



Behavioral Health:

Achieving Scalable,
High-Value Care



Abstract

Health care providers and organizations strive to offer high-quality, comprehensive care to their patients. With an increasing number of patients on a provider's panel presenting with behavioral health needs, offering comprehensive care to treat those needs is a priority for most frontline primary care providers. Implementing a financially sustainable way to provide behavioral health access to their patient population is the trending focus for most providers and organizations. To help manage this growing population of patients, finding a partner that can provide the components to scale a behavioral health solution is critical.



Introduction

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, one in five American adults have experienced a mental health diagnosis.¹ As many as 75% of primary care visits include a behavioral health component, including behavioral health factors related to chronic disease management, behavioral health diagnosis, substance use, smoking or other tobacco use, and the impact of stress, diet and exercise on physical health.² The pandemic has exacerbated the longstanding crisis of behavioral health care access — leaving primary care providers (PCPs) to care for patients they feel unable and unequipped to manage.

The best option for providers will require an evidence-based, scalable and low-cost behavioral health solution. The critical elements of this solution require a patient-centered, team-based care approach that integrates proper behavioral health assessment and intervention.³

**DID YOU
KNOW?**

Mental health disorders, such as depression, incur a significant cost to the US economy, amounting to

**\$210
billion**

per year.⁴





“

We are facing a mental health crisis. Our providers are seeing patients of all ages who are struggling with anxiety and depression and often don't know where to turn. For some, there is a stigma associated with seeking help, for others there can be barriers to access. Collaborative care is a clinically proven way to integrate behavioral health into primary care — increasing behavioral health screening and improving access and outcomes for our patients. We now have one team working seamlessly together to provide whole health — body, mind and spirit — for those who trust us for their care.

Penny Johnson, President/CEO, Southwest Region at AdventHealth

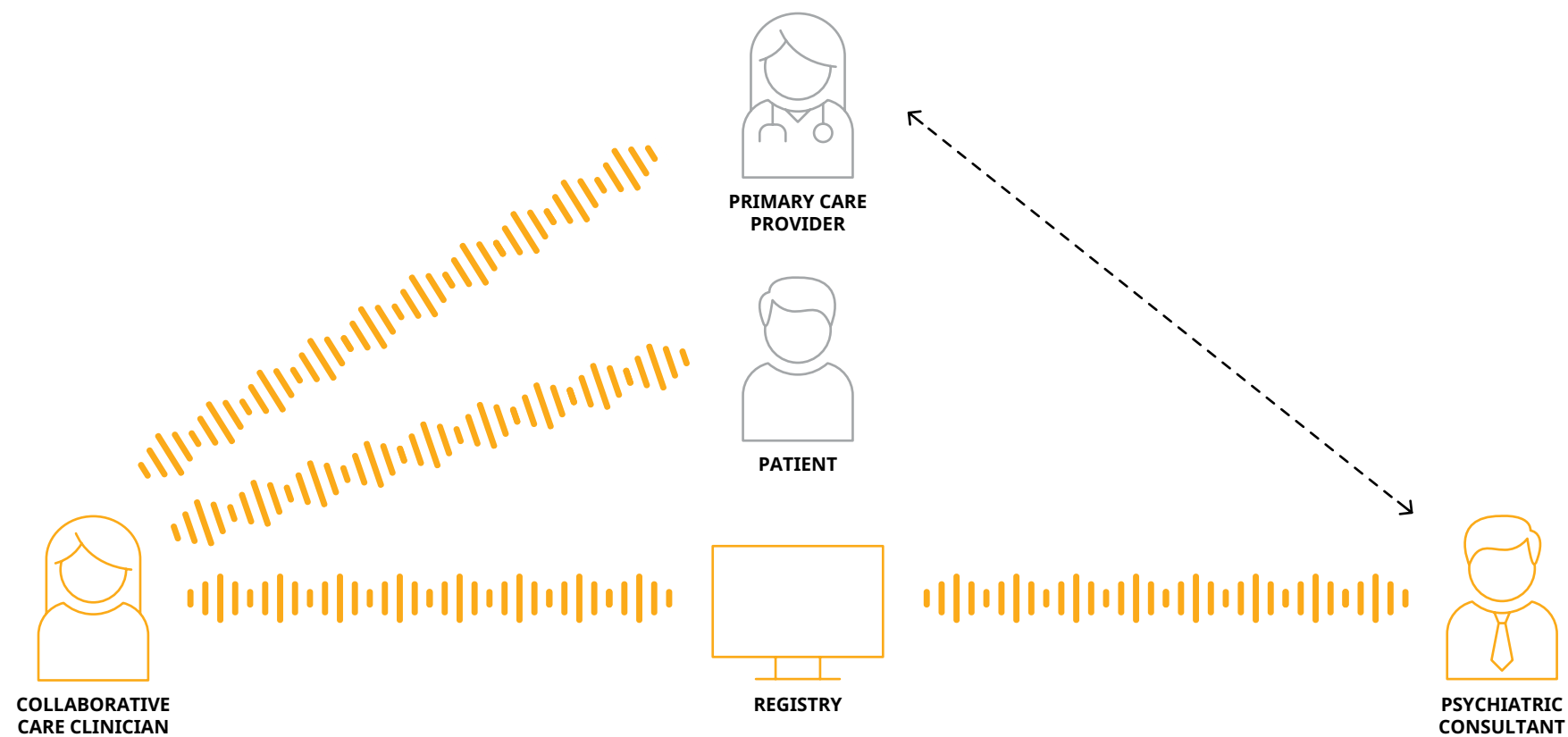


Collaborative care model

Collaborative care is an evidence-based model to identify and treat patients with depression and anxiety, along with other behavioral health needs, in primary care including women’s health and pediatric settings. Providing outcome-based team care, this model of care enables behavioral health treatment as part of the primary care team.

Collaborative care provides access to patient-centered behavioral health treatment shortly following a referral from the PCP. The PCP is given support from a behavioral health care manager on patient treatment and care planning as well as a psychiatric consultation with recommendations on both medication and other treatment considerations. Patient progress is measured, tracked and used to make care recommendations.

The monthly case rate and “carve out” from behavioral health reduces barriers to care helping patients access and afford quality treatment. This model has also been proven to enhance medication adherence, care satisfaction and symptom improvement.



Source: Diagram adopted from the AIMS Center at the University of Washington’s visual representation of the Collaborative Care Protocol

Collaborative care has shown to be more effective than “standard” primary care as well as care with an embedded behavioral health provider. Tested in more than 90 randomized controlled trials in the U.S. and abroad, collaborative care has shown reliable impact on both physical and mental clinical outcomes.⁵



Individuals who have been diagnosed with a chronic illness are

2X more susceptible

to having a behavioral health condition.

The coexistence of these conditions, known as comorbidities, is linked to poorer health outcomes, more intricate clinical management and increased health care expenses.⁶

DID YOU KNOW?

Key components of an effective, evidence-based scalable solution

To ensure high-quality care, it is crucial to have behavioral health services that are both evidence-based and incorporate measurement-based care.

In a recent study completed by the Medical Group Management Association (MGMA), the following factors were identified to be necessary components for a successful behavioral health integration into the primary care setting.⁷

The integration must:



Increase availability of behavioral health services within the medical model



Provide support to the PCP in addressing patients' behavioral health needs



Mitigate negative impacts on physical health



Improve patient clinical outcomes and increase overall satisfaction with care through the integrated care model



Implementing the right infrastructure requires careful consideration. There are several different models to address behavioral health needs in health care settings. Here are the three most common levels of behavioral health integration within primary care.

PCBH: A PCP “refers” a patient to a behavioral health clinician. The behavioral health clinician takes warm hand offs from providers, provides health and behavioral interventions and brief treatment.

Co-located model: Behavioral providers and PCPs work within the same location or practice. Due to proximity, providers may have occasional communication regarding a shared patient; however, patient care is still siloed to areas of expertise.

Collaborative care: An evidence-based practice to identify and treat patients with depression and anxiety in health care settings.

While all models aim to provide behavioral health care access, a component is missed without full integration and collaboration between the PCP and the clinician. For care to be successful — improving patient outcomes and lowering overall cost — the following challenges must be addressed:

- Resources for medication management
- Timely access to behavioral health providers
- A manageable out-of-pocket cost
- A clear path for the patient to navigate behavioral health care (setting up appointments, following up)
- A working knowledge of community resources specifically for behavioral health issues
- An understanding of the social and cultural constructs of behavioral health

There are successful qualities in well coordinated team-based care, or transdisciplinary care, such as shared care planning, shared accountability and cross training. These components are critical to success in integrating behavioral health care and treatment into a practice.



“

We're committed to continuing to identify sustainable solutions in response to the ever-evolving health care landscape. There's a critical need for behavioral health services right now. The combination of our population health approach with Concert's systemic model to identify and treat behavioral and mental health conditions allows us to break down treatment barriers for thousands of patients who would otherwise not have access.

Sarika Aggarwal, MD,
MHCM Chief Population Health Officer,
SoNE HEALTH

Concert Health, offering a team-based approach

Concert Health, a behavioral health medical group, is leading the charge in integrating behavioral health into primary care, women's health and pediatric settings across 17 states. Implementing Concert Health's turnkey, scalable solution helps to improve patient outcomes and support the transition to value-based payment models.



Concert Health provides all of the required components of collaborative care from licensed Collaborative Care Clinicians, specialized Psychiatric Consultants and state-of-the-art registry technology platform.

Unique features of integrating collaborative care into your practice with Concert Health:

- **Improve access as behavioral health care is built into primary care**

- Patients are no longer dependent on external referrals or “wait listed” to community providers
- Patients are contacted by Concert Health within 24-48 hours of leaving your office
- The cost for the patient is equitable to a primary care visit
 - > Most individuals now have collaborative care built into their health plan benefit design
 - > Collaborative care is covered by Medicare, Medicare Advantage, Medicaid and commercial plans in many states

- **Evidence-based efficacy**

- Over 90 randomized controlled trials have proven collaborative care to be highly effective and more effective than “standard” care
- The treat-to-target approach ensures there is a laser focus on clinical improvement, symptom reduction and a proactive approach to achieving outcomes
- Concert Health will continue to learn from and contribute to the evidence base of collaborative care

- **Patient-centered and flexible solutions**

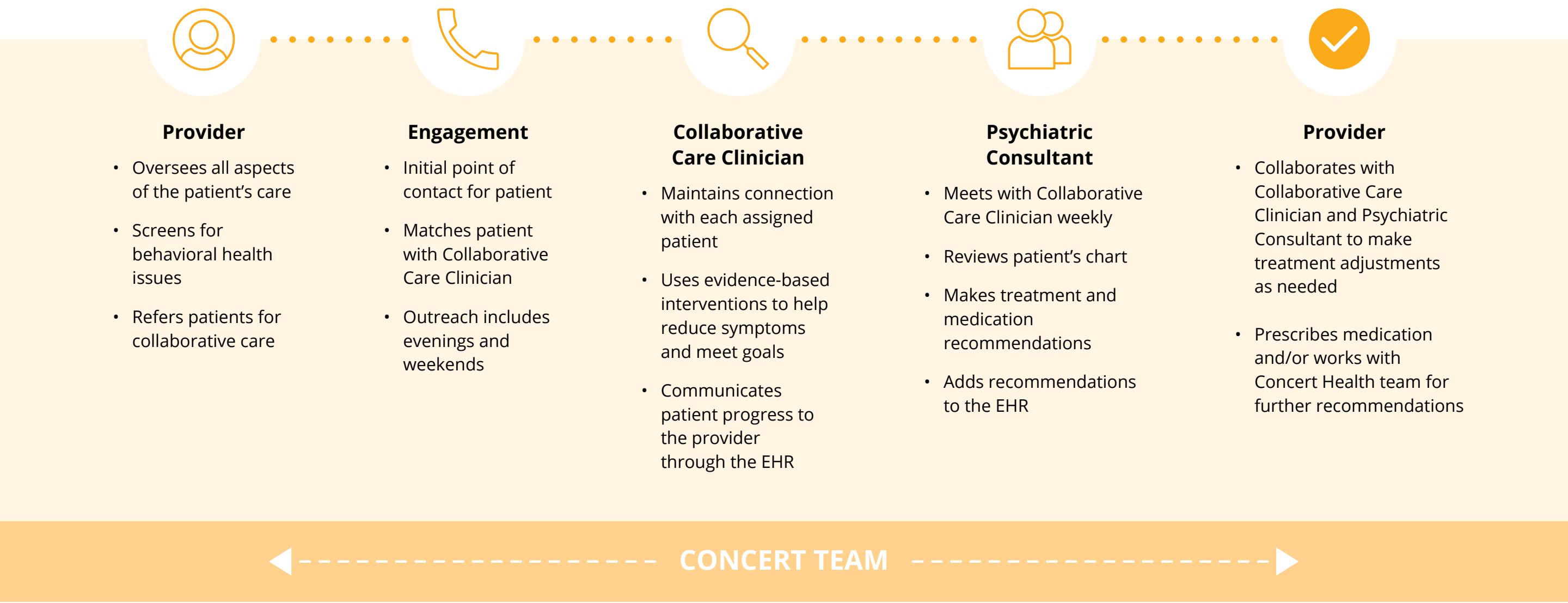
- Patients are remotely treated (by video or telephonically) by Concert Health clinicians at times that fit the patient’s schedule

- **Extend expertise and multiply provider impact**

- Utilize Psychiatric Consultants (alongside the PCP), as opposed to external or direct care
- Optimize psychiatric resources to support providers with current prescribing practices



The patient journey



Psychiatric Consultants do not write prescriptions or meet with patients directly



What makes Concert Health the best fit to scale behavioral health



Care team

Master’s level clinicians identify and treat patients virtually while working as an extension of the primary care team. Board-certified psychiatrists or Psychiatric Consultants are available to make treatment recommendations as needed. Concert has many full-time Psychiatric Consultants available to partners as well as specialty providers in geriatric, addiction, child/adolescent and reproductive health.



Clinical model

Collaborative Care Clinicians develop care plans, provide evidence-based clinical interventions to patients and document in a shared EHR. For patients not improving or worsening, case reviews between Psychiatric Consultants and PCPs are held to ensure measurable clinical improvement occurs.



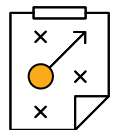
Rigor in outcomes and symptom reduction

Concert Health patients experience a 50% or 10-point reduction in their depression or anxiety symptoms (PHQ-9, GAD-7) within 90 days of beginning treatment.



Revenue optimization

The collaborative care model is being reimbursed by Medicare, Medicare Advantage and commercial payers. Revenue cycle experts provide guidance and training on collaborative care billing, entering charges into your EHR and advising on overall economics.



Seamless implementation

Concert Health’s playbook streamlines the implementation process, leverages existing workflows and reduces administrative burden — enabling Concert Health to begin caring for patients as early as six weeks after contract execution.



Scalable operations

Concert Health partners with over 60 health systems including some of the largest systems in the country. Scale to meet your needs, including augmenting your existing behavioral health infrastructure. Concert Health’s clinical team is equipped to manage entire patient populations. This allows systems to care for thousands of their patients with behavioral health needs for a true, system-wide solution.

Bringing new opportunities in behavioral health and psychiatry, Concert Health makes a core impact by identifying and treating patients with behavioral health needs in the primary care setting. Partnering with Concert Health can help improve the efficiency and effectiveness of your health care organization — while providing an additional revenue stream and the best possible care to your patients.

References

1. MentalHealth.gov (2022, February 28). *Mental Health Myths and Facts*. Retrieved March 25, 2023, from <https://www.mentalhealth.gov/basics/mental-health-myths-facts>.
2. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (Updated, 2020). *Substance Use Disorder Treatment for People With Co-Occurring Disorders*. Samhsa.gov. Retrieved March 25, 2023, from https://store.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/SAMHSA_Digital_Download/PEP20-02-01-004_Final_508.pdf.
3. American Psychological Association (n.d.). *Behavioral Health Services in Primary Care*. APA.org. Retrieved March 25, 2023, from <https://www.apa.org/health/behavioral-health-services-primary-care.pdf>.
4. American Psychiatry Association (n.d.). *Integrated Care*. Psychiatry.org. Retrieved March 25, 2023, from <https://www.psychiatry.org/collaborate>.
5. American Psychological Association (n.d.). *Collaborative Care*. AIMS Center. Retrieved March 25, 2023, from <https://aims.uw.edu/collaborative-care>.
6. National Institute of Mental Health (Revised, 2021). *Chronic Illness and Mental Health: Recognizing and Treating Depression*. <https://www.Nimh.nih.gov/>. Retrieved March 25, 2023, from <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/chronic-illness-mental-health>.
7. Medical Group Management Association (2020, September 20). *Integrated behavioral health in a clinical primary care setting*. MGMA. Retrieved March 25, 2023, from <https://www.mgma.com/resources/quality-patient-experience/integrated-behavioral-health-in-a-clinical-primary>.





To learn more about collaborative care and how to scale for your organization,
please email Connect@concerthealth.io.

