

Achieving No-Barrier Behavioral Health Care in Medical Settings Through Hospital Follow-Up and Mental Health Access Programs

Most individuals who die by suicide have a healthcare encounter in the year before death. Thus, medical care settings provide vital opportunities to treat persons with severe mental illness, substance use disorders, and comorbidities when systemic barriers exist to receiving specialized services. We describe new statewide programs in Colorado designed to improve the quality of behavioral health services in medical settings.

Hospital Follow-up Program

The Hospital Follow-up Program provides caring contacts to individuals after discharge from EDs and hospital for high-risk psychiatric encounters self-harm, suicidal ideation, overdose, and other behavioral crises.

In the last year, Hospital Follow-up has made more than 11,000 calls in response to 4,100 referrals. The most common reasons for referral involve suicidal ideation, substance use, and self-harm.

To refer a patient or engage with the CU Hospital Follow-Up Program visit

<https://medschool.cuanschutz.edu/psychiatry/programs-centers/hospital-follow-up-program> .

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Mental Health Access Programs

The Colorado Office of Mental Health Access Programs (CO-MAP) provides a single phone consult line for providers to receive case consultation, referral support, resource management, and training in the care of patients with behavioral health disorders. Diagnostic consultations might address any psychiatric diagnosis—including for anxiety and trauma-related disorders, psychosis, substance use, dementia, and medication-related complications.

To consult on a patient or engage with CO-MAP visit

<https://medschool.cuanschutz.edu/psychiatry/programs-centers/COLORADO-MENTAL-HEALTH-ACCESS-PROGRAMS> .

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