

# 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](mailto:PFKQICoaching@NationwideChildrens.org)

PARTNERS  
FOR KIDS®

