Innovative G4S Partnership Supports Hospitals and Mental Health Patients

Providing transportation, oversight and bedside guardianship with compassion, empathy and understanding for the special needs of mental health patients

Asheville, NC: Drug abuse or mental health patients in North Carolina are getting compassionate and appropriate support thanks to an innovative and award-winning program from G4S. The Patient Support Program provides oversight, safe transportation and bedside guardianship for patients who need to be transported from hospital emergency departments and into appropriate mental health settings. This first-of-its-kind program is aimed at improving patient satisfaction, quality of care and reducing cost.

“In these times of change in healthcare, particularly in mental health, this service is presenting an option to free-up bed space at hospital emergency departments and provide for quick and dignified transportation for the patient so they can get the specialized care they need,” said G4S General Manager Dallas Clark.

The service is getting positive reviews from participating hospitals, law enforcement, mental health advocates and government agencies.

In most places around the U.S., law enforcement officers and their vehicles are used for these patients,” said Ben Scaglione, Director of G4S Healthcare services. “The North Carolina system is a valuable and innovative solution which focuses on the dignity of the patient because a person in crisis transported or watched by law enforcement can contribute to their traumatic event rather than de-escalating it.”

Since the beginning of this specialized service in November 2013, a team of 25+ G4S Patient Support Staff members have assisted more than 2,500 patients and driven over 128,000 miles without incident. The program was designed with input from healthcare and mental health groups, the NC Sheriff’s Association and the North Carolina Attorney General’s Office.

G4S Patient Support Staff members receive special training because they provide bedside guardianship or transportation to a patient in crisis. This training includes 100+ hours of G4S classroom training in First Aid/AED; hospital and healthcare procedures; and driver and safety responsibilities. All Patient Support Staff members are also required to receive special CIT certification.

The G4S program utilizes vehicles are specially equipped with safe and secure passenger seating, individually-sealed lockers for personal belongings and protection of medical papers. The cars have two-way dispatching communications and always-on GPS units that record time, speed and location.