

Tele-Behavioral Health: Access, Engagement, and Outcomes

October 15, 2025

1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. ET

Submitting Questions and Comments

- Submit questions by using the questions-and-answer (Q&A) feature.
- If you experience any technical issues during the webinar, please message us through the chat feature or email bphc-ta@bizzellus.com.

Presenter

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JBS International, Inc.



Today's Agenda



Welcome



Tele-Behavioral Health: What is it?



Tele-Behavioral Health in a Health Center Setting:
Application, Implementation, Considerations



Tele-Behavioral Health Best Practices

Objectives

- Define tele-behavioral health and describe how it integrates into the health center model of care.
- Identify benefits, limitations, and operational considerations of tele-behavioral health within health centers and similar settings.
- Implement best practices to protect patient privacy, increase engagement, and deliver high-quality care through virtual platforms.
- Describe the importance of aligning medical care with behavioral health care and relevant community-based supportive services to improve care coordination.
- Apply strategies to reduce access barriers for telehealth use.



Polling Question #1:

How would you characterize your health center's or primary care association's status regarding tele-behavioral health?

- a) Fully implemented and ongoing
- b) Piloting or partially implemented
- c) Planning stage
- d) No current plans
- e) Does not apply; organization does not offer behavioral health services



Polling Question #2:

What is the greatest challenge your health center faces in delivering tele-behavioral health services?

- a) Technology/internet access for patients
- b) Staffing or provider availability
- c) Reimbursement and billing complexities
- d) Data privacy concerns
- e) Patient reluctance or lack of engagement



Tele-Behavioral Health

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) defines telehealth as “the use of electronic information and telecommunication technologies to support long-distance clinical health care, patient and professional health-related education, health administration, and public health.”¹



The HRSA Office for the Advancement of Telehealth (OAT) is guided by their mission to improve access to telehealth through integrated telehealth services.

Tele-Behavioral Health Technology and Application

Technology includes:

- Internet
- Video-conferencing
- Store and Forward imaging
- Streaming media
- Land and wireless connections



Tele-behavioral health services include:

- Therapy (one-on-one, group, text)
- Addiction counseling
- Medication prescribing
- Mental health screening
- Referrals
- Monitoring of anxiety and depression symptoms

Tele-Behavioral Health in the Health Center Model

- Enhances access to multi-specialty care
- Synchronous and asynchronous care
- Increases in continuity of care
- Expedited referral and enrollment in behavioral health services



Benefits of Tele-Behavioral Health in a Health Center Setting (1)

Individual Therapy

- Increases privacy
- Minimizes stigma
- Reduces travel time
- Increases accessibility / retention in care

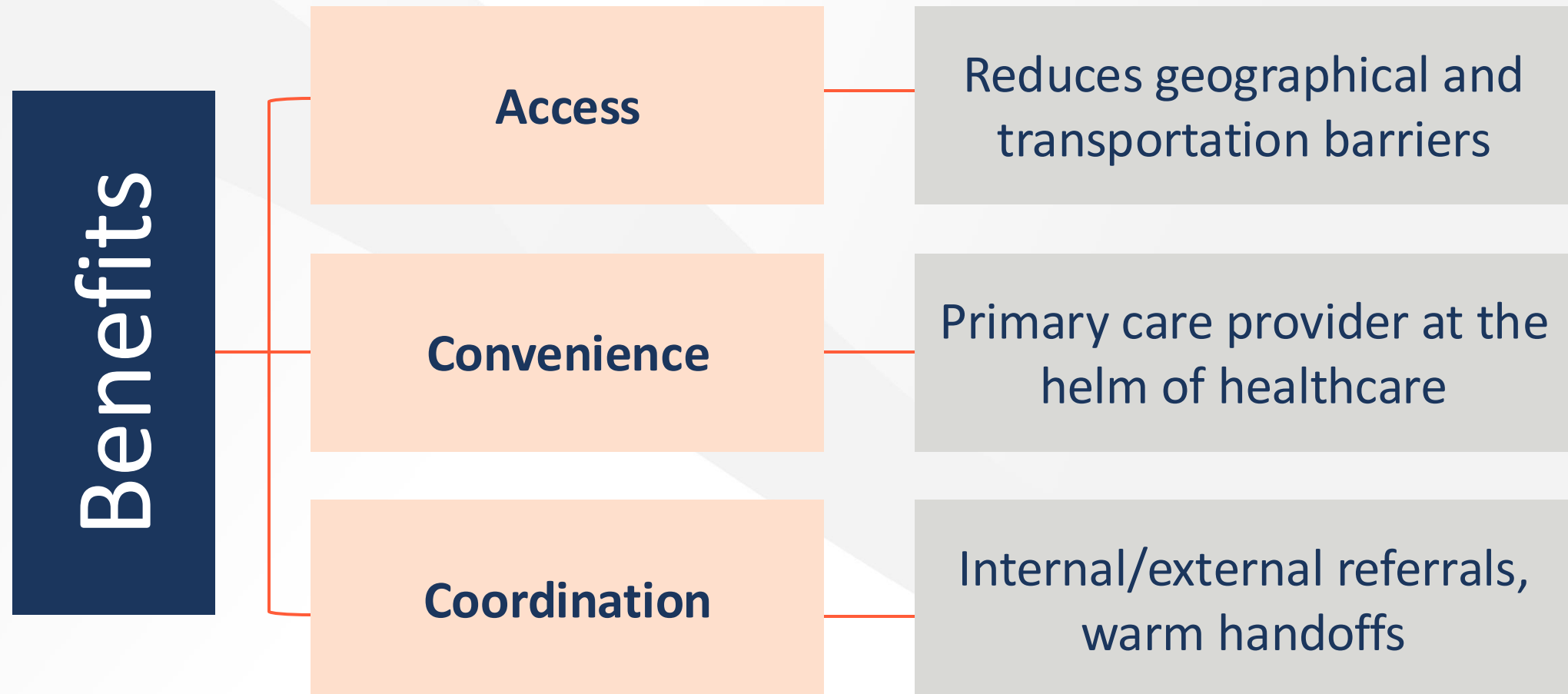
Group Therapy

- Reduces isolation
- Reduces stigma
- Enhances interpersonal skills
- Increases accessibility / retention in care

Substance Use Treatment

- Increases initial engagement and ongoing retention in treatment
- Reduces stigma
- Continuity of care

Benefits of Tele-Behavioral Health in a Health Center Setting (2)



Limitations and Considerations

Privacy Laws & Policy Guidance

- Follow federal, state and funder regulations:
- HIPAA*
- 42 CFR Part 2**
- Create emergency Plan

Patient/Provider Trust/Engagement

- Develop patient / provider relationship
- Confirm patient privacy
- Use telehealth-specific communication skills

Clinical Considerations

- Pre-screen for appropriateness
- Establish session guidelines, expectations
- Augment telehealth with community referral network

*Health Insurance Privacy and Portability Act

**42 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 2

Getting started with Tele-Behavioral Health

Develop a Strategic Plan	• Create tele-behavioral health implementation plan; include policy, quality measures, training, marketing
Billing for Services	• Research Medicare, Medicaid, other reimbursement avenues; CPT* and HCPCS** billing codes
Prepare Staff & Patients	• Train and educate staff & patients • Prepare forms (e.g., one-pager, frequently asked questions, patient forms)
Select a Virtual Platform	• Select a platform: Electronic Medical Record (EMR); commercially compliant vendor
Incorporate Evaluation Measures	• Incorporate quality assurance (QA) / quality improvement (QI) measures

*Current Procedural Terminology.

**Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System

Develop a Strategic Plan

**Build an
Implementation
Team**

**Research
Vendors,
Platforms**

**Establish Program
Goal - Identify
Services to be
Provided**

**Assess Patient
Needs/Select a
Patient Population**

**Establish an
Implementation
timeline**

**Create Policy,
Workflows,
Procedures**

**Develop a
Marketing
Strategy**

**Offer Initial &
Ongoing Training**

**Utilize QA / QI
Measures and Processes**

Polling Question #3:

How confident are you in your understanding of telehealth-related billing and regulatory requirements for health centers?

- a) Very confident
- b) Somewhat confident
- c) Not confident
- d) Not applicable to my role



Billing for Tele-behavioral Health Services

- Federal & State policies and regulations
- Payer / funder guidelines and regulations
- Research and add CPT and HCPCS coding to EMR
 - Educate clinical and non-clinical staff as needed regarding documentation
- Establish regular and frequent checks for updates to policies and regulations



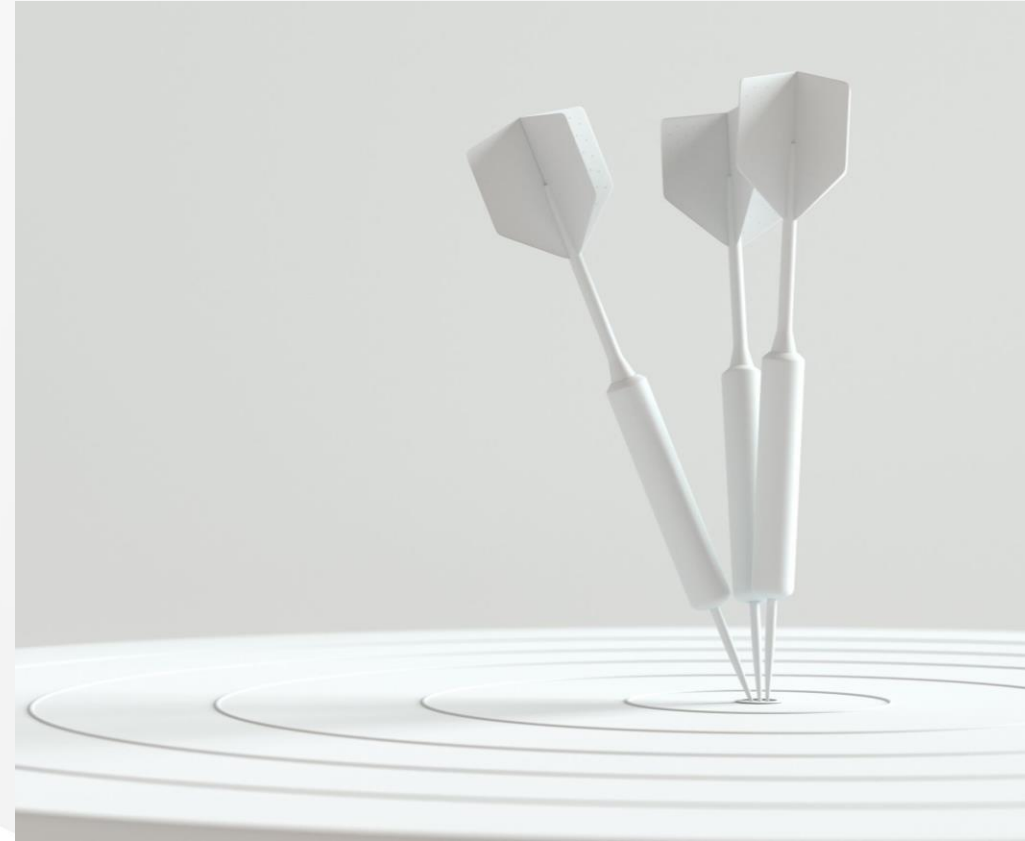
Prepare Staff and Patients

- Educate/train all clinical, clinical support staff, and administrative staff about:
 - Benefits of tele-behavioral health (e.g., improving access, reducing no-shows, increasing continuity of care, managing chronic medical conditions), workflows, and policy and procedure
- Offer clinical staff initial and ongoing refresher training on clinical care considerations, emergency planning, documentation, operations (e.g., scheduling, technology)
- Educate patients / families on the use and benefit of tele-behavioral health and offer skills-training for technology and opportunities to practice
- Include tele-behavioral health in all communications: EMR campaigns, webpages, newsletters, health center posters and brochures, community partner meeting



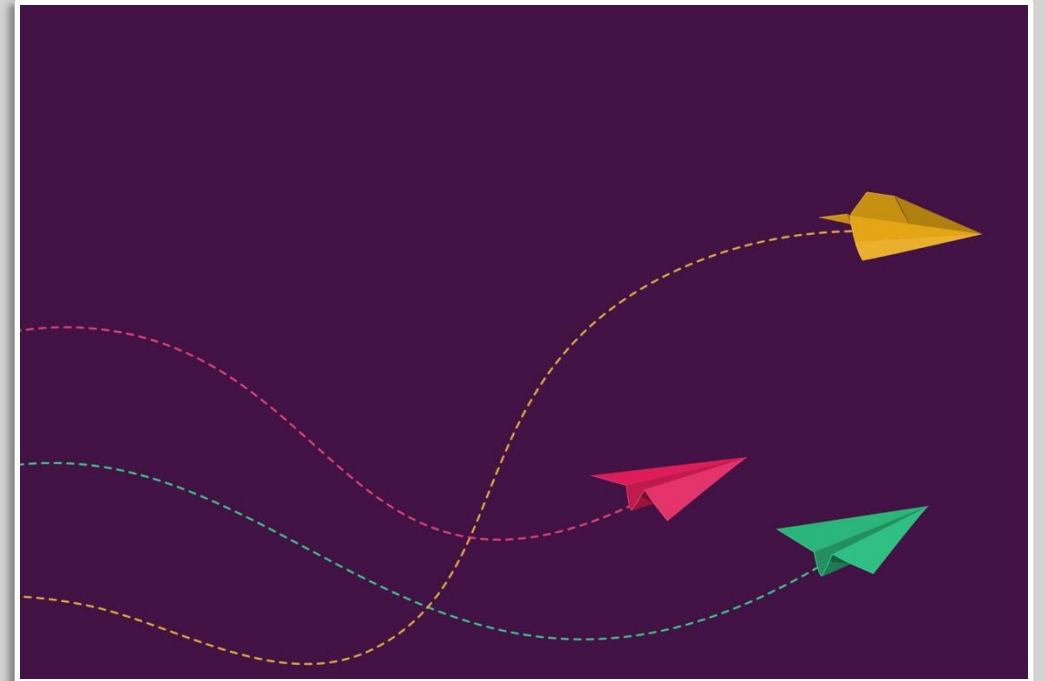
Evaluation: QA / QI Measures

- Ensure compliance representation in all stages of planning and implementation
- Incorporate regular use of a quality improvement tool (e.g., Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA)) to review and revise procedures and workflows
- Incorporate patient and clinician feedback in all QA / QI processes



Tele-Behavioral Health Best Practices (1)

1. Research and implement robust privacy and security measures, to include tele-behavioral health platform
 - Adhere to state, federal laws & payer regulations (e.g., HIPAA and 42 CFR, Part 2)
2. Select a medical/behavioral health condition and establish outcome evaluation measures



Tele-Behavioral Health Best Practices (2)

3. Establish protocol for regular and periodic screening for behavioral health and chronic medical conditions; create clinical pathways and a directory of referral resources for specialty services for clinical and clinical support
4. Ensure comprehensive coverage of tele-behavioral health services in policy and procedures, review and revise regularly
5. Offer initial and ongoing provider & patient education and training, including regular refresher opportunities
6. Start small and expand when ready!

Q&A



Endnotes

Slide 8

Health Resources & Services Administration. (2022). *What is telehealth?* <https://www.hrsa.gov/telehealth/what-is-telehealth>

Resources (1)

Creating an emergency plan for telebehavioral health | Telehealth.HHS.gov. (n.d.).

<https://telehealth.hhs.gov/providers/best-practice-guides/telehealth-for-behavioral-health/preparing-patients-for-telebehavioral-health/creating-a-telehealth-emergency-plan>

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telehealth? <https://www.hrsa.gov/telehealth/what-is-telehealth>

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Resources (2)

Introduction to telehealth for behavioral health care | Telehealth.HHS.gov. (n.d.).

<https://telehealth.hhs.gov/providers/best-practice-guides/telehealth-for-behavioral-health>

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Tele-treatment for substance use disorders | Telehealth.HHS.gov. (2024, September 10).

<https://telehealth.hhs.gov/providers/best-practice-guides/telehealth-for-behavioral-health/tele-treatment-for-substance-use-disorders>

Using telehealth to integrate behavioral health and primary care. (2024).

<https://telehealth.hhs.gov/providers/best-practice-guides/telehealth-behavioral-health-care/integrate-primary-care>

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- We offer BH CEUs for participation in BH/SUD TA events.
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- CE certificates will be sent within 5 weeks of the event from the Health Center BH/SUD TA Team via Smartsheet
<user@app.smartsheet.com>



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- We'd love your feedback on today's session!
- Please take 2 minutes to complete the Health Center TA Satisfaction Assessment.

Thank you for your time!



<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TeleBHWebinar>

Thank You!

