

Quick Tips: Behavioral Health Referrals

Modified July 2020

Purpose: In addition to medication-assisted treatment (MAT), additional behavioral health resources can help supplement patients' recovery process and address underlying behavioral health conditions that may be impacting their substance use disorder. If your organization does not provide behavioral health services on-site, this page contains resources for making behavioral health referrals.

Considerations when making referrals for behavioral health services:

- Be patient-centered in your referrals: Many patients have had previous experience with behavioral health services, which may have been positive or negative. They also may be hesitant to engage in services so whenever possible, try to make referrals with patient preferences. In order to do this, you can ask:
 - About experiences from past services
 - Is the patient open to attending groups? Individual counseling? A day program?
 - What location will be easiest for them to access?
- You may think the patient would benefit from a service they aren't ready for. Start with what the patient is open to, and build from there. Over time, you can revisit the conversation and see if the patient is more open to engaging with behavioral health services.
- Collect information about MAT friendly community support
 - While it is changing, many AA and NA groups still have stigma around MAT. Notify your patient that this could happen, and try to collect information from your patients that are accessing NA/AA support about ones that are supportive of MAT.
- Build relationships with key partners
 - If there are behavioral health sites you refer to often, get to know them. Have a member of your office tour their facility and invite them to visit your clinic. If you refer multiple patients, ask about their ability to designate a key point of contact for you or your navigator for patient questions, and to have available to call if a patient is in crisis.

Resources for the team

- Identifying behavioral health resources and partners to connect with:
 - Use the [NJ SAMS directory](#) to identify providers
 - Reach out to your [County Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors and Mental Health Administrators](#) to ask for their help in identifying resources. They can also connect you to the local professional advisory committee for your region - which can help you meet and start forming relationships with behavioral health providers in your region.
- If your patient is not ready to engage in behavioral health support services, you and your team can support them through Motivational Interviewing. [This tool](#) is a comprehensive guide developed by SAMSHA to support providers (behavioral health, medical providers, peers, etc) to better incorporate Motivational Interviewing into their work with patients experiencing SUD.



- Levels of care - depending on the patient's needs you may refer them to different intensities of services. The following is a list of services for behavioral health levels of care:

Community Supports	<p>Hotlines: NJ REACH / IME Addictions Access Center - 24 Hour Hotline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-844-276-2777 or 1-844-REACHNJ • https://reachnj.gov/ <p>Patient and Family Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.njconnectforrecovery.org/ • 1-855-652-3737 <p>Group Support Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Co-dependency anonymous</u> • <u>Smart Recovery</u> • 12 steps program if they are MAT friendly
Outpatient	<p>Examples of outpatient services include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • individual counseling • medication and management (evaluation by a psychiatrist or APN to manage behavioral health prescribing needs. There are increasing options around telepsychiatry • Group therapy - weekly group sessions
Intensive Outpatient Programs (IOP)	<p>More structured program that involves multiple visits a week (usually 3-5) for half-day treatments. This approach may include individual or group sessions. It is usually as a 3-6 month stabilization program before patients are transitioned to an outpatient program.</p>
Partial Hospitalization	<p>More intensive version of IOP that involves visits 5-7 days a week for half or full-day treatments. Good resource for a patient who may be appropriate for hospitalization but are not open to that treatment.</p>
Residential Services	<p>In this setting, the person lives in a long-term residence or hospital setting for months or even years. It is a good fit for severe and persistent mental illness or substance use disorders where the person cannot function at home.</p>
Inpatient Hospitalization	<p>Acute, inpatient setting to stabilize a crisis, primarily when the patient is at risk of harming themselves or others.</p>

- Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) operate case management teams that can also provide additional services or help answer questions about how to get patients into behavioral health settings. Reach out to your network representative, or have the patient or OBAT Navigator call the MCO member services to learn more about the in-network resources and the MCO case management support for behavioral health needs.

Additional Resources

- For reference, it can be useful to be familiar with the ASAM Criteria for different levels of addiction treatment services. It is not free, but may be a valuable tool to purchase and reference as you are assessing the needs for your patients.
- MyResourcePal - social service directory that also includes information on behavioral health and peer support resources.
- Glossary of Terms
 - There are a lot of abbreviations of behavioral health services and levels of care.
 - BH - Behavioral health
 - BH therapist - Behavioral health therapist
 - BHC - Behavioral health consultant
 - BHCC - Behavioral health care coordinator
 - CAADC - Certified advanced alcohol and drug counselor
 - CATC II - Certified addiction treatment counselor (level II)
 - IOP - Intensive Outpatient Program
 - LCSW - Licensed clinical social worker
 - LLMSW - Limited licensed master social worker
 - LMFT - Licensed marriage and family therapist
 - LMSW - Licensed master social worker
 - LPC - Licensed Practical Counselor
 - OARS - open questions, affirmations, reflective listening, and summary reflections
 - OP - Outpatient program
 - SAMHSA - Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Agency
 - SBIRT - Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment
 - TNQ - Treatment needs questionnaire

