

innovaTel + High Plains Mental Health Center

A CCBHC Success Story

It's one thing to talk about the value of our telepsychiatry partnerships. It's another to see that value manifest in community change and positive patient outcomes.

That's why Walt Hill, CEO of High Plains Mental Health Center, wanted to share his story. "We service 20 counties in northwest Kansas. Our geographic area, with a population of about 100,000, is very rural and averages just five people per square mile. Our patient population is a wide mix of farmers, ranchers, oil field workers and government employees. We see about 6,500 patients each year."

High Plains received its CCBHC status in 2021, providing Hill and his team with additional funding and resources to help their diverse communities.

"Our communities have been telling us they see a need for additional mental health and substance use treatment and resource options, and this funding and enhanced program status has enabled us to fill some of the existing rural service gaps."

Combatting workforce development challenges

The provider shortage is real, with many rural communities struggling to find mental healthcare providers. "Prior to the start of our partnership with innovaTel in August of 2019, we experienced seasons where we only had one psychiatrist serving our entire agency, which required us to rely heavily on locum providers. Recruiting psychiatrists to rural and frontier areas is incredibly difficult."

Since 2019, High Plains has grown their relationship with innovaTel, a testament to the successful partnership and the seamless integration of remote providers with in-person organizations.



- Original innovaTel partnership:
 - **2019: 1 part-time psychiatrist**
- Expanded innovaTel partnership:
 - **2022: 7 psychiatric providers and 10 therapists**

Meeting the needs of underserved communities

With these additional resources, High Plains is able to meet the mental healthcare needs of its community, most notably, its traditionally underserved populations.

- Aging populations, especially those on Medicare
- Agricultural communities
- Hispanic populations

"Working with the High Plains team to set up the MAT program has been a rewarding experience. Our excellent interdisciplinary teamwork and efforts to de-stigmatize treatment for substance use disorders have contributed to our early success in setting up the program. We are already seeing positive changes in the lives of our patients and we look forward to expanding our impact on the community."

– Dr. Vivek Jayadeva
innovaTel Psychiatrist
working with High Plains

"Our partnership with High Plains has been an extremely collaborative one. Together, we support our multidisciplinary team of providers through workflow, technology and resource planning; however, it really feels like I am an extension of their team."

– Sara May
RN-BC, Clinical Liaison,
innovaTel Telepsychiatry

Increasing services through increased funding

As a community mental health center that achieved CCBHC status, High Plains was well suited to expand care delivery.

- **MAT services focused on a whole-person approach**
 - As a result of becoming a CCBHC, providing MAT was new to High Plains and a much-needed service in the community. innovaTel supported High Plains MAT initiatives by integrating a psychiatrist, Dr. Jayadeva, into their team. Dr. Jayadeva works as a remote member of the High Plains on-site MAT treatment team, and has both substance use disorder and pain management expertise.
- **Expanding LCSW team**
 - While innovaTel's partnership with High Plains started with psychiatric providers, the relationship continues to expand. Ten remote therapists have joined the High Plains treatment team, connecting with their patients via telehealth.
- **Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) team development**
 - This on-the-ground service assists high-need SMI patients, often providing life-saving care.



"We wouldn't have even dreamt about moving into these areas without the CCBHC model. It's 100 percent responsible for our service growth."

– Walt Hill

Access to care, speed to care

Investing in a telepsychiatry partnership not only created additional access points for patients, it also increased the speed with which patients received care:



- Initial assessments
 - Before CCBHC expansion and additional providers with innovaTel: 2 weeks
 - After: **3 days**
- Psychiatric care access
 - Before CCBHC expansion and additional providers with innovaTel: 6 weeks
 - After: **2 weeks**

Leveraging the benefits of CCBHC status

Hill understands the rigorous process involved for a community mental health center seeking CCBHC status: “It’s a huge lift! But it’s worth it. Use the power of your team. Don’t go at it alone. **Had we not had our partnership with innovaTel, we could not have pulled it off.**” While the benefits are far-reaching and continually evolving, Hill points to three key areas:

- Continuity of care
- Sustainable payment models
- Additional service development

Local impact with national support

“The work we’ve done with Walt and his team at High Plains has proven to be transformational for the community,” says Jon Evans, Founder and CEO of innovaTel Telepsychiatry. “And much of the success of this partnership is due to the CCBHC model.” Often this kind of transformation requires support on a national scale. “We also would like to acknowledge the significant efforts by the National Council for Mental Wellbeing, under Chuck Ingoglia’s leadership, who continue to advocate for the importance of the CCBHC model and continued increased funding,” Evans continues.

Obtaining and maintaining CCBHC status is no small feat – but with the support of national advocacy groups, workforce development support via telehealth, and a staff of dedicated providers on-the-ground, local transformation is possible.



“The CCBHC model encourages you to stay in touch with patients ongoing. And telehealth facilitates this. You don’t need to pack all services together in a single visit. It also helps with staff morale because they know they have the resources they need to provide care, to help people.”

– Walt Hill



Providing access to care

At innovaTel, we partner with CMHCs and CCBHCs to help connect them to highly qualified providers through our telehealth partnerships. We have a national clinical team made up of Medical Directors, Psychiatrists, Psychiatric Nurse Practitioners and Licensed Clinical Social Workers that have experience working with the SMI and co-occurring patient populations. innovaTel can support teams with part-time or full-time providers.

innovaTel's team works to integrate these remote providers into our partner organizations' on-site treatment teams. It is our goal that these providers are just as much a part of their teams as if they were there on site – the only difference being they are connecting remotely via telehealth. innovaTel is proud to have a 95% provider retention rate, which allows us to provide continuity of care for the patients we serve.



Contact us to learn more.
Call **1.866.492.7597** or email **info@innovatel.com**.