

Patient Engagement in Psychosocial Services

A Quality Improvement Project
from the Partners For Kids Quality Improvement Coaching Program

Project Overview

The Partners For Kids (PFK) Quality Improvement (QI) Coaching Program offers a QI project to assist community behavioral health providers with engaging new patients in longitudinal care for therapy, counseling, and other psychosocial services for at least 4 visits in a 3-month period. The project will support providing new patients with frequent initial visits needed to establish a therapeutic relationship. New patients with a variety of behavioral health diagnoses will be monitored.

Rationale

According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), the average period of time between onset of symptoms for mental illness and intervention is 8 to 10 years. The research shows most evidence-based therapy interventions need 6-16 sessions for clinically meaningful improvement. However, while the average number of outpatient visits is 3, the majority only attend 1 outpatient visit, indicating the need for subsequent longitudinal care. Initial engagement for developing treatment goals and rapport is critical for better adherence to longitudinal care and for optimal outcomes. Evidence-based literature supports the importance of providing longitudinal care for mental health conditions, as these patients are typically at risk for missed appointments and not meeting their treatment goals.

Project Components

- Develop operational processes for **identifying and tracking** “new” patients
- Implement a **standardized scheduling process** for enhancing patient engagement in their treatment
- Implement processes to **improve no show rates** and active follow-up for no shows

Practice Benefits

- Achieve improved patient outcomes
- Align with behavioral health Provider Incentive Plan (PIP)
- Strengthen QI knowledge and skills to better impact other disease processes
- Improve billing of appropriate behavioral health management codes
- Customize to fit your practice

Support Resources Available

- Lists of eligible PFK patients, based on diagnosis codes and related treatment codes
- Expertise and guidance from PFK QI specialists
- Training from Nationwide Children’s Hospital (NCH) affiliated primary care and mental health specialists
- Data support using your practice’s Electronic Health Record (EHR) and claims data

For more information about PFK QI projects, please contact PFK QI Coaching at PFKQICoaching@NationwideChildrens.org

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