

The Kent Center Awarded Grant to Provide Mental Health Discharge Planning Services at ACI

March 1, 2015 – This month, The Kent Center will begin providing trauma-informed discharge planning services to institutionalized offenders at the Department of Corrections who suffer from mental illness. The Rhode Island Department of Administration/Division of Purchases, on behalf of the Rhode Island Departments of Corrections and Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities, and Hospitals, solicited proposals last October from qualified organizations to provide these services. The Kent Center was one of four vendors who submitted proposals for this opportunity. It was awarded \$363,757 to provide these services over a three year timeframe.

An overwhelming percentage of incarcerated individuals have experienced some form of trauma in their lives, and this rate dramatically increases when an inmate has Serious and Persistent Mental Illness. Many prisoners are impacted by additional traumatic events while serving their sentences. Untreated trauma is unlikely to disappear and can contribute to drug and alcohol abuse, chronic pain, depression, and anxiety that can significantly diminish a person's quality of life.

The Kent Center has a lengthy history of providing opportunities for inmates to reclaim their lives at any stage of incarceration, from initial arrest to eventual parole. The Mental Health Discharge Planning Services program will be overseen by Emergency Services, Intake, and Residential Services Program Manager Dee Tavares, LICSW, QMHP. Among other responsibilities, the discharge planner and community intake clinicians will conduct assessments and provide discharge treatment plans and link individuals with clinically appropriate agencies for immediate follow up care.