning and reduce or control a patient’s symptoms so as to prevent relapse and/or avoid further deterioration.
- Services for patients who have failed at less intensive levels of care.
- Improvement in the quality of life of the patients, maximize their functional independence and capacities and promote health.

Program Size and Population

The Unit operates Monday through Sunday with programming from 8:00AM until 8:30PM.

The population includes patients who are ages 55 and up. The Unit can accommodate up to 9 patients at any time.
The Staff

The multidisciplinary team is central to the philosophy of staffing an inpatient hospitalization setting. The patient’s attending psychiatrist is the head of the treatment team.

The program is staffed with a Program Director, Nurse Manager, Staff Nurses (RN’s and LPN’s), Mental Health Technicians, Social Worker and a Recreational/Activity Therapist.

Additional staff may include additional Psychiatrist(s), Medical Physician(s) and Psychologist(s).

The Program Director and the Nurse Manager are responsible for the overall and day-to-day functioning of the Unit.

The staff nurses will attend to your medical needs and provide education to assist you in managing your illness. Nurses are available 24 hours per day.

Mental Health Technicians will assist you with activities of daily living as needed. They also provide leisure activities throughout the day.

The Social Worker will provide you with group, individual and family therapy as ordered. They also assist you and your family in making decisions regarding discharge and aftercare plans.

The Recreational Therapist provides therapeutic groups each day aimed at improving your outlook and enjoyment of life.
Admission to the Unit

When you arrive at the Unit you will be asked to sign paperwork which will allow the hospital and its staff to treat you. All paperwork will be explained to you prior to signing. Please feel free to ask any questions you might have regarding information you do not understand fully.

You will be oriented to the Unit and your room.

Assessments/Treatment Planning

The physician and the staff will provide a series of assessments which will assist us to identify patient strengths and issues which need treatment.

These assessments will provide the basis for formulation of the treatment goals for each patient. You and your family (if you permit it) will be included in the treatment planning process.

Services

Group Therapy

The purpose of this group is to focus on issues, which brought the patient into treatment, including the effects of the aging process, family problems, and the need to adjust to the loss of independence and autonomy. The purpose of this group is to assist the patient in beginning to verbalize and share feelings, and identify those issues which contribute to his or her current problems.

Group therapy allows patients to receive feedback and support from their peers, provides an opportunity for patients to encounter others who have similar problems, and instills hope by observing the improvement of others. The group process enables the patient to interact and share with others, who have similar problems, and to identify and work toward a solution.

The group assists patients in examining ways people cope with living situations. It provides the opportunity to develop alternative coping behaviors and general skills, which are useful in dealing with typical social situations.
**Individual Therapy**

Patients may find it difficult to express certain feelings or share painful experiences in a group setting. Individual therapy allows the patient an opportunity to explore issues with a therapist, as well as review individualized goals for treatment.

**Family Therapy**

The Unit realizes that the problems experienced by patients do not occur in a vacuum. Emotional problems affect the whole family; therefore, family therapy is provided to assist the patient and family in dealing with difficult issues.

Family therapy provides for new learning, ventilation and feeling expression, and mutual problem solving. Communication and understanding is enhanced, so everyone is working toward common goals.

**Patient/Family Education**

An integral part of the treatment program, individual education is provided to promote and maintain the patient’s health and to insure improvement and positive patient outcomes.

Education takes place in both individual and group sessions and is based on the assessment of the patient/family needs. Education is required as part of the multidisciplinary treatment plan.

**Discharge and Post Discharge Planning**

Discharge planning begins on admission and is an integral part of the treatment process. The discharge plan is updated continually and regularly until the actual time of discharge. Elements of this strategy include active participation by the patient, family and care provider in formulating the discharge plan. When appropriate, referrals will be made that offer each patient increased assurance of continued care with community-based professionals.

While an estimated length of stay may be provided upon admission, the physician and the treatment team will determine the patient’s actual date of discharge using the following criteria:

A. The patient is no longer a danger to self or others.
B. The patient has demonstrated improved behavior and level of functioning.
C. Goals of treatment have been met.
D. Treatment can safely be accomplished at a lower level of care.
E. The patient develops an acute medical condition, which requires admission to a medical unit.

**Pastoral Services**

The program recognizes the importance of meeting the spiritual needs of the patient. Please let the staff know if you would like visits from your Clergy. The hospital also provides this service. Visits with Clergy will be coordinated by the program staff so as not to interrupt the therapeutic programming.

**Meals**

Every patient receives a nutritional screening on admission.

Meals are served at standard times and are prepared according to physician orders. Snacks and beverages are available throughout the day.

Should you have specific food preferences, please let the staff know.

**Phone Calls**

Phones are not provided in patient rooms, however, there is a phone available at the Nurses station for your use.

The receiving and making of phone calls are restricted to personal time as noted in the program schedule. Should an emergency arise, please contact a staff member.

We ask that phone calls be limited to 15 minutes to allow all patients the opportunity for phone use.
Visitation

The program recognizes the importance of allowing patients visitation with their family and loved ones. In order to ensure that visitation does not interfere with therapeutic activities, and allows for adequate rest and nursing care of the geriatric patient, we ask that you note the following information:

- An ID number will be provided to the patient upon admission. The patient is responsible for providing this to potential visitors. Prior to entry onto the Unit, the visitor must present the ID number. This is to ensure continued patient confidentiality.
- All visitors are to report to the Nurses station prior to visiting with the patient. Visitors must sign in at the Nurses station and will be instructed on Unit confidentiality. Additionally, all packages, clothes, gifts, luggage, etc., brought in by visitors are to be checked by the staff.
- The hours of visitation are from 12:30PM to 2:00PM and 5:30PM to 6:30PM Monday thru Saturday. Sunday visitation is from 12:30PM to 4:30PM.
- It is recommended that only two individuals visit with a patient at a time. Children under 12 years of age are not permitted to visit.
- PLEASE NOTE: No family member is allowed to stay on the Unit over night.
- Privacy will be provided during visitation unless contraindicated or ordered by the physician.
- A copy of the Unit schedule is provided in this handbook for your review.

Smoking

The hospital is a non-smoking facility. All patient’s use of tobacco products will be assessed upon admission. Patients may be allowed to smoke outside if a safe area is available, if clinically appropriate and if ordered by the physician. For patients who are unable to leave the Unit, a Nicoderm patch or Nicoderm gum may be ordered by the physician to assist with refraining from the use of
tobacco products during their hospitalization until clinically able to leave the Unit.

**Falls**

Elderly patients may be at a higher risk for falls than younger adults. This may be due to factors such as problems with mobility, confusion, agitation, medications, etc.

Many family members inquire about the possibility of restraining patients in beds or chairs to keep them from falling. It is the policy of this Unit that we do not restrain patients for this purpose.

The program does recognize that falls are a potential problem for this age group and has an aggressive falls prevention program.

Each patient will be evaluated on admission for falls risk and specific interventions will be initiated as necessary.

Patients are re-evaluated every 48 hours and interventions are adjusted accordingly.

Should you have any questions/concerns regarding our falls program, please contact a nurse on duty.

**Community Agreement**

When living in any family or community there are certain ground rules to be followed. Agreement to follow these ground rules and to support others in following them allows an atmosphere of trust where recovery can take place.

1. I agree to attend and be on time for all meetings and activities except when I have an authorized medical excuse.

2. I agree not to have any form of alcohol or drugs on this Unit.

3. I agree not to keep or eat food in my room.
4. I agree to dress in a manner which is clean and neat. I will wear shoes at all times when out of my room.

5. I will smoke only in the designated areas of the hospital. I understand that the physician must approve this. I will leave my matches and/or lighter and cigarettes at the nursing station. I understand a violation of this rule may jeopardize other lives and the privilege of smoking.

6. I agree that I will not use alcohol, drugs or any medications other than those ordered by the physician.

7. I agree to respect the confidentiality of the sharing of all patients and not disclose information, stories or names of the Unit.

8. I agree not to verbally, emotionally or physically abuse another patient or staff member.

9. I agree not to become sexually involved with another patient.

10. I agree to handle any complaints I may have by communicating them only in community meetings or to someone who can do something about the situation. I agree not to criticize or complain to someone who cannot do anything about it. I agree not to listen to complaints that I cannot do something about, but redirect the person to someone who can do something about it.

11. I agree to maintain my assigned room in a neat and orderly manner, to make my own bed and keep my personal effects put away. I also agree to perform my assigned Unit tasks.

**Patient Rights**

You have the same general rights as all other citizens of Alabama. These rights include, but are not limited to, the following:
The right to exercise rights as a citizen of the United States and the State of Alabama.

The right to be served through general services available to all citizens.

The right to be presumed competent until a court of competent jurisdiction, abiding by statutory and constitutional provisions, determines otherwise.

The right to vote in elections and otherwise participate in the political process.

The right to free exercise of religion.

The right to make contracts.

The right to social interaction with members of either sex.

The right to exercise rights without reprisal.

The right to access individualized mental health services.

The right to participate in the treatment planning process, with the material presented in language appropriate to your ability to understand.

The right to be accorded human respect and dignity on an individual basis in a consistently human fashion.

The right to be fully informed, on an individual basis, when needed, concerning services provided, presented in a setting and in language appropriate to your condition and ability to understand.

The right to a statement of any applicable charges for mental health services, itemized when possible, and the right to be informed of any limitations placed on the duration of services.
You may contact Southern Oaks at:
Grove Hill Memorial Hospital
P.O. Box 935
Grove Hill, AL 36451
or
295 South Jackson St.
Grove Hill, AL 36451
or by phone at:
251-275-3191 ext. 259 or 291