



## About Belmont Behavioral Health System

Belmont Behavioral Health System is an inpatient psychiatric and mental health hospital in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. They provide innovative mental health and addiction treatment services for children, adolescents and adults.

As one of the largest mental and behavioral healthcare providers in Philadelphia, Belmont Behavioral Health System has strived to provide the highest quality of care to individuals and their families for over 75 years. Designed with comfort and healing in mind, their new state-of-the-art hospital has 252 patient beds and numerous features and amenities. Their care is focused on renewing hope and encouraging lasting recovery.

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Ukeru has elevated my therapeutic techniques when I'm interacting with our more intense PRS (persons receiving services) in various units throughout the hospital.

Tanya B.  
CBHA

## Looking for Solutions

Prior to Ukeru, Belmont Behavioral Health System was searching for a tool to keep their staff and individuals safe while they worked towards eliminating the use of mechanical restraints throughout their facility. In addition, they were in the process of opening a specialty unit for the neurodivergent population. To support these efforts, they were seeking a less restrictive approach for staff to use in crisis situations.

Ukeru appealed to them as a partner because its trauma-informed approach and philosophy aligned with their organizational beliefs and its focus on creating a culture change is exactly what they were aiming for.



# Working with Ukeru

Belmont Behavioral Health System began working with Ukeru in the Summer of 2022. The implementation of Ukeru came at a pivotal time. As they diligently worked to move away from mechanical restraints, leadership strategically introduced Ukeru as a new tool for staff to further support their efforts. “Ukeru definitely supported our efforts in increasing the feeling of safety and protection, particularly with the Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) population” shared Shawna Gigliotti, Director of Training and Development.

Ukeru training is a part of their orientation process and they are carefully working to expand it throughout the entire hospital. Ukeru is used in tandem with another system, along with their sensory-based de-escalation tools.

To ensure a successful implementation, they had their Ukeru trainers, many of who were managers, assigned to specific units to model usage and support their peers. In addition to coaching their employees, they held retrainings, debriefings, camera reviews and reeducations.



My experience with the Ukeru team has always been positive. The team is super helpful, approachable, and supportive. They also have real life experience and are understanding to the work being done.

**Shawna Gigliotti**

*Director of Training and Development*



**Increased staff protection and safety**



**Effective tool for acute care**



**Increased application of trauma-informed practices**



**Reduction of self injurious behavior**

## Results

Less than two years ago, Belmont Behavioral Health System set out to find a tool for their staff that would help them reach and maintain their goals as an organization. The support and comfort of Ukeru training and equipment came at a crucial time, as they were in the process of eliminating mechanical restraints across their organization. We are so impressed with their ability to do this and are **excited to share that they have been 2+ years mechanical restraint-free**. This is an incredible accomplishment and we hope that this inspires similar organizations to follow in their footsteps.

To those in acute care settings looking to reduce their use of restrictive practices, Gigliotti would say, “It’s all about how you approach this. This was a huge discussion at my hospital. However, **once you show staff another way and are in it with them, they start to believe this is possible**. Now we have staff that never even knew mechanical restraints were an option.”



Gigliotti continued, “Just try! Motivate your staff, lead by example, be present, keep the energy going, have a countdown, give milestone rewards, don’t lose sight of why you are doing this, and most importantly - provide staff with multiple tools in their toolkit to be successful. Have a plan and roll it out slowly.”

The implementation of Ukeru escalated the culture change that they were striving for. They have worked hard to build a culture that is safe and comforting. **“Ukeru has significantly supported staff in feeling protected, as well as reducing self injurious behavior in the unit,”** Gigliotti stated. In addition to increasing safety, staff have a better understanding of the individuals they serve. “Staff have reported that they feel that understanding the ‘why’ provides more insight and empathy to depersonalize the behavior,” shared Gigliotti.

Gigliotti continued, “The system really improves staff’s approach even without the pads. I chose this system for the didactic piece and approach to staff education. It is a great framework with the added bonus of the pads to reduce hands-on interventions.”

**“I can anecdotally state that our staff’s approach and understanding of de-escalation has been more trauma-informed and supportive to the patient’s needs,”** said Gigliotti.

Belmont Behavioral Health System is further proof that a trauma-informed, restraint-free approach benefits everyone and that Ukeru can play an essential role in an acute care setting. They are paving the way for others and demonstrating what it means to be a trauma-informed organization.

As far as next steps, Belmont Behavioral Health System is excited to expand Ukeru throughout their entire organization. Once rolled out organization-wide, they are eager to see what changes and results they achieve on a larger scale.

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Ukeru is very effective  
and useful.

Javon A. / CBHA III

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I like the pads! They are  
helpful, safe, and great when  
individuals are aggressing.

Shannon Elam / CBHA

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Ukeru is good! I enjoy the  
education part. It makes  
you understand the brain  
and the patient.

Kia Watson / CBHA III