



Telebehavioral Health Promotes Access to Subspecialties of Care

Remote providers offer clinical teams an extension of care





Integrating Remote Specialists Into Clinical Teams

Leaders of behavioral health organizations, like leaders in other industries, are often trying their best to do more with less. A growing demand for behavioral health care creates an even more delicate environment, as organizations manage provider shortages, extended wait times and less patient capacity while reconciling their passion for offering treatment when and where it is needed.

These all-too-common challenges are some of the top reasons why telebehavioral health partnerships have become so valued by clinical teams and behavioral health leaders.

One of the most critical benefits of a telebehavioral health partnership, though, is its ability to allow a behavioral health organization to introduce specialized treatment to patients that might not otherwise be available in their immediate area.

Any organization navigating the needs assessment phase of the CCBHC designation process is familiar with varied subspecialties that could be beneficial to a behavioral health organization, from adolescent psychiatry to culturally-competent providers to forensic psychiatrists with legal expertise. The needs of every community are different.

By partnering with an organization offering remote providers with expertise in any number of subspecialties, behavioral health organizations have the opportunity to better meet their patients (and the very specific needs of their patients) right where they are — regardless of geography.

Telebehavioral health partnerships, like those offered by innovaTel, help organizations relieve patient capacity issues, reduce wait times and — overall — improve access to care.

Extending Care with Expanded Subspecialties

Statistics indicate 1 in 5 children are impacted by mental health disorders in the U.S. And a recent report by the American Academy of Pediatrics revealed that mental health disorders in children now more commonly cause impairment and limitations than physical conditions¹.

But gaining access to specialized treatment offered by a child or adolescent psychiatrist is a significant challenge for many, due in large part to wait times and geography.

The American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry is calling the nationwide shortage of child and adolescent psychiatrists “severe.” A workforce map detailing the national availability of child and adolescent psychiatrists throughout the country illustrates the crisis in vivid detail², as most of the map indicates a complete absence of these types of specialized providers.

With a lack of incoming specialists (current average age is 52), and just 14 child and adolescent psychiatrists available per 100,000 children in the U.S., primary care providers, community organizations and schools are in need of alternate solution.

Adolescents, when treated by providers without the proper, specialized qualifications, may be misdiagnosed³. A recent report in The New York Times revealed that Black and Native Hawaiian youth primarily living below the poverty line were more often diagnosed with disruptive behavioral disorders as compared to their white peers.

A social and cultural understanding, coupled with specialized clinical training and experience in treating adolescent youth, allows for a more informed diagnosis and a more informed treatment plan. Telebehavioral health partnerships facilitate more positive outcomes by placing highly-qualified, specialized providers in areas of great need.

Scarce Care

10,597
Child and Adolescent Psychiatrists in the U.S.

74,077,738
Children in the U.S.

Telebehavioral Health Reduces Wait Times

Children’s Wisconsin had a child psychiatry waitlist of more than 600 kids before partnering with innovaTel and reducing the waitlist to 0.





Understanding Challenges In An Authentic Way

No two patients are the same, as any provider or behavioral healthcare leader can attest. Any number of varied factors influence a person's mental and physical health, from environmental to social, to cultural and beyond. It's why certain patient populations, **such as those with racial and ethnic backgrounds, those from the LGBTQ+ community, and even women in general, greatly benefit from treatment offered by providers who understand their lived experiences.**

Research has shown that culturally-competent care, including **providers who speak more than one language, has the ability to improve patient engagement and improve a patient's commitment to treatment**, both of which inevitably have the potential to improve outcomes.

California, for example, just enacted new laws requiring cultural competency training to specifically help support gender-affirming care⁴.

Particularly as it relates to mental health, a culturally-competent approach to care offers a better understanding of underlying influences for certain types of behaviors. And with a telebehavioral health partnership, organizations are able to not only ensure that remote providers joining their clinical teams are training in culturally-competent care, but they're also able to find a provider whose experience and background best aligns with the needs of a specific community.

Just 1 in 3 African Americans with a mental illness receive treatment, despite the prevalence of mental illnesses mirroring that of the general population, according to the American Psychiatric Association⁵.

Barriers to Care

- Cultural stigma associated with mental illness
- Lack of trust for the health care system
- Scarcity of providers from racial/ethnic backgrounds
- Lack of culturally-competent providers
- Poor insurance or no insurance

The LGBTQ+ community has its own unique issues related to mental health care. **Statistics indicate LGBTQ individuals are more than twice as likely as heterosexual men and women to experience a mental health disorder in their lifetime.** And, according to the American Psychiatric Association, individuals within the LGBTQ+ community are more than 2.5 times as likely to experience depression, anxiety or substance misuse⁶.

Just 8% of the lowest income communities in the U.S. have practicing mental health professionals, leaving the burden of mental health care to primary care doctors and school counselors, according to an in-depth report on culturally-competent care by *The New York Times*. A lack of qualified care means people in these communities are falling through the cracks due to a misdiagnosis or an absence of care altogether⁷.

Behavioral health providers who understand these influences by practice or lived experience, from income disparities to identity issues to deep-rooted cultural mistrust of healthcare and beyond, are better positioned to connect in an authentic way to the patients they're treating.

A Competency to Determine Legal Competency



Needs within the behavioral healthcare landscape, like most professional sectors, can be very specific — requiring a response from refined, experienced experts. Forensic psychiatry is one of those areas.

The demand for forensic psychiatry is expected to grow in the coming years, according to labor bureau projections. And it has been on the rise since an association was made between psychiatric disorders and the legal system.

The Bureau of Justice reports that more than 1 million inmates have at least one psychiatric condition⁸. And some reports estimate that up to one-quarter of the nation's inmates have severe psychiatric disorders.

As the nation continues to rethink and reshape its relationship with crime, as it relates to prison time for certain offenses, providers with specific expertise at the intersection of psychiatry and the legal system become even more critical resources.

Forensic psychiatrists not only have to understand the legal system, they need to be able to embrace their role in it. Often, forensic psychiatrists evaluating alleged offenders for competency or other psychiatric disorders, will need to be prepared to be cross-examined should a case go to trial — a stark contrast to the clinical setting most providers have come to know.

Experts with these qualities may be hard to find, particularly in areas already experiencing a general shortage of psychiatrists.

At innovaTel, our fellowship-trained, board-certified, remote forensic psychiatrists are able to engage with patients from anywhere in the country using a secure telehealth platform, eliminating travel expenses, security clearance and geographical boundaries.

With an increased need for behavioral health care in general, and a need for expertise in subspecialties of care, telebehavioral health partnerships offer a gateway for organizations to introduce providers with specific experience to better meet the needs of the patients they are serving.



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innovaTel is a national telepsychiatry provider that partners directly with community-based organizations to improve access and speed to behavioral health services. For the past eight years, innovaTel has been providing telebehavioral health services with a remote clinical team made up of psychiatrists, psychiatric nurse practitioners and licensed clinical social workers with a fundamental mission of increasing access and speed to care.

For more information, visit www.innovatel.com.