

## CUSD Cares

### Lighthouse Psychiatry Advanced TMS & Counseling

Season: 3 Episode 2 – October 19, 2022

Director of Counseling and Social Services, Brenda Vargas and Chung Trinh, president and CEO of Lighthouse Psychiatry Advanced TMS & Counseling.

Lighthouse Psychiatry's core mission is to provide innovative solutions to our patients to enable healing the right way. The interconnection between the brain, mind, and physical body can make treatment complex. But when healing is coupled with effective treatment, the solution can be impactful.

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**Brenda Vargas:** 0:06

Welcome to another edition of C U S D Cares. This is Brenda Vargas, and today I have the privilege of being joined by Dr. Chung, CEO of Lighthouse Psychiatry. He comes to us right from our backyard here folks. And Dr. Chung, welcome. Thank you for being with us today.

**Chung Trinh:** 0:25

Well, thank you so much for the invitation. I'm humbled to be here. First off, just call me Chung. I'm a very casual guy. Part of my responsibility is really bringing resources to the community. We have a lot of providers that provide the direct clinical care. Let me just dive right in and share that as Lighthouse Psychiatry, as one of the big players in the mental health space in the Valley we are really excited to help in the community. The question is gonna be who we are. I think we get asked that a lot. We are really two entities. We are a regular brick and mortar psychiatry practice, but separately, we're also an on-profit, that is really our passion piece. We created a well health clinic.

**Brenda Vargas:** 1:18

And let's talk about that a little bit, Chung, because I know part of your passion obviously lies not just in mental health, but in serving our community. Far beyond those maybe that have the ability to receive services, but also extend the services to those that maybe are underserved and part of that n on-profit that you guys established. What was the vision and mission behind why you established that?

**Chung Trinh:** 1:43

Our nonprofit is really focused on kids, the adolescent, the teens, because, as we've discussed in the past, we were just really shocked at how many suicides we witnessed, in a very short period of time. Covid definitely did not help us, but access to care has been a huge barrier for a

lot of kids and a lot of families, especially those families who don't have a lot of resources. Hence, we decided to start this nonprofit, which is a full-service mental health facility that is meant to really serve kids and schools. Specifically, the goal is we're gonna be taking Access individuals as well as commercial insurances. So, we are really excited about contributing to this community and helping the kids.

**Brenda Vargas: 2:26**

And Chung, you know, since the first time that we've connected with you and your staff, it was very obvious to us that you guys are certainly grounded in compassion and innovation. That was at the forefront in our many conversations before I think we even met in person, which was extremely refreshing. When we talk about Lighthouse Psychiatry and the Lighthouse Well Health Clinic, talk to us a little bit about, for those parents and community members that don't know who you are, and just know the name and or are hearing the name for the first time, tell us what types of services your folks are able to offer when they go to Lighthouse.

**Chung Trinh: 3:06**

Great question. So, again, we have two separate entities. I'll dive right into our traditional brick and mortar Lighthouse Psychiatry. It is a complete full-service facility. Not only do we offer general psychiatric medication management, especially for ADHD, depression, anxiety, we also have counseling, but it's not just regular counseling. We offer counseling for kids and teens and adolescents and adults and families and couples. Recently, we've actually established group counseling as well, where we are focused on young adults and teens who are struggling with trauma, as well as general depression anxiety. In addition to the services I just mentioned, we also provide neuromodulation. That is a very unique service that we offer because we're probably one of the few, if not the only, that offer a very broad structure of innovative technology as a means of treating individuals. And that's important because a lot of individuals don't respond well to medications, or more often not, as we've discussed in the past, that people are hitting a roadblock in their therapy. So, what we realize is that not one single treatment modality is enough to help the individuals. We went out and decided that we are gonna be a very broad-spectrum type of service where we offer everything that we could possibly identify that can be useful for families. Now, that is our brick-and-mortar lighthouse psychiatry. The goal is we are gonna transplant all these services into our non-profits. So, we could give the same resources to those individuals who don't have the means, the financial means, or the Access. You know, that's why this has been an amazing project for us to take on.

**Brenda Vargas: 4:49**

I think what's important to highlight is for parents and caregivers to understand is the fact that they have choices when they go to Lighthouse, and what a better option that it's all in one place and you're giving them options because individual care for each family so much comes into play with them making those tough decisions as to what their child needs. And even if they have more than one child with the same concern and or struggle, it may look one way for one

child and completely different for another. So, I certainly appreciate the fact that parents can have all their needs met by going to Lighthouse Psychiatry and having options that they can really be informed through your clinicians and the people that work on your staff, that have been absolutely amazing in supporting us in C U S D and our families. Let's talk about those people. Who do you employ and who can we find if we were ever to reach out to Lighthouse Psychiatry?

**Chung Trinh:** 5:49

Thank you for that. I just want to touch on one piece that you just mentioned is that every person is different. That is a very important distinction. So, the way we approach clinical care is when every person that comes in, we identify them as individuals, and we sought out a very personalized and holistic approach to that person's care. Whether they need medications to address ADHD or depression anxiety, or they have some trauma that they need to address, it doesn't matter. We have the ability to aggregate a lot of different resources and treatment modalities and come up with a treatment plan that can best fit that individual. Now, as we all know, the rise in mental health has been very eye opening and it's a double-edged sword. It's unfortunate that there's so much rise in mental health challenges, but it's also good because we're also at a crossroad where there is amazing awareness. There is significant awareness from all factors of life, and there are also a lot of resources available for that. Even for us, we have seven clinicians that can prescribe medications. They could not only prescribe medications, they could assess people with ADHD issues and get treated right away. I know ADHD is a huge challenge for students because sometimes they see that as a barrier or they see that as a shaming feature, but it's not. It's just any other condition. The moment they get treated; they are gonna feel so much better. We also have nine therapists. It's been very challenging to bring on new providers for counseling and whatnot. We've been very lucky. In addition to the nine that we already have, we've actually just added three more. So, we are at 12 therapists now, and that number is only gonna go up. We're very committed to adding more providers to make sure that we can meet the needs of this community, especially the kids.

**Brenda Vargas:** 7:46

Well, I know that I've had families that have circled back around to us who have said they've had such a positive experience with your staff and that you have been very intentional about connecting the right therapist or clinician for a particular student with a particular need. So, I know part of the treatment success for anyone with a child that's struggling in any of the areas that you mention, part of it has to have the right chemistry and the right person there to be able to receive them, where they're at as all as well as work and support the family as well. So, thank you for doing that. As you continue to share with us, what are some of the other things that you're able to offer families and students?

**Chung Trinh:** 8:30

One of the reasons why we value having all these different resources and have all different types of providers is that we're actually trying to create a continuum or continuity of care that is extremely valuable in securing success. Not only are we looking to treat individuals, we want that individual to succeed, okay? And to be successful, we need to have buy-in from that individual as well as the right team of professionals to surround that individual. That is paramount to why we had set up our facility the way we are, where we have so many different providers of different backgrounds and different resources. It is so critical; somebody's mental health is so fragile that they could easily slip out of it. And if we are not thoughtful in our approach and our strategy to make sure that we catch every nuance and maximize every opportunity to help them, we're offering a very disservice. We are just passionate about our work.

**Brenda Vargas:** 9:27

When you guys have certainly been intentional with where you have decided to spend your time, energy, and resources as you serve families. I know that we have been in communication for over a year now, and you're asking lots of questions and your staff about what is the need; how can we better serve families? We know there's some roadblocks with folks being busy and families running their business day to day and with working families. I would say access and getting students where they need to be and still being ready for learning. So, I appreciate the questions and dialogue that you have participated in with us.

**Chung Trinh:** 10:11

Thank you so much. We're very appreciative that we had this opportunity to sit down with you and have this very exciting engagement with you and C U S D. One of the challenges that many families face is that one they don't know how to recognize their kiddo needing help. There's a certain amount of guilt in not knowing what to do. So sometimes people do too much, and sometimes people don't do enough, and that's okay. That's why we're there. We have sessions with parents, and we help guide those families in a direct direction. Starting next month, we're actually gonna be starting up our monthly events where we are gonna bring families in and help them talk about different aspects of these things.

**Brenda Vargas:** 10:57

We'll be happy to help share what those events are so folks know what's happening right in our backyard. Whether it's something that you're offering to specific individuals that are already seeking care and or if it's something that's open to the community, we'd be happy to share that as well.

**Chung Trinh:** 11:14

Thank you so much. One of the challenges that I think parents should also recognize is that it's very hard to communicate with the child. How do we talk to the child about something so complex like mental health? Because, in the back of the parent's mind the child feels some

aspect of shame because they don't know how they're gonna be perceived if they tell their mom and dad. I have two little kids that are in the Chandler District and during dinner we always talk about, hey, how was your day? Did you have a good day? Did you have a bad day? And if you can normalize these conversations about what is good and what is bad, do you feel sad, do you happy, it takes away a lot of the mystery and a lot of the shaming that maybe some of these kiddos feel when they want to talk about something more serious, God forbid they feel like harming themselves. I mean, if we don't normalize these on a day to day conversation, then, as parents, I would not be prepared to have those thoughtful conversations when I'm called up to have those honest conversations with my little kids.

**Brenda Vargas:** 12:17

Sometimes kids have so many things they're thinking about, and I know they can be pretty critical of themselves in their own personal narrative, and they are pretty hard on themselves, I guess is what I'm saying, especially during those fun adolescent years and really opening up the space to be able to say whatever is on your mind, even if it's not the stuff that's a happy go lucky things. I appreciate that your staff has really been very, very intentional about making sure to reduce the shame around that. It's okay to feel however it is that they're feeling cuz it's just as scary for parents as it is for kids.

**Chung Trinh:** 12:57

Absolutely. Absolutely. You know, one of the things that we were actually gonna start doing is we are actually gonna be opening up our group therapy sessions where we are going to invite people to participate in these groups. We found that it's gonna be a nice way to help individuals' kind of introduce them to what therapy is. Not everybody's maybe ready for one-on-one therapy. Doing these group therapies can potentially expose them to a little bit of everything and allow them to experience some aspect of therapy and buy into getting help. That's the biggest challenge sometimes is they don't know when to get help. We don't know what we don't know. So, if we could introduce these kiddos to these groups and have them share their feelings and maybe learn different coping skills amongst their peers, that could be a great start. And again, everything is about normalizing this topic and normalizing the conversation about mental health because every little thing matters. I always say the value is in the details. Whether it's the kiddo or the parents. If we could just spend just a moment, one conversation, one sentence, and touch on this particular topic and just inquire how the individual's doing, then we have made a step forward. And that's all we're asking is just a step forward. If we all take a small step forward, then can you imagine what that relates to as a community taking a full step forward,

**Brenda Vargas:** 14:22

A small step in the right direction, and many small steps equal right, bigger change. Yeah. One of the last things that I think is critical that parents and community members understand about Lighthouse and please full free, Chung to speak about this, is the fact that you make the parent

participation piece an essential part of the process as their child may be receiving treatment or support. You guys have just done it so beautifully well, in making sure that parents feel affirmed, in doing their job. And also, it's a journey for them.

**Chung Trinh:** 14:58

Well, thank you. Thank you for that. We're doing our best. We're doing everything we can, if we have to throw the kitchen sink in there, we will do that as well, but if somebody needs resources, the best thing they could do is to just go onto our website is just one word, lighthouse tms.com, and send us an email and our team will help that individual, through the process. Getting mental health care if it's a first time for you, it is a very daunting task and it can be scary because we're always scared of the unexpected. That's okay. The moment you reach out to us, we will guide you through that process and hopefully demystify what that can look like for you and the family to get help. It's not uncommon that we have families come in and it's their first time and we see a kiddo and then all of a sudden, they realize that to help that kiddo get better, they need to work on family dynamics or parent relationships or parenting skills or coping skills. And all of a sudden, we realize that we're taking care of the whole family. And not only is one person getting better, but the whole family is also getting better. And ultimately that is the goal that is so much more sustainable than trying to help one person. The value is again, helping the entire family.

**Brenda Vargas:** 16:14

Working together has been at the forefront of how you have really approached every single possible crisis situation that we have sent to you. Our hope is that parents and community in listening to this understand that we want you to act sooner than later. That there is help and there is hope, and that you are one amazing agency that I think could be a solution for many families and students that need the extra support necessary to get through a difficult time or to be seen through a particular season in life when families are approaching different changes that happen because we all have different stressors. And so, what might be easy for one may not be easy for others, but there is no judgment. There is help. Chung, I just appreciate you immensely and your staff for doing what you can. It's quite amazing that you not only are in our backyard, but also your own children attend CUSD schools, you're a C U S D parent, and thank you for being loyal to our organization and our community and wanting to serve and help.

**Chung Trinh:** 17:26

Thank you so much for those kind words. I would like to end with just giving my team a lot of the credit. I have the easy job. I just go out there and share the amazing work that our providers do and our therapists and our staff. But I will say that we have an amazing team and that each one is genuinely passionate about each individual that goes through our door, and we work collectively to make sure that everybody has the same goal of getting better

**Brenda Vargas:** 17:57

And isn't that the goal that we all achieve wellness and, doing the best that we can. Thank you Dr. Chung. I know I keep saying Dr. Chung.

**Chung Trinh:** 18:08

That's okay.

**Brenda Vargas:** 18:09

We appreciate you and if you would like more information about Lighthouse Psychiatry as Chung just shared [lighthouse@psychiatrytms.com](mailto:lighthouse@psychiatrytms.com) You can also find their information on our website, CUSD80 , under the Department of Counseling and Social Services under the parent tab. They're listed as one of our resources in our community. So, thank you and have a good day.