



Successful Model: Mental/Behavioral Health- Primary Care Integration and Telemedicine

Project: Center for Rural Mental Health Studies

Target Population: Bigfork, Cook, Ely, Littlefork, Mora, Paynesville

Description: The Center for Rural Mental Health Studies (CRMHS) at the University of Minnesota Medical School Duluth is integrating mental health into primary care settings for underserved rural populations. CRMHS partners with the Family Medicine clinics in Bigfork, Cook, Ely, Littlefork, Mora and Paynesville, Minnesota communities to provide telemental health consultative services.

The telemental health service uses a modified shared care model of service delivery. Psychologists from the University of Minnesota Medical School Duluth work with a patient's physician via virtual presence communication to provide behavioral health services within the primary care clinic. The CRMHS provides timely, local mental health services that patients can access without the stigma associated with entering a mental health clinic or the costs involved with travel to distant sites for consultation. The patient is seen in their community medical clinic or hospital via a televideo arrangement, using PolyCom equipment, after referral from their primary care physician or other health care provider. Following the session(s) with the patient, CRMHS providers call the referring community provider, summarize their clinical impressions and offer treatment or further referral recommendations. This is followed with a written communiqué for the patient's medical file.

Patient satisfaction with the arrangement is very high.

Contact: James G. Boulger, Ph.D.

University of Minnesota Medical School Duluth

1035 University Drive

Duluth, MN 55812

218-726-7144

Email: jboulger@d.umn.edu

Web site: <http://www.med.umn.edu/duluth/about/CRMHS/home.html>

The Office of Rural Health and Primary Care Models' Web site is

<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/orhpc/models/index.html>

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