In 2019, the Brattleboro Retreat continued moving forward with a variety of initiatives designed to enhance patient safety, support the delivery of high quality care, and strengthen our operational and business activities.

We welcomed Gaurav Chawla, MD, as our new chief medical officer. Dr. Chawla’s considerable background in psychiatry and addiction treatment along with his experience as a credentialed physician executive has helped strengthen our talented senior leadership team.

The Retreat also began work in 2019 on a complete overhaul of our patient admissions process. Known as Redesign with Patients in Mind or RPM, this initiative was set in motion to ensure that patients and referring providers are put first in every step of the admissions experience.

As you might imagine, this involved actually reducing the number of steps. It also meant eliminating overlaps in reporting and paperwork, expediting the amount of time between a patient’s arrival on campus and assignment to an appropriate level of care, and incorporating greater efficiency into our patient billing and revenue cycle systems.

At the same time, we completed a project to optimize our Pharmacy operations and rolled out new incident reporting and tracking software with an eye toward enhancing patient and staff safety and improving overall quality.
2019 also saw the launch of major construction to create 12 new Level I beds on the first floor of our Linden Lodge building. Slated for completion in December, 2020, this project has been undertaken in partnership with the Department of Mental Health with the goals of expanding Vermont’s treatment capacity for individuals with serious psychiatric disorders and providing relief for emergency departments across the state as they deal with rising numbers of patients experiencing acute psychiatric distress.

On the operations side, 2019 saw the launch of numerous improvements including a new secure online bill pay system, an enhanced emphasis on organization-wide cyber security, the successful completion of negotiations with the Agency of Human Services for a 2020 Medicaid rate increase, the launch of a new employee performance appraisal system, and significant updates to our ADP payroll software.

The numerous accomplishments of the past year have been guided by a singular commitment to improving the lives of our patients and strengthening the communities we serve in the months and years to come.