

# ABBHH becomes first to introduce protocol for diagnosing pediatric bipolar disorder

**Editor's note:** *As part of Alexian Brothers Hospital Network's (ABHN's) long-term commitment to continuous quality improvement, teams of staff members regularly measure, analyze and enhance processes and protocols at ABHN hospitals to ensure adherence to best practices. Beginning with this edition of The Alexian Way, the newsletter will regularly spotlight the efforts of these teams and the results they achieve as they strive to deliver the best possible care to patients.*

**B**ipolar disorder has become one of the most commonly diagnosed disorders for children in psychiatric inpatient and outpatient units. Yet no consensus exists about how to diagnose bipolar disorder in children, and clinicians lack standardized assessment tools and protocols for diagnosing the disorder in kids.

To address this issue, Alexian Brothers

Behavioral Health Hospital (ABBHH) in Hoffman Estates, Ill., with the help of a grant from the Jean Paul Ohadi Foundation, has developed the first hospital-wide diagnostic protocol for pediatric bipolar disorder in the nation. To disseminate this protocol, ABBHH has collaborated with ABHN's Continuing Medical Education (CME) office to develop a practiced-based CME project aimed at using the latest evidence-based diagnostic tools to improve the reliability of the diagnosis of bipolar disorder in children.

Four ABBHH psychiatrists have completed the three-phase project. By the end of the project, their diagnostic practices were increasingly consistent with ABBHH's new protocol. The project produced a significant change in diagnostic practices in terms of which symptoms were deemed as critical to the diagnosis of bipolar disorder and which symptoms were used to evaluate the severity of the disorder. This

change is expected to result in more effective and consistently administered treatments for pediatric bipolar disorder.

## **IN OTHER QUALITY NEWS:**

- St. Alexius Medical Center in Hoffman Estates, Ill., ranks third in "door-to-balloon" time among 56 Illinois hospitals tracked by Medicare Compare. Door-to-balloon time is an important measure of a hospital's effectiveness in cardiac intervention. The phrase refers to the interval between a patient's arrival at a hospital and a doctor's inflation of a tiny balloon in the patient's artery. Medicare Compare reported a score of 92 percent for St. Alexius Medical Center. The score represents the percentage of heart-attack patients with door-to-balloon times of 90 minutes or less. Alexian Brothers Medical Center in Elk Grove Village, Ill., also finished in the top 10, with a score of 87 percent.