

The Importance of Follow-Up Care for Mental Illness



Visiting the hospital for mental illness or intentional self-harm can be overwhelming. Research suggests that timely follow-up care after discharge can help the member transition back to home, work, or school and can help providers detect early post-hospitalization reactions and medication concerns.¹

Advancements in integrating behavioral healthcare with primary care have created opportunities with the Psychiatric Collaborative Care Model. With this model, non-behavioral health providers can utilize a psychiatric consultant to participate in care services.

Provider Tips:

- Offer telehealth and phone visits
- Provide empathic listening and nonjudgmental discussions to engage the patient and caregivers in decision making
- Reach out proactively to assist in (re)scheduling appointments within the required time frames
- Encourage coordination of care between physical and behavioral health providers, including transitions in care
- Reinforce the treatment plan and evaluate any medication regimen considering presence/absence of side effects
- Partner with the health plan to address social determinants, health equity, and quality care
- Provide timely submission of claims and code related diagnosis and visits correctly
- Address co-morbidities and integrate care with peer support and psychiatric collaborative care models

Measures:

- Follow-Up After Hospitalization for Mental Illness (FUH)
- Follow-Up After Emergency Department Visit for Mental Illness (FUM)

Additional Support:

- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration: SAMHSA.gov
- National Alliance on Mental Illness: NAMI.org
- SMI Adviser, A Clinical Support System for Serious Mental Illness: SMIAdviser.org
- Collaborative Care Model: Psychiatry.org

¹ <https://www.ncqa.org/hedis/measures/follow-up-after-hospitalization-for-mental-illness/>