



CBHC

Colorado Behavioral
Healthcare Council

golden
light bulb

Program Title: UC Health Greeley Hospital Clinical Team

Organization: North Range Behavioral Health

Program Abstract (50 words max, please):

North Range Behavioral Health launched a pilot program embedding masters level clinicians within The Greeley Hospital emergency department. The intent was to appropriately manage inpatient hospitalizations, educate behavioral health clients about the NRBH crisis team, and measure impact of referrals to the broader behavioral health system.

Program Description (Include program development, program information, staffing requirements, pertinent data and start-up costs.): *Please limit to 2 pages, and remember to address all criteria specified.

North Range Behavioral Health (NRBH) and The Greeley Hospital partnered together to implement an innovative, new model of care within the emergency department. The intent was to embed masters level clinicians employed by NRBH in the emergency department to conduct any/all behavioral health assessments. In addition, the clinicians were first thoroughly trained in all resources and the full continuum of care that North Range provides.

The partnership agreed that no financial exchange would occur between The Greeley Hospital and North Range Behavioral Health. The original hypothesis was that the benefit received in the lower cost of inpatient stays and the financial benefit from the referrals to the North Range continuum of care would outweigh the cost of the clinical team (salary, medical benefits, and administrative overhead).

There were many initial goals identified in the initial pilot phase of implementation:

- Historically, emergency department personnel have not been fully aware of all levels of care available for a behavioral health patient in the community. Most emergency room physicians believe their options are limited to placing someone in an inpatient psychiatric facility or discharging them home with instructions to seek behavioral health help. Embedding NRBH staff allowed for the opportunity for community mental health center trained clinicians to assess and appropriately refer patients to the most clinically appropriate, and least restrictive level of care available. This benefits the client by matching appropriate care interventions, but also is fiscally responsible to all insurance types.
- NRBH staff also could educate community members, patients, and families about the local crisis walk in and mobile services in hopes that patients could utilize the community mental health center resources in the future instead of emergency departments.
- Referrals could be made to the broader North Range continuum of care including Acute Treatment Unit (ATU), Withdrawal Management Unit (Detox), Respite unit, residential substance abuse programs, short term and long term mental health residential facilities, community based interventions like Ascent (First Episode Psychosis) and ACT (Assertive Community Treatment Team), family interventions such as FFT (Functional Family Therapy) and MST (Multisystemic Therapy), Intensive Outpatient services, psychiatric services, and outpatient care.

A data collection system was created to track patients seen, dispositions, and referrals made. Extensive cost analysis was conducted based on financial information collected from the RAE (Regional Accountability Entity) including emergency department costs, inpatient stays, and frequent utilizers data.

The embedded clinicians would document all encounters into The Greeley Hospital's electronic health record. They also complete a spreadsheet for the patient contacts that includes the identity, insurance information, diagnosis, and disposition/referral information. That data is then cross referenced with North Range data regularly to determine how many of The Greeley Hospital contacts were previously known to NRBH and how many are new clients to the system.

Between July 1st, 2020 and June 30th, 2021, the team provided 1,369 services within the ED, referred 906 clients to ongoing care, and demonstrated a cost savings of \$80,255. If we include revenue from new clients, this cost savings increases to \$313,722. In addition, the partnerships that have been formed, and improved client care experience confirm that establishing and maintaining a team embedded within The Greeley Hospital is a worthwhile investment.