



About Valley View Health Center

Valley View Health Center is a non-profit, Federally Qualified Health Center that provides medical, dental, behavioral health and pharmacy services to patients at 12 locations in three counties. Valley View's patient-centered delivery focuses on providing care to patients in the communities in which they live, regardless of ability to pay. Their mission to improve health and well-being of the community is accomplished by providing quality and compassionate care while respecting individual and cultural diversity.

Building a Program

In 2009, Valley View Health Center joined the Washington State Mental Health Integration Program (MHIP) to learn about the Collaborative Care Model for behavioral health integration from the Advancing Integrated Mental Health Solutions (AIMS) Center at the University of Washington. Tre Normoyle, Ph.D., Behavioral Health Director, shares "what pulled me in [to this model] is that you could meet so many people who had never had mental health treatment, break down barriers to care, and support the medical providers in treating the whole person."

The success of the program meant that the needs soon outgrew MHIP capacity. Dr. Normoyle recognized those needs and worked to secure a grant focused on bringing depression care to rural areas. The Social Innovation Fund (SIF) grant they were awarded required matching funds from community partners, which helped strengthen community ties and created the opportunity to treat depression in patients who had no ability to pay. During the three years that Valley View received the SIF funding, they were able to treat over 600 additional people for depression, utilizing the Collaborative Care Model.

“It’s an incredibly rewarding journey when you can see how much it helps people to break down the barriers to care and to see all of the work my providers have done, and all of the lives that we’ve impacted.”

–Tre Normoyle, Ph.D.,

Behavioral Health Director

Integrated Care at Valley View

Valley View consists of 12 clinic locations, and almost all offer onsite behavioral health services, covering patients in three different counties. New patients are screened using the PHQ-2, and then the PHQ-9 if necessary. If a patient screens positive for depression or demonstrates a need for behavioral health services, medical providers can access the onsite behavioral health provider for a “warm connect” with the patient, in which the behavioral health provider is introduced as a member of the care team. During these “warm connects” behavioral health providers explore next steps with patients which may include scheduling a follow up with that provider. Providers at Valley View have learned that the shorter the time between the warm connect and the follow up appointment, the lower the no-show rate is.

Valley View has implemented protocols to meet the clinical needs of the providers as well as the security needs for compliance with federal and state law. Patients are offered an informed consent form including a disclosure of who on the care team has access to patient notes and records. Behavioral health notes are restricted within the electronic medical record to only the patient’s care team. The behavioral health providers model their notes after the medical model, including less detail than a typical behavioral health note.

Psychiatric Consultation

The onsite behavioral health providers are supported by a remote psychiatric consultant, Dr. Eric Turner, M.D., Ph.D., a Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the University of Washington (UW) who is based at Seattle Children’s Research Institute. Each behavioral health provider at Valley View has a weekly

phone consultation with Dr. Turner in which they review new patients, discuss patients who are not responding to medication, and follow up on existing patients that may need additional support. For patients who present diagnostic challenges, or do not respond to treatment, Dr. Turner conducts full diagnostic interviews via a telemedicine network provided by the UW. Onsite behavioral health providers maintain a shared patient registry that Dr. Turner can access. This is independent of the electronic health record used at Valley View (NextGen), which has the capacity to import notes from the registry but is not a fully integrated system. ral health specialist

Tips for behavioral health providers:

- Work with your medical team to emphasize a warm connect with behavioral health providers
- Be very flexible, especially while building the program
- Ensure behavioral health leadership is on the executive team
- This model is not traditional therapy, be prepared to adapt

“There are 200 patients on my caseload at Valley View, and I’d never be able to see all of those patients individually. Collaborative Care is a way that psychiatrists can amplify and leverage their time.”

–Eric Turner, M.D., Ph.D.

Measurement and Referral

Measurement-based care is a key component of the Collaborative Care Model. The behavioral health providers track remission of depression symptoms over their caseload, using ongoing PHQ-9 and GAD-7 screening tools. The model of care is focused on symptoms, and remission of symptoms over a relatively short period of time. Dr. Normoyle reminds the onsite behavioral health providers, "Sometimes the limited scope is a gift. You're giving patients something you wouldn't get without this program, and you reach so many more patients."

Valley View recognizes that this model of care is not appropriate for every patient and has relationships with different community mental health centers for external referrals when their services do not meet a patient's needs. Valley View's behavioral health providers work to ensure those patients have access to appropriate care, as access to behavioral health services can be a challenge in rural areas. Building community relationships to ensure continuous patient care is an ongoing process.

“You never get to a static point where everything is perfect, you'll always be refining and learning to do things better.”

–Tre Normoyle, Ph.D.,
Behavioral Health Director

“It is important to be bold and think outside the box to figure out how to pay for this. It's like a quilt, you need to sew together multiple pieces to sustain.”

–Tre Normoyle, Ph.D.,
Behavioral Health Director

Sustainability

Though the grant that originally funded the expansion of the MHIP program at Valley View ended in June 2017, the program continues. Valley View is investigating ways to fund the expanded psychiatric consult role, beyond MHIP patients. New billing codes available in 2018 may be beneficial but Dr. Normoyle credits "being bold and thinking outside the box" as a key component for sustainability.



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