

New Biometric Quality Measures Support Emerging Specialty Health Care System

SCCMHA was awarded a federal grant, Primary and Behavioral Health Care Integration (PBHCI), in 2014 by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to improve the overall health for adults with severe mental illness (SMI) through care coordination with primary care. Over seventy-five grant projects have been funded by SAMHSA throughout the United States since 2009 with the goal of improving the overall health of individuals with SMI and multiple chronic health conditions.

SCCMHA recognizes that health care for the consumers we serve includes the coordination of care for mental, physical and substance use conditions. Behavioral healthcare providers play a critical role in providing access to care management, care coordination and transitional care across settings. Coordinated care may involve nurses, health coaches and peers, as well as, doctors and can be provided in a variety of settings such as a clinic, a person's home or other community settings. SCCMHA, through its work with the PBHCI grant, has made improvements to match services and information to individual needs and focus on continuous quality improvement.

We have also learned in this process that it is hard to change what you can't measure; it is hard to know how you're doing without data and information; it is hard to get others to change their behavior without data and information and it is hard to understand the parts of the system that need to change without data and information. Using data and information, we are now able to identify areas for improvement, make plans to improve, and have begun to track our data to determine if improvement has happened.

SCCMHA has been actively engaged in demonstrating that the work we do within our electronic health record is able to improve the quality, safety, efficiency of health care and to reduce health disparities. Meaningful Use, now renamed as "Promoting Interoperability", is focused on using electronic health record technology and is intended to engage consumers in their health and to improve care coordination. SCCMHA is able to transmit electronic prescriptions, receive lab results electronically and has developed a consumer/patient portal known as CEHR where consumers can view their health data.

Another requirement of Meaningful Use is the reporting of quality measures specific to the overall health of the consumers we serve. Tracking biometrics like A1c, blood pressure, smoking and other health indicators, has been enhanced through the use of data, which helps us to understand the population we serve. These new biometric quality measures are shaping system workflows and health outcomes. We continue to make strides in sharing health information with physical health care providers to improve the overall quality of life for the consumers we serve.

The good news is that SCCMHA was recently awarded a contract as a sub-grantee with the State of Michigan to continue our efforts toward healthcare integration. The five year award beginning 2019, Promoting Integration of Primary and Behavioral Health Care (PIPBHC), will continue the gains made as a result of the PBHCI grant working with adults with SMI and multiple chronic health conditions and will include children with severe emotional disorders. The grant will require SCCMHA to work even more closely with our Federally Qualified Health Center, Great Lakes Bay Health Centers, to improve care coordination for the consumers SCCMHA serves. Together, we will use data, information and continuous quality improvement to determine if consumers are getting access to health care, behavioral health treatment, wellness services or evidenced based practices and equally as important, determining if our efforts are making a difference.