

Ethics After Hours



One South: Portrait of a Psych Unit, Part 1

Documentary

Summary¹

This two-part documentary follows young patients during their stay at the in-patient psych unit *One South* at Zucker Hillside Hospital, Queens, NY. The unit is specialized in treating young adults with severe mental health issues. They come to the unit in acute crisis, and staff works to stabilize them, help them deal with their emotional pain, and prepares them for discharge and out-patient treatment. During their stay they go through one-on-one therapy sessions and group therapy with psychiatrists, psychologists, and clinical social workers to learn coping strategies. The documentary also gives an insight into how staff on the unit work together to prevent burn-out and deal with moral distress.

Duration: Part 1, 1h 17min.

Directors: Lindsey Megrue & Alexander Shiva

Released: June 25, 2024.

HBO documentary. Available on HBO Max and Crave

Ethical Issues

Stigma

Discharge planning

Moral distress and Moral Wellness

Doctor-patient relationship

Burn-out

Barriers to mental health care

Trauma-informed care

Social determinants of health

Questions for discussion:

- What stood out the most to you in this documentary and why?
- According to the documentary, 1 in 10 young people in the US are diagnosed with a serious mental illness. Does this number surprise you? Why or why not?
- Dr. Laura Braider has a conversation over the phone with a mother. Her son's college had advised him to go via the psychiatric emergency and that he would be admitted to One South from there. However, when the patient arrived at the emergency department (ED), he was told that there were no beds available at One South. Feeling out of place at the psychiatric emergency department, he decided to leave. Dr Braider calls the mother and offers a place at One South on the following day, provided that the son agrees to be admitted via a crisis day clinic. The mother declines the offer, saying that her son won't go to the crisis clinic.
 - What was your initial thoughts when the mother described her son's experience in the emergency department?
 - Why do you think the unit's policy is that all admissions have to go via either the ED or a crisis clinic?

¹ Summary based on Episode descriptions available at [One South: Portrait of a Psych Unit \(TV Mini Series 2024\) - IMDb](#)

- How would you triage admissions to accommodate needs of students at all the colleges that are part of the program?
- Dr. Rachel Reich and Dr. Jason Stasi have a conversation about the challenges they come across in their day-to-day work and how it can affect them personally.
 - What stood out the most to you in this conversation and why?
 - How might conversations with colleagues help alleviate moral distress or promote moral wellness?
- To prevent burn-out staff meet weekly to practice mindfulness and to have an opportunity to talk about challenges they are encountering in their jobs and how these challenges impact their well-being.
 - What do you think of this approach?
 - What other approaches can individual health care providers and health care teams take to build resilience and prevent burnout?