

Oklahoma Department of Mental Health
and Substance Abuse Services

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Contact: Jeff Dismukes
ODMHSAS Communications
(405) 522-3907

For Immediate Release

Over A Century of Mental Health Services in Norman

ODMHSAS has created an opportunity for the public to “experience” a century of behavioral health treatment progress with a guided walk through parts of Oklahoma’s first psychiatric hospital

The Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (ODMHSAS) is hosting a public presentation of the history of mental health services in Norman to take place on Friday, October 2 and Saturday, October 3 on the ground floor of historic Hope Hall on the Griffin Memorial Hospital (GMH) campus. The event will take place in what was once the main treatment building of the state’s first psychiatric hospital and will include a guided awareness “experience” through parts of the old facility, along with museum pieces and information on the progress of behavioral health treatment services over the past century. Doors will be open between 6:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. on Friday and between 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. on Saturday.

The hospital is located at 900 E. Main in Norman, Oklahoma. Signs will direct visitors to parking. The event will be open and free to the public.

GMH began as a private psychiatric facility in 1895, with operations being transferred to the state in 1914. It was the first of multiple ODMHSAS mental health and substance abuse treatment facilities now located in Norman. The department also contracts with area private providers to deliver a range of community-based behavioral health service options.

For over a century, GMH has served the Norman community and remains an integral part of the city’s growth and development.

Hope Hall now sits empty and unoccupied, generating many questions from the public about its use past and future. This includes a great deal of misinformation regarding psychiatric hospitals.

ODMHSAS is hosting this event as a means to help educate the public about the amazing history of behavioral health services in Oklahoma, and as a chance to honor the memory of those who have both worked and received services at the facility. The event is an opportunity for the public to ask questions and learn more about the myths and reality of behavioral health care.

On display will be antique medical equipment, rare photos and historical documents along with other information about department facilities. Behavioral health advocates, treatment providers and other local experts will be on-hand to explain advancements in diagnosis, treatment and public perception. There will also be information on the challenges that still exist for many Oklahomans who are seeking care for themselves and loved-ones.

For more information about the event, call the GMH administration offices at (405) 573-6600.

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