

Building a future that goes far beyond fine.

Behavioral Health Care at
Helen DeVos Children's Hospital



Meeting the Need

Across the country, millions of people are dealing with increased stress, anxiety, depression, grief and substance use—and nowhere is this more apparent than among young people. Since 2019, Helen DeVos Children's Hospital has seen double-digit increases in mental health-related emergency department visits and hospital admissions for young patients, and in 2022, the numbers continued to climb.

Many of these visits and admissions result in transfers to community-based inpatient programs, where patients who have been medically stabilized continue to heal through medication and therapy. But for patients with complex medical needs or patients with disqualifying conditions—anything from autism to diabetes to sleep apnea—these programs aren't an option.

The result is patients and families who wait weeks for an appropriate placement, or who end up back at home with just enough support to bridge them to the next crisis, the next emergency department visit, or the next hospital admission.

“We have six ‘preferred behavioral health’ beds at HDVCH right now, and they are always full. We always have patients waiting.”

— Samantha Boyd, LMSW, Care Manager, Helen DeVos Children's Hospital

At HDVCH

19% increase in mental health-related emergency department visits¹

24% increase in mental health-related admissions²

Nationally³

24% increase in mental health-related emergency department visits for kids ages 5 to 11

31% increase in mental health-related emergency department visits for youth ages 12 to 17

¹ Between 2020 and 2021.

² Between 2019 and 2021.

³ Between April and October 2020.

At Helen DeVos Children's Hospital, we know we can do better and serve our communities with critical resources to meet the growing need.

Expanding Prevention and Access (2021–2022)

In 2021, we launched our “Beyond Fine” campaign to help address this crisis. Thanks to the generosity of our community, we raised over \$3 million to fund two foundational initiatives:

1. Our award-winning school suicide prevention program provides suicide crisis response training to over 5,000 school employees across 20 West Michigan school districts.
2. Our dedicated youth behavioral health clinic is expected to see 13,000+ patients by September 2023.

Creating the Community Safety Net (2023–2024)

For the most complex patients—those with intersecting behavioral health and medical needs—more is needed. That's why we're reimagining the 11th floor of HDVCH as a safe, secure and supportive environment for these patients to get well. For Chris, who suffers from severe asthma, to receive group therapy. For Elena, who lives with the ups and downs of autism spectrum disorder, to have a private patient room where she can take refuge when she needs less stimulation. For Jade, who struggles with Type-1 diabetes, to be a kid with other kids like her, who know what it's like to also struggle with severe trauma.

With your help, we can make a difference for hundreds and thousands of children like Chris, Elena and Jade, who currently have no place to go to fully heal, mentally and physically. A dedicated team of specially trained pediatric health providers will staff this space, providing expert medical and behavioral health interventions, and leading the way to better care for young people in our communities.

What the new space includes:

- 12 private rooms designed with patient safety in mind
- Group dining room to support community-building among patients
- Group therapy room, led by social workers, psychologists and other clinicians
- Music and art therapy room
- Physical and occupational therapy space
- Classroom for the Dick and Linda Antonini Hospital School Program
- Physical space for patients to move and exert energy
- i understand Sensory Room
- Dedicated staff of pediatric health specialists, including:
 - Psychologist
 - Psychiatrist
 - Family therapist
 - Psychiatric nursing specialists and nursing techs

Patient support services, which are not covered by insurance, are critical to enhancing recovery for our patients:

- Child and family life specialists (3)
- Music / art therapist
- Special education teacher

In addition, a behavioral health research program, staffed by research psychologists and led by an endowed chair, will ensure that we will continue to lead in the years to come.

When complete, this will be the first and only pediatric medical / psychiatric unit in the state of Michigan.

“This medical / psychiatric unit will allow patients to receive comprehensive services in the right setting. This is the first such unit in the state of Michigan, and it will be able to provide quality services for both medical and psychiatric needs.”

– Hossain Marandi, MD, MBA, FACHE, President, Helen DeVos Children's Hospital



Currently, many children and families are going without the services they need to fully heal, because the system hasn't been designed with complex, multi-needs patients like them in mind.

By investing in a safe, secure and supportive facility space, with dedicated research programs and clinicians who have been specially trained to support the most complex pediatric behavioral health patients, we can build the therapeutic capacity to make a difference for these patients and others in the generations to come. Together, we can provide these children and families a space to heal and a future that goes well beyond fine.

How you can help

Your donations and support can help us become a more effective safety net—a place where every child and family can access the healing and support they need.

Naming Opportunities – \$4 million goal

Facility Space: Patient rooms and common areas are available for naming. Donors will be recognized with a plaque in the sponsored space.

Other Opportunities – \$10 million goal

- Endowed division chief of psychiatry - \$2,500,000
Make a gift of \$500,000 for five years
- Endowed behavioral health staff - \$1,400,000 each
Make a gift of \$280,000 for five years
 - Child and family life specialists (3)
 - Music / art therapist
 - Special education teacher
- Research funding - \$500,000

“There are countless examples of patients whose needs we haven't been able to meet, because we haven't been able to offer therapeutic resources.”

– Erica Gudelsky, PMHNP, Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrics, Helen DeVos Children's Hospital

“What I'm most excited about is being able to provide these patients something that is closer to the ideal state, closer to meeting their social and emotional needs.”

– Jamie West, BSN, RN, CPN, Nurse Manager, Helen DeVos Children's Hospital

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give.spectrumhealth.org/donate/mental-health



“The medical / psychiatric unit will have therapeutic services inclusive of group, individual, sensory and physical therapies as well as medical capabilities delivered by specialist experts. This unit definitely fills a void in our community.”

– Subodh Jain, MD, Division Chief, Psychiatry & Behavioral Medicine, Corewell Health West & Helen DeVos Children’s Hospital