



Integrated Behavioral Health Initiative

CARING FOR PEOPLE'S PHYSICAL, BEHAVIORAL, AND MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS UNDER ONE ROOF.

In Montana, primary care providers serve as the first line of treatment for many people with mental illness and substance use disorders.

The Integrated Behavioral Health Initiative supports primary care providers to care for patients' physical, behavioral, and mental health needs under one roof. Primary care practices in this initiative develop a team-based approach that helps them provide routine screening and prompt, effective care for common issues like depression, anxiety, and substance misuse and builds referral relationships so that people with more severe behavioral health issues can get the care they need without a long wait.

The Integrated Care Model

The Integrated Behavioral Health Initiative uses the integrated care model. This is a team-based approach (also called "integrated care" or "integrated behavioral health") that helps primary care providers incorporate screening for behavioral health issues into regular health maintenance and acute care visits.

In this model, primary care providers partner with or bring behavioral health providers onboard and integrate them seamlessly into their workflows. Care coordinators are also incorporated into the health care team and relied on to coordinate patient care and referrals and connect them to resources that support health, like safe housing, healthy food, and reliable transportation.

BENEFITS OF THE INTEGRATED CARE MODEL INCLUDE:

Improving Patient Care •

Integrated care improves physical and mental health by expanding access to timely behavioral health care and increasing efficiency.¹ Studies in youth and adults consistently show a significant improvement in both physical and behavioral health outcomes in settings that provide integrated care, as well as reduced utilization of high-cost hospital and emergency department services.²

Reducing Health Care Costs •

Integrated care allows primary care providers to catch and treat behavioral health issues early, which can reduce health care costs and improve patient care experiences.³

Supporting Health Care Providers •

Integrated care makes it easier for providers to offer prompt, effective care for common behavioral health issues. It also improves provider well-being and resilience and reduces burnout.⁴

Solving Montana's Behavioral Health Provider Shortages •

Integrated care allows many behavioral health issues to be identified and treated in primary care, reserving scarce specialty care resources for the most complex cases.

Comprehensive Healthcare Integration Framework

The Comprehensive Healthcare Integration (CHI) framework supports primary care practices both large and small adapt the model in a way that is congruent with their resource capacity, population needs, payer incentives, and regulatory requirements. Grantees implement the following domains of integrated care:

- Integrating screening, referral to care, and follow up
- Prevention and treatment of common conditions
- Continuing care management
- Self-management support that is adapted to the culture, socioeconomic and life experiences of patients
- Multi-disciplinary teamwork
- Systematic measurement and quality improvement
- Linkages with community/social services for social determinants of health
- Financial sustainability

How We Help

The Montana Healthcare Foundation helps primary care practices across the state implement integrated care by providing start-up funding and tailored technical assistance.

Funding to join the initiative is available to primary care practices that serve a substantial low-income, Medicaid, or other at-risk population, including practices based in large hospitals and critical access hospitals, federally qualified health centers, tribal health departments, urban Indian health centers, and rural health clinics.

To learn more about the Integrated Behavioral Health Initiative, visit mthcf.org/priority/integrated-behavioral-health.

If you are interested in participating in the initiative, please get in touch with our office at info@mthcf.org. All grant applications are by invitation only.

In rural states like Montana, where specialty providers are scarce, **more than half of people seek behavioral health care from their primary care provider.**

We support primary care practices to screen for and treat behavioral health issues so that Montanans can get many of their behavioral health needs met by their primary care team.⁵

¹ <https://archive.ahrq.gov/research/findings/evidence-based-reports/mhsapc.pdf>

² <https://mthcf.org/resource/brief-integrated-behavioral-health-in-montana/>

³ <https://archive.ahrq.gov/research/findings/evidence-based-reports/mhsapc.pdf>

⁴ <https://nam.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Implementing-Optimal-Team-Based-Care-to-Reduce-Clinician-Burnout.pdf>

⁵ https://www.behavioralhealthworkforce.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Y4-P10-BH-Capacityof-PC-Phys_Full.pdf



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