

Integration of Care

Working together to develop and deliver mental health resources for Colorado communities.



Importance of Integration/Coordination of Care

- **Good mental health is vital to good overall health.** Mental health and physical health care need to be integrated. It is critically important to establish a healthcare system that treats mental illnesses with the same urgency and importance as it treats physical illnesses.
- Individuals regularly turn to physical care providers for support, treatment, and access to specialized mental health resources.
 - Due to lack of awareness and coordination, individuals may not gain access to the broader range of specialized services available in their community when accessing behavioral health care through the physical care provider.
- According to the Surgeon General, only 15% of children are referred to mental health services through their primary care physician. The other 85% access mental health needs through schools, juvenile justice, child welfare, and other community based programs.

Community Mental Health Centers are a Medical/Healthcare Home

- Children and adults with special health care needs often have many professionals invested in their physical and emotional well-being, making care coordination essential.
- It is often very difficult to find a physical care provider who will see patients with a mental illness that are also on Medicaid. Therefore, Community Mental Health Center works to help find a doctor who will meet the consumer's needs.
- The Community Mental Health Centers feel very strongly about the concept of Medical Home/Healthcare Home and how to utilize this concept to ensure the proper care of people with mental illness.
- In our commitment to this concept, we have been participating in the medical home project with Dr. Steve Poole, and the Medical Home Initiative coordinated by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and the Department Health Care Policy and Finance.
- In addition to ensuring that our consumers have a primary care doctor, we help them navigate the many other systems involved in their life. This includes the schools, social services, the criminal justice system and other healthcare providers.