

Outpatient alcohol, substance abuse services to be scaled back in Limestone, Morgan, Lawrence

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Quest Recovery Center, the Mental Health Center's alcohol and drug treatment program, will halt intensive drug and alcohol outpatient services by the end of August, an official announced Friday.

"The decision to scale back and revise the center's alcohol and drug services comes as the result of three-consecutive years of Quest being unable to financially break even," said Bill Giguere, the center's development officer.

In the past, he said other MHC programs have been able to keep Quest viable. That is no longer possible in the current funding environment, he said.

"Drastic changes in the reimbursement process from the Alabama Department of Mental Health for alcohol and substance abuse services have made keeping Quest financially in the black an unattainable goal," Giguere said.

After three years of struggling, he said, there was no option but to scale back the program.

Although Quest Recovery Center will cease to be a standalone program of the MHC, two full-time clinicians will be kept on staff to provide treatment services for people who have co-occurring mental health/substance abuse issues, Giguere said. Alcohol and drug prevention services are alive and well and will continue to be provided at area schools and community agencies, he said.

Remaining Quest staff will be absorbed into other positions at the MHC.

The MHC's Executive Director Marie Hood said, "This was an especially difficult decision for the board to make. Quest has served thousands of adults and adolescents over the years. The board and the center's leadership will continue to explore viable options as we adapt and evolve in this new healthcare landscape."

Within the next few days, all Quest Recovery Center clients will be contacted regarding the changes. Some clients with co-occurring mental health/substance abuse issues will continue to receive treatment at a mental health clinic. Clients who are unable to continue their alcohol and drug treatment services at the center will be provided appropriate referral information to other treatment providers. Quest currently has approximately 100 clients on its roster.

Updated information will be posted on the Foundation for Mental Health's Facebook page and via Twitter @MentalHealthNCA.