

Tools from the National Center Resource Exchange: Maximizing the Power of a Community-Generated Platform

Integrating Behavioral Health into Primary Care

Overview: As health care reform proceeds and primary care is transformed, many practices are considering integration of behavioral health services to improve access and quality. This guide provides helpful resources to use when considering behavioral health integration.

- [Improving Primary Care: Team Guide](#): Part of the “Improving Primary Care: Team Guide,” the resource, created by The Primary Care Team: Learning From Effective Ambulatory Practices (LEAP) initiative with support from The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, studied exemplary primary care practices from across the United States and used findings to develop resources to guide primary care practice redesign and service expansion. Some of the practices studied had integrated behavioral health services. This is an overview of the models and their major features.
- [Quick Start Guide to Behavioral Health](#): The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA) sponsors the Center for Integrated Health Solutions (CIHS) that serves to promote the development of integrated services and disseminates support resources. This guide provides an overview of steps and questions regarding integration.

Provider Competencies and Resources: To work effectively in primary care settings, behavioral health providers must adopt practice patterns and skill sets different from those used in traditional specialty mental health settings.

- [Improving Primary Care: Behavioral Health Specialists](#): This LEAP initiative outlines major roles of primary care behavioral health providers found in exemplary primary care practices across the United States.
- [U.S. Air Force: Behavioral Health Optimization Program Practice Manual](#) and [U.S. Air Force Primary Care Behavioral Health: Practice Manual Appendices](#): The United States Air Force has been working to integrate behavioral health services into its primary care clinics since the late 1990’s. As a result of these efforts, this practice manual and appendix has been developed. This rich collection provides extensive resources to review as providers and administrators explore behavioral health integration.
- [Provider- and Practice-Level Competencies for Integrated Behavioral Health in Primary Care: A Literature Review](#): Published in 2015, this review provides an overview of the practice, provider and staff competencies needed for successful integration.

Financing: A major challenge to integration is reimbursement. A variety of payment models are emerging as payers shift to value-based payments. Two resources are provided that illustrate current payment issues.

- [CIHS - Financing Resources](#): This collection of resources and guidance centers on current Medicare payment structures, sustainability models and billing worksheets.
- [CHCS State Payment and Financing Models to Promote Health and Social Service Integration](#): The Center for Health Care Strategies, with support from the Commonwealth Fund, published a brief in February 2015 that describes possible funding models.

Related Resources: Listed below are additional resources to provide information regarding the major aspects of behavioral health integration:

- [Academy for Integrating Behavioral Health and Primary Care](#): Offered by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), the Academy serves as a coordinating center and resource for the delivery of integrated care. Their portal provides a wide range of resources covering many aspects of integration.
- [Collaborative Family Health Care Association](#): This interprofessional group focuses on the development of care models that integrate health and mental health care.
- [Advancing Integrated Mental Health Solutions \(AIMS\) Center: University of Washington](#): The AIMS Center has a long history of developing and testing collaborative care models and has used the evidence gained to develop care models and processes exportable to many sites.

Accessing Resources: To access these and other resources and to upload your contribution, visit www.nexusipe.org and click on “Resource Exchange” from the left navigation.

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