

DAG Meeting Summary Report August 22, 2018

TBGH's Depression Advisory Group met on August 22, 2018 to discuss ways for North Texas employers and health systems to improve access and utilization of appropriate mental health care services when they're needed.

This was the fourth meeting of the DAG, comprised of a group of 8-10 North Texas Employers and Mental Health experts from MMHPI. The first meeting addressed the many ways to look at mental health care and the most urgent challenges facing employers. We looked at various approaches to overcome the stigma of a mental illness in the workforce at the second meeting, and how providers can provide best practices at the third meeting.

Continuing our exploration of ways employers and health systems can work together to improve mental health care throughout the community, the August 22 meeting focused on some of the strategies North Texas employers are implementing to address the challenges identified earlier, specifically, coordinating physical and mental healthcare, when appropriate, and organizing data flow and payments to drive desired outcomes.

The discussion began with the employers sharing some innovative mental health initiatives that they had undertaken in the past year as a direct result of their involvement in the DAG. Several are noted below:

Dallas Area Rapid Transit has begun a relationship with Baylor Scott & White Health System where every patient is screened for depression at the primary care practice at least once a year. Trained licensed social workers are available to provide basic mental healthcare and referrals, as appropriate. DART has recognized the impact of depression and other mental and behavioral health conditions on productivity and is actively researching programs to reduce the stigma at work.

Unions at America Airlines are involved in this challenge of reducing stigma and directing employees to appropriate quality mental health care. AA is also actively promoting use of the EAP, access to trained peer counselors, basic mental health screening at the onsite clinic, and family engagement, AA is working on a "grand strategy" to address the need for timely, affordable and appropriate mental health services.

Garland ISD has become proactively engaged with the challenges of addressing depression. They are promoting their EAP and a popular website with useful information about mental health resources. Local high schools are also undertaking innovative mental health initiatives.

Dr. Mike Massey, Chief Medical Officer, Baylor Scott & White Quality Alliance and Mae Centano, Vice President of the Chronic Care Continuum, Baylor Scott & White Health presented the efforts of BSWH to integrate basic mental health care within affiliated primary care practices. BSWH has piloted this model

with its own employer group. DART is the first employer to participate in this new model and we look forward to learning more about this partnership over time. (BSWH slides is attached.)

Some of the challenges that continue to face employers and health systems include the difficulty of acquiring useful data, lack of awareness that depression is often a successfully treated condition, shortage of mental health providers, and provider networks and payment systems that discourage integrated physical and mental health care.

Dr. Madhukar Trivedi, an internationally recognized clinical expert in the field of depression and other mood disorders, complimented the efforts of BSW and other health systems to serve their patients. Dr. Trivedi suggested a data-driven project that would examine and analyze the impact of various health plan designs and payment strategies. (Update: Marianne and Judy are actively engaged in conversations with Dr. Trivedi and Phil Ritter, Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute, to explore suitable opportunities for a select group of employer members to participate in a data-focused collaboration.

We want to continue to provide you opportunities to learn from experts and each other and welcome your input as we move forward together.