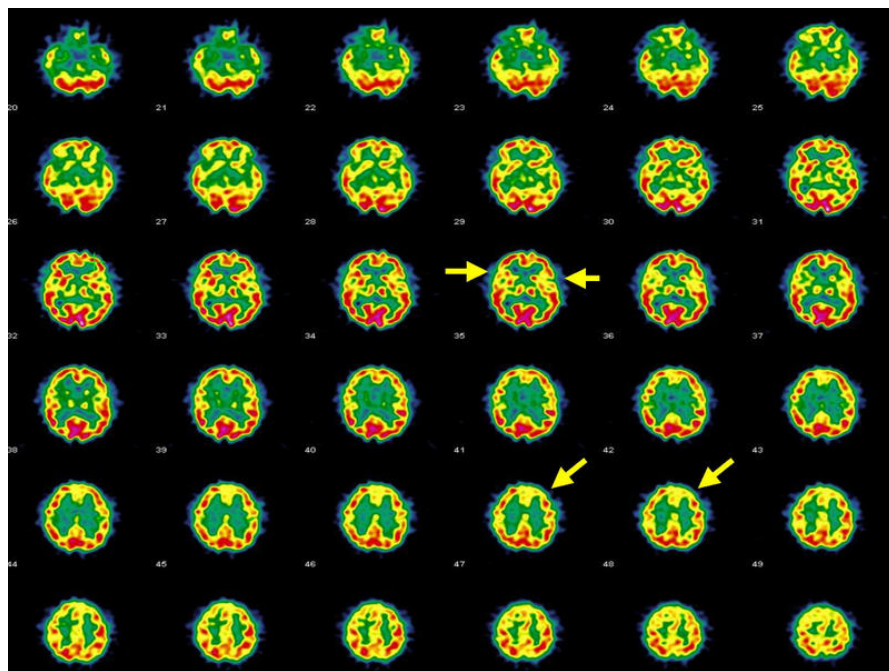


## Mental Health

12:09 PM FRI JANUARY 23, 2015

## Early Intervention Program Offers Hope for New Haven Area Youths With Psychosis

By [RAY HARDMAN](#) (/PEOPLE/RAY-HARDMAN)

([http://mediad.publicbroadcasting.net/p/wnpr/files/styles/x\\_large/public/201501/Affective\\_psychosis%2C\\_Hashimoto%27s\\_thyroiditis%2C\\_and\\_brain\\_perfusion\\_abnormalities.jpg](http://mediad.publicbroadcasting.net/p/wnpr/files/styles/x_large/public/201501/Affective_psychosis%2C_Hashimoto%27s_thyroiditis%2C_and_brain_perfusion_abnormalities.jpg))

Alberto Bocchetta, Giorgio Tamburini, Pina Cavolina, Alessandra Serra, Andrea Loviselli and Mario Piga Wikimedia Commons

Yale University and the state are now offering a new treatment to young people living in the New Haven area who are experiencing psychotic symptoms. The treatment is also the subject of a soon-to-be-released study.

People who suffer from psychosis often have their first psychotic episode sometime in their late teens or early 20s.

According to Dr. Vinod Srihari, associate professor of psychiatry at Yale, this episode can be a confusing and debilitating event, and may actually cause sufferers to delay treatment.

"People often feel the world has changed," Srihari said. "Often they feel that people are out to get them, and it may not be clear to them that they actually need professional help. The transition from having an episode to 'maybe I should seek help' can be a cause of great delay. Sometimes it takes years."

Those are years during which peers are

going to college or starting careers, which can be an additional source of anxiety and frustration for a patient.

### [Yale's Specialized Treatment Early in Psychosis](#)

(<http://medicine.yale.edu/psychiatry/step>), or STEP clinic, is tailored to these patients. STEP coordinates medication, counseling, and social skills training -- and perhaps most important, according to Srihari, involves the patient in the process.



Dr. Vinod Srihari is the Associate Program Director and Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at Yale School of Medicine.

*Credit Vinod Srihari / Twitter*

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The map shows the following areas: BETHANY, WOODBRIDGE, NORTH HAVEN, HAMDEN, NEW HAVEN, EAST HAVEN, ORANGE, and WEST HAVEN.

The STEP clinic is now available for young people in the New Haven area suffering from symptoms of psychosis. The partnership between Yale and the state DMHAS is called "Mindmap".

*Credit mindmapct.org*

"All of this was more tolerable and acceptable to young people, with an overall focus on their goals, that tended to be around vocational goals, like finding ways to get back to college, or get back to work," said Srihari.

According to a study to be released next month in the journal *Psychiatric Services*, three out of four patients in the STEP clinic avoided hospitalization in the year after their episode, and were more likely to go back to school and have jobs than those in traditional treatment.

Yale and the state Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services have partnered to offer the STEP clinic to young people living in the eight towns surrounding New Haven. For more information, go to [mindmapct.org](http://mindmapct.org) (<http://mindmapct.org/>).

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