

THE INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE

# EHR for Behavioral Health



## BH Encounter Documentation in EHR

Superior Health Information Management  
Now and for the Future

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# Learning Objectives

- Identify the scope of Behavioral Health (BH) services.
- Define the Integrated Model of Care.
- Define clinical documentation best practices for BH.

# Defining Behavioral Health

- Can be a combination of one or more of the following programs:
  - Mental Health
  - Social Services
  - Alcohol and Substance Abuse:
    - Residential or outpatient
    - Adult and/or Youth
  - Prevention/Community-based programs

# Non-Integrated Approaches for Behavioral Health

- Behavioral health is considered a separate healthcare service.
- Non-Integrated behavioral health programs have:
  - Separate charts
  - Separate physical locations
  - Stigma associated with seeking “mental health” services

# Treating the Whole Patient: Integrated Healthcare Considerations

- Certain psychosocial experiences are major risk factors for the leading causes of illness and death as well as poor quality of life in the U.S.
  - Documented by the highly regarded Adverse Childhood Experiences study
- Adverse childhood events are correlated with increased risk for obesity, nicotine, and other substance addiction, suicidal behavior, and other risks.

# Integrated Behavioral Health

## Social and Societal Trends

- The treatment and management of most mental illnesses occurs in primary care.
- Even serious and chronic mental illnesses are increasingly managed in primary care settings – particularly in community health clinic settings.
- Serious mental illness is attended by high medical morbidity and substantially reduced life-spans.

# Integrated Behavioral Health

- The Integrated Behavioral Health model provides both medical and behavioral health care with an emphasis on prevention, early detection, and intervention in a medical setting.
- The focus of the Integrated Behavioral Health model is on high risk populations, disease management, and interventions that consider physical, mental, social, and spiritual aspects of patient's lives.

# Behavioral Health Integration in the Medical Setting

Allows behavioral health providers to work with providers in the medical clinic in order to:

- Facilitate access to BH services
- Provide early intervention
- Aide with care coordination
- Provide mutual support

# Using EHR To Support the Integrated Model

- Provides a shared information system.
- Allows for improved “need to know” management.
- Allows for disease management opportunities.
- Provides incorporation of BH interventions into primary care setting.
- Promotes shared decision making.
- Improves referral management.

# Benefits of Using the EHR to Behavioral Health Providers

- See what other providers see.
- Participate more closely in care.
- Ability to use note templates.
- Allows use of Consult Tracking.
- Allows for notes to be electronically signed.

# The First Phase in Implementation

- Increase awareness of benefits of integrated care.
- Identify possible “low hanging fruit ” opportunities for integration.
- Identify champions.
- Get commitment to integration process.
- Small pilot activities.

# Common Misperceptions and Challenges

- It's against the law to share mental health information.
- Everyone will be able to see the information.
- Patients won't like it.
- What happens to my psychotherapy notes? I don't want to share them.

# The Second Phase in Implementation

- Establish BH EHR liaison.
- Establish BH EHR integration workgroup.
- Define level of integration desired.
- Review behavioral health business processes.
- Identify potential areas needing redesign.
- Identify hardware/network upgrades required.
- Establish timeline for integration.

# Other Sample Concerns

- What do I do when someone tells me they've been sexually abused and ask me to promise not to tell anyone else?
- We can't bill for those visits.
- I want to do group visits in EHR.

# Final Thoughts

- CACs are vital to integration.
- Start a discussion.
- EHR system design can drive care.
- Get to know your site's BH providers and the services they provide.
- Demonstrate security and confidentiality of the system.
- Complete all pre-implementation work, including reviewing and modifying policies and procedures.



# Questions?