

# PSYCHIATRY DISORDERS, MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

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Josh Vigderman, J Ment Health Aging 2019, Volume 3



## Josh Vigderman

Merakey, USA

### BIOGRAPHY

Josh Vigderman has been working in the behavioral health field for 14 years. He has been involved in the Drug and Alcohol programs for Merakey since 2007. While working with Merakey, he had multiple roles, beginning as a Therapist and now in his current position as Executive Director—Addiction Services. He was recently a recipient of Philadelphia's Social Innovation Awards for his work implementing a mobile team to help clean up Philadelphia's encampment sites. He is very passionate and dedicated to help any individual who is seeking treatment through Merakey. He received his Master's in Clinical Counseling Psychology and is a Licensed Professional Counselor in the State of Pennsylvania.

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### AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO MEDICATED ASSISTED TREATMENT

Merakey Parkside Recovery has designed an innovative treatment model to address the opioid epidemic plaguing the city of Philadelphia. The Merakey Parkside Mobile Intake and Assessment team travel throughout the city, providing outreach, screening and intervention efforts to individuals experiencing substance use and/or co-occurring symptoms. They also deliver interventions through emergency services or admission to the appropriate level of care by creating immediate access to services and engaging individuals in their environment with consideration for their unique needs. The design of this innovative service aims to remove barriers to immediate access to treatment, promote same day admissions, reduce readmissions, shorten lengths of stay and decrease treatment failure, ultimately enhancing treatment outcomes and yielding reduced overall costs. The Merakey Parkside Mobile Intake and Assessment Unit provide access to care utilizing all three forms of MAT (Methadone, Buprenorphine and Vivitrol). Persons in recovery (PIR) have same day access to our physicians so that their physical discomfort in withdrawal can be alleviated as soon as possible. The Mobile Intake and Assessment Unit allows them to continue with their long-standing practice and ability to admit clients to MAT regardless of the use of other substances, issues with transportation, homelessness or any other social determinants of health. Merakey Parkside has improved access to services with the use of our Mobile Unit to actively engage individuals in need of services. The Mobile Unit utilizes a centralized intake hotline for those either in need of recovery services or those who are referring someone to their care. Whether under a bridge in a local encampment site, in a homeless shelter or in a crisis unit the Mobile Unit is truly meeting people at their current living situation. The Merakey Parkside model is based on a true outreach initiative that extends beyond the walls of a traditional clinic and is built on an integrated and coordinated approach to care.