

*As we age, we undergo many changes, including physical, mental and, at times, behavioral. Behavioral changes may be so gradual that they are barely noticeable from day to day. Or, they can begin abruptly after an illness, injury or life event such as loss of a loved one. Either way, behavioral changes can be upsetting and challenging for individuals and their families. St. John's offers a mental health program for older adults called Generations.*

## **Generations**

Generations is designed to care for elderly patients affected by psychiatric disorders such as depression, anxiety, cognitive decline and dementia.

The psychiatric staff uses a team approach to care. Our medical director is a board-certified geriatric psychiatrist. The team is led by the patient's psychiatrist and includes professional staff trained in the emotional and physical health of older adults. This team is comprised of psychiatric nurses, counselors, social workers, an occupational therapist and a recreational therapist. All staff members are certified or licensed in their specialties and stay current with the most up-to-date practices.



## **Services**

### **Inpatient**

Generations inpatient services provide specialized care that includes assessment, diagnosis and treatment of acute psychiatric disorders. Generations patients are placed in rooms located in a separate, secure area of St. John's adult psychiatric unit.

Generations patients undergo a thorough medical and psychiatric evaluation and an individualized treatment plan is developed. Emphasis is placed on education and support of both the patient and the family. All services are provided in a comfortable, home-like environment.

Treatment includes medication management, therapeutic groups, activities and counseling. Individual and group activities are specially designed for geriatric patients. Special equipment allows patients to maximize their independence and maintain personal dignity.

### **Cognitive and Safety Assessment (CASA)**

St. John's Psychiatric Program offers the CASA program, which provides evaluation of memory and functional abilities of patients with dementia. A team of professionals, including a psychiatrist, psychologist, social worker and occupational therapist works with patients and their caregivers.

### **Psychiatric Home Health Services**

Psychiatric nurses and occupational therapists make home visits to help patients with their medication and adapting to their environment. The home health staff work with physicians to maintain the patient's highest level of functioning and provide continuity of care.

### **Support Groups**

Support groups may be available for patients needing additional community resources and a personal connection with others experiencing similar problems.

## **About Aging & Mental Illness**

### **Depression**

Depression is *not* a normal part of the aging process; however depression may be triggered by physical illness, injury, stress or life events such as loss of a loved one. Depression is a serious medical condition that requires treatment at any age. Fortunately, clinical depression is a very treatable illness. More than 80 percent of all people with depression can be successfully treated with medication, psychotherapy or a combination of both.

Signs and symptoms of depression that may suggest a need for professional help include changes in sleeping and eating habits, loss of interest, social isolation, sadness and irritability.

### **Cognitive Decline**

Many older people experience very minimal decline in cognitive abilities as a part of normal developmental changes with aging. Such changes do not interfere with activities of daily living, and do not progress to dementia.

### **Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias**

Alzheimer's disease is the most common type of dementia, and one that progresses from mild to severe symptoms. In the early stages of Alzheimer's disease, symptoms such as mild forgetfulness and anxiety may go unnoticed. In later stages, memory loss is more severe and often accompanied by sleep problems, wandering, agitation, confusion and communication difficulties. The demands of caregiving increase as the disease progresses.

### **Be prepared ...**

for your loved one to resist evaluation or treatment for mental disorders. Many people age 65 and over view emotional symptoms as a weakness, even though most of these symptoms are treatable. And more than half of people in this age group believe that it's normal for people to become depressed and/or confused as they age, although this too is a myth.

## *Caring through all generations*

- ... to you, it's a warm blanket;  
... to us, it's a gentle touch.
- ... to you, it's a clean hallway;  
... to us, it's home.
- ... to you, it's a kind word;  
... to us, it's a caring relationship.
- ... to you, it's medical equipment;  
... to us, it's leading-edge technology.
- ... to you, it's a hospital stay;  
... to us, at St. John's Hospital, it's an opportunity for healing.



## *Generations Mission Statement*

St. John's *Generations* Program is dedicated to caring for elderly patients affected by psychiatric disorders and/or cognitive decline. We will ensure that every person is cared for with dignity and respect, maximizing their physical and emotional health, their independence and their quality of life.

St. John's Hospital is affiliated with Southern Illinois University School of Medicine. SIU's Department of Psychiatry and Department of Internal Medicine-Division of Medicine-Psychiatry both provide residency programs at St. John's Hospital.

*For more information  
about psychiatric services  
at St. John's Hospital,  
please call (217) 757-6330.*



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# *Generations*™

## St. John's geriatric mental health program



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Hospital**