



HOAG MEMORIAL HOSPITAL PRESBYTERIAN
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**Hoag's Teen Mental Health Program Accredited by
Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC)**

*ASPIRE program participants can now receive school credit hours
to be applied toward graduation*

NEWPORT BEACH, Calif., May 13, 2019 --- The [After-School Program for Interventions and Resiliency Education \(ASPIRE\) Program](#) at Hoag is now accredited by the [Western Association of Schools and Colleges \(WASC\)](#) for teens to receive high school credits.

The ASPIRE program, offered by the [Pickup Family Neurosciences Institute at Hoag](#), received a three-year accreditation, and teens who complete the program are eligible to receive up to five WASC-approved semester credit hours to be applied toward their high school graduation. Acceptance of credits toward graduation, as well as the number and type of credits granted, are determined by each individual school district and school. This is the first Hoag program to offer a school credit option for teen participants.

“Accreditation from WASC is a true testament to both the strength of the ASPIRE program and the great need for these mental health support services for our local community,” said [Sina Safahieh, M.D., board certified in child and adolescent psychiatry and program director of ASPIRE at Hoag](#). “The recognition further affirms the value and importance of the services we offer to help teens and their families navigate the unique and difficult set of pressures they encounter living here in Orange County.”

Hoag currently collaborates with the Newport Mesa and Tustin school districts to offer the credit program and is expected to expand to additional local districts in the near future.

In response to an alarming local trend of youths in Orange County and across the nation afflicted with severe depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts and other [mental health](#)

[disorders](#), Hoag launched the acclaimed ASPIRE program in 2018 in both Newport Beach and Irvine to help local youth and families tackle the life-changing challenges of these disorders.

According to the 2018 Orange County Community Indicators Report, major depression hospitalizations among children and youth have increased 99% locally since 2007.

To date, more than 50 Orange County teens and their families have participated in the ASPIRE program and utilized its support, early intervention tools and access to specialists with prevention training that strengthens future functioning for the entire family. While the services provided are reimbursed by insurance, some families can't afford the associated deductible. Philanthropy supports family scholarships to ensure those who need ASPIRE can access it.

The intensive outpatient therapy program is designed for young people ages 13-17 with significant anxiety or depression and who are at risk of harming themselves. Over the course of eight weeks, dialectical behavioral therapy and expressive arts are used to help teens develop and practice healthy behaviors and coping strategies. ASPIRE builds interpersonal relationships through educational groups, skills groups and weekly family meetings, requiring parents or guardians to participate during the course of the program.

WASC is one of six regional associations that accredit public and private schools, colleges and universities in the United States. It is responsible for evaluating the quality and effectiveness of higher-education institutions in California, Hawaii, Guam and the Pacific Basin. The ASPIRE program is fully accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Schools, Western Association of Schools as Colleges as a Supplementary Education Program.

For more information on ASPIRE, visit hoag.org/ASPIRE. For more information about the WASC Accreditation, contact Accrediting Commission for Schools - Western Association of Schools and Colleges - 533 Airport Blvd., Suite 200 Burlingame, CA 94010 www.acswasc.org.

ABOUT PICKUP FAMILY NEUROSCIENCES INSTITUTE

Delivering a personalized, integrated approach using best-practice guidelines, the most advanced technology, and integration of medical specialists in the most appropriate facilities, the [Pickup Family Neurosciences Institute \(PFNI\) at Hoag](#) provides the highest quality care for patients with brain and spine disorders including stroke, aneurysms and vascular malformations, brain tumors, epilepsy, movement disorders, memory and cognitive disorders, pain, minimally invasive spine surgery, multiple sclerosis, addiction medicine and sleep disorders, as well as the mind-body interface of behavioral health. Several of Hoag's PFNI programs have received high acclaim, including the stroke program, which was the first hospital in Orange County and the second in California to be named a Certified Comprehensive Stroke Center by DNV GL Healthcare. It was awarded the American Stroke Association's Get With The Guidelines Stroke Gold Plus Performance Achievement for stroke care. And as one of the first centers in the U.S. to offer the most advanced radiosurgical treatment system available, Leksell Gamma Knife® Perfexion™, the PFNI brain tumor program is the largest in Orange County and is also among the top volume programs in the western United States. The epilepsy program is an accredited Level 4 center. The PFNI's memory and cognitive disorders program is nationally recognized.

ABOUT HOAG MEMORIAL HOSPITAL PRESBYTERIAN

Hoag is an approximately \$1 billion nonprofit, regional health care delivery network in Orange County, California, that treats more than 30,000 inpatients and 450,000 outpatients annually. Hoag consists of two acute-care hospitals – Hoag Hospital Newport Beach, which opened in 1952, and Hoag Hospital Irvine, which opened in 2010 – in addition to eight health centers and 11 urgent care centers. Hoag is a designated Magnet® hospital by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC). Hoag offers a comprehensive blend of health care services that includes five institutes providing specialized services in the following areas: [cancer](#), [heart and vascular](#), [neurosciences](#), [women's health](#), and orthopedics through Hoag's affiliate, [Hoag Orthopedic Institute](#), which consists of an orthopedic hospital and two ambulatory surgical centers. Hoag has been named one of the Best Regional Hospitals in the 2018 - 2019 *U.S. News & World Report*, and *Becker's Healthcare* named Hoag as one of the 2018 "100 Great Hospitals in America" – a designation Hoag has received five times. For an unprecedented 23 years, residents of Orange County have chosen Hoag as one of the county's best hospitals in a local newspaper survey. Visit www.hoag.org for more information.

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