

WVU Medical Center + Ascension Recovery Services

Addressing the Addiction Crisis in West Virginia

Ascension Recovery Services (ARS) partnered with WVU Medicine to expand access to comprehensive substance use disorder treatment and recovery services through the development of the WVU Medicine Center for Hope & Healing and the WV PEERS recovery program.

The partnership between ARS and WVU Medicine aims to fill critical gaps in the SUD care continuum in West Virginia. This includes integrating medical detox, residential treatment, outpatient services, peer recovery support, and community engagement into a single, sustainable model.

The WVU Center for Hope & Healing



Opened in March 2019, the WVU Medicine Center for Hope & Healing opened offering a full spectrum of treatment services for individuals struggling with addiction including, detoxification, trauma-informed care, mindfulness practices, family and support services, individualized treatment plans, group and individual therapy, and medication-assisted treatment.

ARS played a crucial role in feasibility studies, business plan development, licensing, policy creation, EHR implementation, clinical training, marketing, and ongoing operational consulting.

- **29,305-square-foot**
- **12 beds for medically managed withdrawal**
- **30 residential beds for 28-day treatment programs.**



To support the center's mission, ARS's founder and CEO Doug Leech donated \$60,000 to the Patient Care Fund, ensuring treatment access regardless of payer type.



WV Peers Recovery Program

ARS and WVU collaborated to launch WV PEERS, a peer recovery coach network that leverages lived experience to connect individuals with SUD to treatment and support services. Peer coaches engage with individuals in emergency rooms, shelters, and communities, addressing immediate needs like transportation, housing, and food security while facilitating treatment entry.

Program outcomes demonstrate impact:

- **63.9% of individuals accessed mental health or SUD services,**
- **52.3% entered treatment,**
- **and 30.4% remained in treatment at six months.**

Combined Strategic & Clinical Impact

- Improved local access to treatment services, reducing the need for out-of-state referrals.
- Integrated care model aligned with best practices in addiction treatment.
- Community engagement through peer recovery supports improves treatment adherence.
- Demonstrates a replicable model for health systems seeking to expand behavioral health capacity.
- Emphasis on financial sustainability and measurable outcomes.



- **Facility size: 29,305 sq ft**
- **12 detox beds and 30 residential beds**
- **Opened March 1, 2019**
- **\$60,000 philanthropic gift from ARS to Patient Care Fund**
- **63.9% accessed services, 52.3% entered treatment, 30.4% remained at 6 months**