



PRESS RELEASE

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TRANSPORTATION OFFERED FOR SENIOR RESIDENTS COPING WITH DEPRESSION, BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ISSUES

Valley Baptist Senior Adults Program Gets 2 New Vans to Transport Patients Needing Psychiatric Care & Counseling

HARLINGEN / BROWNSVILLE – Senior residents in the Valley have greater access to mental health services through transportation provided by the Senior Adults Program at Valley Baptist Medical Center, which recently purchased two new vans to transport older adults who suffer from psychiatric, emotional, or behavioral disorders.

The shiny white vans carry patients 55 years of age and older from their home or nursing home for individualized outpatient treatment and counseling at Valley Baptist's Senior Adults Behavioral Health Programs in Brownsville and Harlingen. As an outpatient program, the goal of the Senior Adults Program is to maintain and improve each client's coping skills and quality of life.



The program addresses the unique needs of the elderly, which can include such issues as declining health, a loss of independence, and grief over the loss of a spouse, other family members and friends. These issues can contribute to depression and other behavioral health problems, such as anxiety, psychosomatic disorders, adjustment to aging, and schizophrenia.

The Senior Adults Program is staffed with a multi-disciplinary team of health care professionals, including counselors, nurses, and mental health technicians; and directed by psychiatrists. The psychiatrists for Valley Baptist Behavioral Health Services include [Dr. Daniel Villarreal](#), [Dr. Francisco J. Torres](#), and [Dr. Gaylyn J. Holstein](#).

The psychiatrists provide an evaluation of each client's treatment needs, prescribe and monitor medications, and supervise treatment, working in close collaboration with the patient's primary care physicians. The Valley Baptist team carries out the psychiatrist's plan of care and provides a variety of group, family, and individual therapies, individualized to the needs of the client.

Becky Tresnicky, LCSW, Director of Valley Baptist Behavioral Health Services, attributed the program's success to its "dedicated mental health professionals and staff."

"Mental illness impacts up to one in every five families, with major depression being a leading cause of disability in the Valley and throughout the country," Ms. Tresnicky said. "Yet many senior citizens in the Valley don't receive treatment because of stigma, misunderstanding, and lack of access to care. Our new vans will help increase that access by helping to address a transportation barrier for many clients."

Armando Medrano, LPC, Therapist and Program Manager for the Seniors Adults Program at Valley Baptist Medical Center–Harlingen, said the Senior Adults Program uses group counseling and other therapies to address the feelings of loneliness and isolation that many elderly patients face in coping with their suffering.

The Senior Adults Program is an outpatient department of Valley Baptist Behavioral Health Services, open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. In Harlingen, the Senior Adults Program is located in Valley Baptist's Professional Office Building, 2121 Pease Street, 3rd Floor, Suite 3A. In Brownsville, the program is located on Valley Baptist Medical Center-Brownsville's East Campus at 1 Ted Hunt Blvd., off Ruben Torres Blvd. The campus in East Brownsville also houses Valley Baptist's 37-bed Inpatient Behavioral Health Services Facility for adults ages 17 and older, as well as outpatient psychiatric services on a limited basis for ages 10 and older. All services are confidential; and arrangements can be made to bring patients in through a private entrance when needed and requested in advance. For more information, please call (956) 698-5205 in Brownsville or 389-6578 in Harlingen; or visit www.ValleyBaptist.net.

About Valley Baptist Health System

Valley Baptist Health System is a faith-based regional health system focused on improving the lives of the people it serves by providing high quality health care and medical education throughout South Texas guided by the healing and teaching ministry of Jesus Christ.

Valley Baptist extends many of its services beyond its facilities and into local communities, offering free screenings for the community, support groups and numerous educational opportunities. For more information, visit www.ValleyBaptist.net.