

INTEGRATION AT WORK

LABS AND HEALTH INDICATORS: AN INTEGRATED CARE OPPORTUNITY

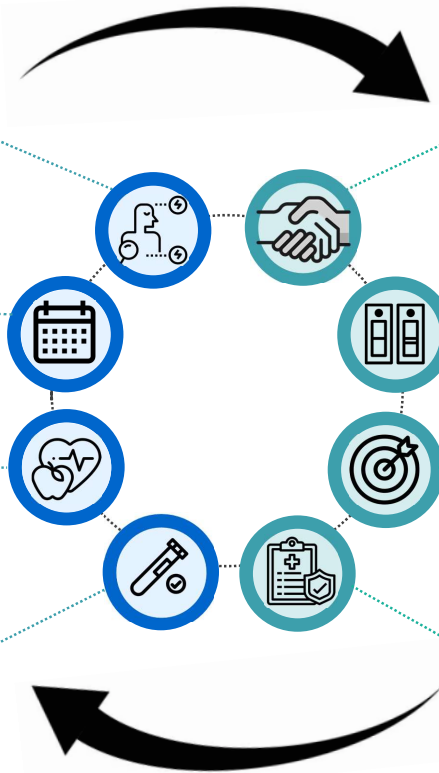
Primary Care Providers (PCP):

Provide information to BH colleagues about "red flag" symptoms a client may mention that should get a referral for labs or other health indicator testing such as: dizziness when standing, trouble breathing, excessive thirst, numbness, etc.

Keep BH colleagues updated on fluctuations in client labs and health indicators.

Convey acute and long-term implications of health behaviors that may be related to lab results in order to facilitate collaborative care planning and alignment on shared treatment goals.

Follow through on care for referred clients and follow up with BH provider to connect around reasons for referral.



Behavioral Health Providers (BH):

Refer clients for labs or other health indicator testing when "red flag" symptoms are expressed and provide a warm hand-off to PCP.

Engage with clients about their experience receiving lab and health results. Offer supportive coping mechanisms if needed.

Connect with PCP for updates on what client lab results indicate. Collaborate on care plans, modifying shared treatment goals to ensure client is comprehensively supported.

Recommend ways PCP colleagues can supportively provide health guidance and information to clients.

Key ways Behavioral Health providers are critical partners within integrated care:



Improve the skills of primary care providers to recognize behavioral disorders.



Improve the skills of providers to recognize how behavioral health conditions may manifest as physical symptoms.



Promote greater adherence to treatment regimens for chronic conditions.



Help patients understand the ways that emotions can effect how they feel physically.



Establishing responsive "person centered" goals to manage both physical and behavioral conditions.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- Include details on specific task oriented staff activities
- Convene stakeholders from throughout organization to develop PC-BH policies and recommendations
- Incorporate feedback even after policies are drafted as input is key to understanding how a process gets carried out in real time
- Ensure all guidance is either broad enough for or can specifically account for differences between disciplines. For instance: *PCP may focus on specific clinical markers; BH may focus on social and emotional markers.* Good policy and directives would account for both.