



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF FIRE FIGHTERS



Clinical Overview

The IAFF Center of Excellence for Behavioral Health Treatment and Recovery is a one-of-a-kind treatment facility for members of the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) who are struggling with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), substance abuse and other behavioral health issues.

Our 64-bed, residential treatment facility is a haven for healing, located on 15 acres in Upper Marlboro, Maryland.

The Center is exclusively for IAFF members in the United States and Canada.

Center of Excellence Staff

Our staff are master's level, licensed clinicians who work alongside our highly experienced medical team of doctors, nurse practitioners and behavioral health technicians.

Marc Rattigan, BS, Executive Director

As executive director of the IAFF Center of Excellence for Behavioral Health Treatment and Recovery, Marc Rattigan promotes positive team interactions to support exceptional patient care for IAFF members. Marc comes from a long line of fire fighters, including his father, uncle and grandfather. A combat veteran with 21 years of service in the United States Army, Marc values teamwork and dedication to helping people who are struggling with behavioral health and addiction.

Marc's assignments and responsibilities in the Army behavioral health community included inpatient and outpatient services, substance abuse counseling, master resilience training, sexual assault advocacy and several epidemiological studies with high-risk populations. Marc's Army career culminated as the chief of operations at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland. He holds a bachelor's degree in emergency management from Thomas Edison State University and is a member of the Order of Military Medical Merit.

Abby Morris, MD, Medical Director

Dr. Abby Morris is a board-certified psychiatrist with diverse experience in community mental health, substance abuse, inpatient and private practice settings. She is responsible for all inpatient care, training and future operations planning at the Center of Excellence. She develops the individualized plan of care for each client throughout their stay at the Center. Previously, Dr. Morris was the medical director of a 24-bed inpatient facility for addiction and behavioral health disorders. Dr. Morris completed undergraduate studies at Cornell University and is a graduate of Georgetown University School of Medicine, having completed residency at Georgetown University Hospital and John Hopkins Medicine.

A Treatment Facility Designed for Fire Fighters

The IAFF Center of Excellence is a voluntary treatment facility designed by fire fighters for fire fighters. Our mission is to address the unique medical, psychological and social needs of IAFF members facing behavioral health crises. Housed in one of four station houses, patients share an instant bond, forged on shared sacrifice and a mutual understanding of life in the fire service. Staff is trained to understand the cumulative impact of occupational trauma, as well as the clinical implications of fire service culture and lifestyle. Treatment plans are designed to restore fire fighters to the career, community and family they love.

A Continuum of Compassionate Care

The average length of stay at the IAFF Center of Excellence is approximately four weeks, but varies based on individual clinical need through five levels of care:

- Detox: 24-hour medical monitoring with dedicated nursing
- Inpatient: 24-hour psychiatric care with dedicated nursing
- Partial Hospitalization Program (PHP): Six days per week, with or without boarding
- Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP): Three to five days per week, with or without boarding
- Outpatient: twice weekly: one individual session and one group treatment session



While group therapy and psychoeducation are the primary treatment modalities, patients are assigned to an individual therapist and receive ongoing individual therapy twice weekly during inpatient and PHP levels of care, and once weekly during the IOP level of care. All patients receive a thorough psychiatric diagnostic evaluation and medication evaluation upon admission. Patients who chose to follow a medication regimen are seen regularly by the psychiatrist and medical director at all levels of care. When clinically indicated, family therapy sessions are scheduled with family members who choose to visit their loved one.

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Approach to Treatment

On the job and in the firehouse, fire fighters function as a highly cohesive social unit. Off the job, fire fighters are a clinically diverse patient population that requires a variety of evidence-based treatment approaches to address occupational trauma, co-occurring addiction and other complex behavioral health problems. While roughly one-third of patients admitted to the IAFF Center of Excellence seek treatment for PTSD, other commonly treated conditions include a primary substance use disorder, major depressive disorder, complicated grief, social anxiety disorder, obsessive compulsive personality disorder and other addictions or compulsive behaviors (e.g., sex, gambling, binge eating).

Treatment approaches include:

- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)
- Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT)
- Eye Movement Destination Reprocessing (EMDR)
- HIPAA Compliant Video-Enabled Family Counseling
- Psychoeducation and Life Skills
- Biofeedback (available offsite)
- Pain Management



An Inclusive Approach to Recovery

While a strong psychotherapeutic program is the foundation of treatment, the IAFF Center of Excellence is designed to provide purposeful, goal-directed activity outside of the therapy session.

Alternative wellness approaches enhance recovery by restoring a broken mind, body and spirit:

- Yoga (twice weekly)
- Alcoholics Anonymous meetings (twice weekly)
- SMART Recovery Concepts
- IAFF Peer Fitness Training
- Recreation Therapy
- Pastoral Care
- Equine Therapy (available offsite)



Comprehensive Discharge Planning

Preparing patients for successful reintegration to work, family and home life depends on continued recovery and accountability at a lower level of care. Case managers strive to connect patients with culturally competent healthcare providers who understand the demands of the fire service. With patient permission, discharge treatment recommendations are shared with the patient's outpatient clinician and fire department physician.

Discharge plans use the Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) model and include the minimum following components, including the first behavioral health appointment within seven days:

- Referral to clinically indicated level of care (intensive outpatient or outpatient)
- Individual therapist appointment
- Psychiatrist/prescriber appointment if indicated
- Primary care appointment
- List of local resources for self-help support (AA, NA, SMART Recovery groups, etc.)

A Commitment to Aftercare Support and Outcome Monitoring

The IAFF Center of Excellence is dedicated to understanding treatment efficacy, which is why we provide continuous aftercare support and monitoring for 18 months post-discharge. Patients who choose to participate in aftercare monitoring are surveyed at repeated intervals to measure symptom stabilization, aftercare compliance, treatment recidivism, and social and occupational functioning. Patients receive wellness check calls at one, two, three, six, nine, 12, 15 and 18 months to explore survey responses, recovery setbacks and milestones. An IAFF Center of Excellence clinician is always a phone call away.

To make a referral for a client,
call our 24/7 admissions center at 1-855-900-8437.

Learn more at www.IAFFRecoveryCenter.com