

Practice Innovation Strategies: Behavioral health integration

Integrating medical and behavioral health care services within primary care practices helps promote more accessible and equitable treatment of patients' behavioral, mental and physical health needs.

This collection of AMA STEPS Forward® Practice Innovation Strategies and BHI Collaborative products provides physician practices with evidence-based best practices, tools, aggregated resources and practical solutions to implementing and sustaining integrated behavioral health care.

Compendium

Developed by the BHI Collaborative, the Behavioral Health Integration (BHI) Compendium serves as a tool to learn about integrating behavioral health care, which includes mental health and substance use disorders care, and how to make it effective for your practice and patients.

[The] aim is to provide accessible, detailed information on the steps required to integrate behavioral health care, which includes mental health and substance use disorders (SUD), into your practice and to provide links to resources should you desire further, more specific information.

View an overview or download the BHI Compendium.

Toolkits

This collection of toolkits focuses on behavioral health education, including the resources and support physicians need to bring medical and behavioral health services together.

- Behavioral health integration into primary care
- Medication Adherence
- Empathetic Listening
- Project ECHO® (Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes)

- Social Determinants of Health
 - Essentials of Good Pain Care: A Team-Based Approach
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Webinars

Access strategies and solutions to catalyzing effective and sustainable integration of behavioral and mental health care into physician practices.

Discussions

View discussions about BHI, how COVID-19 has affected mental health needs and how health care professionals are working to address patients' needs today and beyond.

- PIN discussion on BHI in 2020 and 2021.
 - Patrice Harris, MD, MA, AMA former president, participates in the Bipartisan Policy Center Workgroup on BHI: Tackling America's Mental Health and Addiction Crisis Through Primary Care Integration (report and infographic).
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Videos

This video collection discusses ways physicians can advance the integration of behavioral health in their practice, during COVID-19 and beyond.

- How to advance equity by integrating behavioral health: Experts discuss ways physicians can advance health equity in their practice.
 - How to integrate behavioral health into your practice: Experts discuss the BHI Collaborative and how to integrate behavioral health into your practice, an issue that takes on new urgency during COVID-19.
 - Patrice Harris, MD, MA, discusses the pandemic's impact on children & teens: Learn more about the growing concerns with mental health issues in children and adolescents.
 - AMA Telehealth Immersion Program: AMA's newest offering guides physicians, practices and health systems in optimizing and sustaining telehealth at their organizations.
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Podcasts

Practice experts share how they successfully integrated behavioral health care into their practice workflow, creating a seamless experience for patients and the care team.

- AMA Moving Medicine: BHI in practice & establishing efficient workflow
 - AMA Moving Medicine: Beating physician burnout with BHI
 - ReachMD: BHI & exploring its effect on clinical practice
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Resources

The AMA provides physician practices with tools and practical solutions to integrate behavioral health programs.

- BHI in physician practices
 - AMA Opioid Task Force
 - Medicare Annual Wellness Visit (AWV) workflow
 - Substance use disorder treatment guide
 - Suicide prevention guide to treat at-risk patients
 - Psychopharmacology guide on prescribing psychotropic medications
 - Designing a workflow for behavioral health integration
 - Managing mental health during COVID-19
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Research

AMA partnered with the RAND Corporation to learn about the motivators, facilitators and barriers to BHI from physician practices with firsthand experience.

“We found that behavioral health integration is possible in a wide variety of medical practices, not just in primary care,” said Dr. Peggy G. Chen, co-author of the study and a physician researcher at RAND, a nonprofit research organization. “The key factor in the success of behavioral health integration was adaptation to each practice’s needs and resources.”

Explore key findings and more.