

Behavioral Health's Role in Relieving Emergency Department Strains



As the demand for psychiatric beds rises without adequate resources, patients in need of behavioral health care will continue to turn to emergency departments (EDs) as a solution. However, EDs are not equipped to treat a majority of behavioral health conditions, causing a backlog of patient admissions, lack of beds and ineffective treatment.

Discover 4 ways behavioral health program integration in the post-acute setting can benefit your ED and improve hospital operations and outcomes.

1 Enhances Operational Efficiency



Currently, patients with mental health disorders **experience more ED visits lasting 4+ hours** compared to patients without mental health disorders.¹

This is compounded by the fact that **ED caregivers often do not feel comfortable and are not trained to care for behavioral health patients** due to societal, institutional and educational issues.



One study revealed that **65% of patients with psychiatric and behavioral health conditions boarded in the ED had a medication error** requiring additional care interventions.²

Having a team of focused experts allows the hospital to leverage the latest trends, data and best practices – promoting efficiency and quality outcomes. This is made possible through partnership.

2 Reduces Costs



Overall expenditure on mental health has steadily increased from **\$32 billion in 1986 to \$186 billion in 2014.**³

Patients who require specialty behavioral health care but are admitted to the ED can cost the ED roughly \$2,265 per stay. Of those admitted with a behavioral health condition, 55% will be discharged without seeing a mental health professional.⁴



If adequate mental health resources are made available in local hospitals, EDs have the potential to experience over **\$4 billion in annual cost savings.**

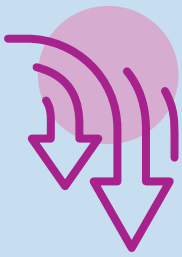
Having a partner can help hospitals integrate an effective program and relieve ED strains. This will not only help improve outcomes but enhance financial performance for both the ED and hospital.

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3

Lowers Length of Stay (LOS)

Behavioral health admissions in the ED have been found to occupy 42% more time than those in need of other ED-related treatment.⁵



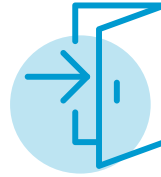
These longer stays can result in more negative outcomes, including:⁶

- Increased suicidal ideation
- Higher post-traumatic stress
- Decreased productivity
- Worsening finances

Partnership can help hospitals gain access to a skilled interdisciplinary team specially trained in behavioral health interventions – resulting in improved patient care, outcomes, satisfaction and LOS.

4

Improves Care Access



EDs have historically been the first point of entry for those experiencing behavioral health illnesses regardless of the ED's ability to successfully diagnose and treat their condition.

Research demonstrates hospitals that incorporate behavioral health services into the post-acute setting are more likely to generate positive outcomes for patients experiencing both behavioral and physical conditions.⁷



Creating greater access also helps reduce the stigma around behavioral health illness and treatment while increasing education and awareness around mental health concerns.

Partnership with a trusted behavioral health provider can help a hospital achieve this accessibility and therefore help contribute to the health and well-being of their local community.

Find out how partnership with Lifepoint Behavioral Health can help your hospital address the growing mental health need in your local community and relieve ED strains.

For more information, visit www.LifepointBehavioralHealth.net



References

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