

Mental Health Provider in Primary Care Core Competencies

- ◆ Identifies problem quickly and accepts the patients point of view
- ◆ Limits the number of problems identified and applies patient strengths and resources to the problem
- ◆ Is change-focused and measures outcomes at every visit
- ◆ Focuses on functional outcomes
- ◆ Able to address motivational factors and readiness to change
- ◆ Accepts patient’s level of readiness to change and emphasizes patient role in change
- ◆ Interventions can be understood and supported by other primary care team members
- ◆ Effectively co-manages patient care with team members
- ◆ Shows understanding of relationship of medical and psychological systems within the cultural context of the individual patient
- ◆ Shows knowledge of psychotropic medicines and adherence strategies
- ◆ Adheres to evidence based pathways for behavioral health conditions, e.g. pain, depression, obesity

<p><i>Mental Health Providers should not</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prefer specialty Mental health care ▪ Prefer treating psychiatric disorders ▪ Like to spend an hour with a patient ▪ Perform best in a quiet working environment ▪ Want to be in charge of patient care ▪ Lack training in behavioral and brief interventions 	<p><i>Mental Health Providers should</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Become intrigued with the idea of helping a patient “function” better ▪ Be comfortable with noise and rooms with sinks (and uncomfortable furniture) ▪ Want to take a team approach to patient care ▪ Have training in behavioral and brief interventions ▪ Be willing to help a patient of any age ▪ Think it’s better to spend 10 minutes with a patient than zero
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From: “Integrating Primary Care and Behavioral Health Services: A Compass and a Horizon”. Kirk Strosahl, Ph.D and Patricia Robinson Ph.D. for the Collaborative Family Healthcare Association 9th Annual Conference, and

Robinson, P. & Reiter, J. (2006) *Behavioral Consultation and Primary Care: a Guide to Integrating Services*. New York: Springer

Skills Required for Mental Health Providers Integrated into Primary Care

1. Focused Assessment
2. Time Efficiency
3. Decisiveness with Limited Data
4. Cognitive-Behavioral Expertise
5. Skills for Enhancing Motivation to Change
6. Appreciation for a Population Health Focus
7. Good Communication with Physician Colleagues
8. Ability to Function as a Team Member
9. Tolerance for Position in a Hierarchical System
10. Flexible Hours/Availability
11. Understanding of Medical Conditions, Procedures and Medications

Key Factors in Establishing a Mental Health Service in Primary Care

1. Get Your Foot in the Door
2. Be a Team Member
 - a. See all patients referred
 - b. View referring physicians as your primary customers
 - c. Communicate well
3. Build Key Relationships
 - a. Sit in with physician colleagues
 - b. “Act like” a primary care provider
 - c. Assist coworkers
4. Persist in “Marketing” Mental Health Provider Services
 - a. Designate a “Problem of the Week”
 - b. Conduct daily check-ins
5. Be Available
6. Learn the Primary Care Culture
 - a. Adopt the Primary Care pace
 - b. Adopt a “Population Health” perspective
 - c. Give feedback promptly and succinctly
7. Attend to Ethical Issues
8. Plan Around Financial Issues

From:

Gatchel, R. & Oordt, M.(2003) *Clinical Health Psychology and Primary Care: Practical Advice and Clinical Guidance for Successful Collaboration*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association