



UNIVERSITY PHYSICIANS HEALTHCARE

For Immediate Release

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**Early Psychosis Intervention Center
Established at University Physicians Hospital**

TUCSON, Ariz. (Jan. 14, 2011) – University Physicians Healthcare is now offering treatment for adult patients in the early stages of psychosis at its new Early Psychosis Intervention Center. The treatment and research program, also known as EPICENTER, is one of a handful of its kind in the United States and the only one in Arizona. It is located at University Physicians Hospital at 2800 E. Ajo Way in Tucson.

Nicholas Breitborde, PhD, EPICENTER's director, is an assistant professor of psychiatry in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Arizona College of Medicine. Dr. Breitborde received his PhD in psychology from the University of California, Los Angeles, and completed his clinical internship at the Yale University Training Program in Clinical and Community Psychology. Following the completion of his doctoral program, Dr. Breitborde served as project director for the Specialized Treatment Early in Psychosis Program at Yale University. His experience in that program served as the inspiration and basis for developing the EPICENTER.

EPICENTER aims to reduce the impact of psychosis in patients through early-symptom alleviation and reintegration back into the community. Studies have shown that as with physical illness, treatment early in the course of a mental illness, such as psychosis, can lead to better outcomes. The longer the illness is left untreated, the greater the disruption to the person's ability to meet the demands of transition into school, work, meeting new people and becoming independent in the community.

“The majority of the functional deterioration that accompanies psychotic disorders appears to occur within the first five years after the onset of psychotic symptoms,” Dr. Breitborde said. “Intervention during this 'critical period' has the potential to prevent and/or delay much of the deterioration that accompanies psychotic disorders.”

EPICENTER provides specialized, phase-specific treatment for individuals early in the course of a psychotic illness, such as schizophrenia, schizoaffective, bipolar disorder with psychotic features and unspecified psychosis. Signs of these illnesses can include: trouble with

reality testing, paranoia, hallucinations, delusions, disorganization, odd behavior or thinking, isolating, emotional changes and difficulty with work or school. "We are excited to be able to intervene early in these devastating illnesses so that we can make a significant impact in their course," said Dr. Linda Durst, clinical psychiatrist and department vice-chair at UPH Hospital. "We are fortunate to have Dr. Breitborde offer this service at our campus and hope the community will take advantage of this resource."

UPH is a nonprofit corporation created in 1985 as the medical practice of the physicians of the UA College of Medicine. UPH, the University of Arizona, UPH Hospital and University Medical Center combine to care for patients, educate medical students, train young physicians and conduct clinical research. With more than 400 physicians and 2,000 staff members, UPH is Arizona's largest physicians group.

More information on EPICENTER can be obtained by calling UPH Psychiatry Clinic (520) 874-7500.

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Editors Note: Dr. Breitborde is available for interviews by contacting Christina Myren at 520.310.2400 or cmyren@uph.org.