FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 25, 2023

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

Julie Tracy, MS, MSW, LICSW

Acting Specialty Medication Clinic Manager

802-258-6714 / jtracy@brattlebororetreat.org

**Brattleboro Retreat Specialty Medication Clinic**

**Introduces Esketamine Program**

**for Treatment-Resistant Depression**

**Brattleboro, VT**—While treatments such as anti-depressants and psychotherapy work for many people with certain psychiatric conditions, for others these interventions can prove ineffective. When at least two medications from different drug classes have failed to provide symptom relief, adult individuals may qualify for esketamine (Spravato®) therapy, now offered by referral in the Specialty Medication Clinic of the Brattleboro Retreat, a leading specialty psychiatric hospital for people of all ages located in Brattleboro, Vermont.

FDA-approved, esketamine is a prescription-only nasal spray which is self-administered in a safe, medically supervised clinical setting to treat adults with treatment resistant depression, or adults with major depressive disorder with acute suicidal ideation or behavior. It increases the brain’s glutamate levels, which is thought to alleviate depression by strengthening and improving connections between brain cells.

Julie Tracy, Acting Specialty Medication Clinic Manager and clinician, says that esketamine “is effective for 70% to 75% of people who receive a full treatment course, with relief sometimes coming within hours, or after several treatments, faster than many conventional antidepressants.” Tracy explains that qualifying patients referred by a medical or mental health provider receive treatment twice a week for four weeks, then step down to once a week for an additional four weeks, at which point their progress is evaluated. Each session takes about 2 hours and fifteen minutes in the Brattleboro Retreat’s Specialty Medication Clinic, from check-in to administering of the medication, with a two-hour observation period in a private room to watch for temporary side-effects including dizziness and fatigue.

To learn more about Esketamine treatment at the Specialty Medication Clinic, the Brattleboro Retreat directs people to brattlebororetreat.org/SMC. Those who wish to know if they qualify for this prescription-only treatment are advised to speak to their doctor or therapist, as there are currently no self-referrals for this treatment. Providers may fill out a referral form online at brattlebororetreat.org/referrals or call 802-258-3700 or 1-800-RETREAT. Esketamine is covered by Medicare/Medicaid and most private insurers. Verification of insurance acceptance is provided free of charge by the Brattleboro Retreat.

**About Brattleboro Retreat**

The Brattleboro Retreat, founded in 1834, is a not-for-profit, regional specialty psychiatric hospital and addictions treatment center, providing a full range of diagnostic, therapeutic and rehabilitation services for individuals of all ages and their families. Recognized as a national leader in the treatment of mental illness and addiction, the Brattleboro Retreat offers a high quality, individualized, comprehensive continuum of care including inpatient, partial hospitalization, residential, and outpatient treatment.

**# # #**

A person pushing a basket full of children

Description automatically generated with low confidence