

Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Treatment Levels of Care: An Overview

Mental Health Treatment

Outpatient Treatment: Provides interventions in a clinic setting that include individual, group, and family therapies, as well as medication management. When services are located physically within the school, these services are still considered a community service, and treatment providers are operating on behalf of their agency.

Intensive Behavioral Health Services: IBHS offers a wide array of services that meet the needs of these individuals in their homes, schools, and communities. Services include individual, group, and Applied Behavior Analysis Services. Evidenced-based treatment (EBT) can be delivered through Individual, ABA or Group services. IBHS includes services like mobile therapy, behavior consultation, behavioral health technician, school-based behavioral health programs, after school programs, and others. IBHS replaced services that were provided through Behavioral Health Rehabilitation Services (BHRS).

Family Based Mental Health Services: These services combine individual therapy, family therapy, case management services, and crisis support. Intensive in-home interventions are designed to assist the family to become better able to alleviate problematic behaviors and increase the family's positive functioning.

Partial Hospitalization: Provides mental health treatment delivered in a clinic or school setting for prevention of psychiatric inpatient hospitalization or to assist a child in transitioning from inpatient treatment back to home, school, and community.

Inpatient Treatment: This is one of the most intensive and restrictive services available. Provides intensive, 24-hour care and treatment interventions a secure psychiatric unit of a treatment facility or hospital. It is indicated when the safety of a patient is jeopardized and it is determined that the child's psychiatric needs cannot be safely managed in a lesser level of care.

Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility (PRTF): Provide intensive 24/7 supervision and mental health treatment in a group residential setting for youth whose psychiatric symptoms cannot be addressed through services delivered at home or in the community. Residents are expected to receive reassessment, skill building, and recovery oriented interventions to include individual, family, and group therapy as well as special education and other necessary interventions based on individualized goals.

Substance Use Disorder Treatment

Outpatient Services: Take place in a non-residential setting with a counselor who specializes in substance use disorder treatment. It consists of less than 6 hours per week of services. These services may be located in the school or community.

Intensive Outpatient Services: Take place in the community but provides more intense treatment than traditional outpatient counseling. They enable patients to continue with their normal day to day lives in a way that residential treatment facilities do not. Treatment consists of 6 or more hours of service per week for adolescents.

Partial Hospitalization: Designed for individuals who would benefit from more intensive services than are offered in outpatient programs, but who do not require 24 hour inpatient care. Treatment consists of 20 or more hours per week of services.

Withdrawal Management: Includes services to assist a patient's withdrawal. Withdrawal is the symptoms that follow after an abrupt discontinuation or decrease in substance use.

Inpatient Treatment: Provides residential treatment at the highest level for patients diagnosed with a substance use disorder. Services provided by inpatient programs could include individual, group and family counseling, integrated mental health services and withdrawal management services. Drug and alcohol inpatient facilities are not locked facilities.

Recovery Support Services

In addition to treatment services the continuum of care for individuals with mental health and substance use disorders also includes recovery support services. SAMHSA's working definition of recovery defines recovery as a process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live self-directed lives, and strive to reach their full potential. The process of recovery is highly personal and occurs via many pathways. It may include clinical treatment, medications, faith-based approaches, peer support, family support, self-care, and other approaches. The types of recovery supports available in communities can vary. SAP liaisons can assist in identifying peer or recovery supports available for youth.

Learn more about outpatient services in schools in this guide: [Outpatient Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Treatment Services in Schools: Considerations for Schools and Providers.](#)