Adopting a Collaborative Care Approach to Increase Access to Mental Health Care in Evanston, WY

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Hypothesis

• Integrating mental health care and counseling into the primary care clinic will increase access to care for low-income individuals.

Background

• Evanston, located in Uinta County, is in the Southwest corner of Wyoming.
• Population of approximately 11,700.

Welcome Sign in Evanston, WY

Community Asset Profile

• High Country Behavioral Health (HCBH) is a state-contracted mental health resource that provides care on a sliding scale.
• Programs offered: individual and family counseling, addiction services, support groups, case management and Community-Based-Rehabilitation services.
• HCBH partnered with Arrowhead Family Medicine to introduce a mental health counselor into the Arrowhead clinic to reduce stigma and increase access.
• Other resources: Pioneer Counseling Services, Evanston Community Health Center, Youth Alternative Home Inc.

Literature Review

• The collaborative care model integrates mental health care into the primary care clinic.
• Team-based approach: a case manager, a primary care provider and a psychiatrist for consultations.
• Patients address mental and physical health concerns together at the same visit.
• Patients had increased access to mental health care, reduced wait times and faster implementation of psychiatric medications.
• Increased care efficiency and fewer appointments with specialists reduce patient costs.

Conclusions

• With modifications to the Arrowhead Family Medicine and HCBH partnership, a collaborative care model could be implemented in the clinic.
  • The HCBH mental health counselors in the Arrowhead clinic could serve as patient case managers.
  • HCBH counseling services can be provided on a sliding scale to improve access for low income individuals.
  • Arrowhead could serve as a pilot program for Evanston, which could be expanded into more clinics in the area.
• The biggest challenges would be finding a psychiatrist to provide the consultations on complicated patients, securing further funding for sliding scale care and adapting the clinic schedule to accommodate this new model.

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