

2022
BayCare Behavioral Health
Accessibility Plan

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PURPOSE

To identify, remove and or minimize barriers to access to BayCare Behavioral Health (BCBH) programs, services, or employment.

BARRIERS, BARRIER PREVENTION AND IDENTIFICATION

Architectural barriers are physical features that limit or prevent people with disabilities from obtaining BCBH services.

- Facility Services ensures new construction or alterations of facilities conform to ADA Accessibility Guidelines
- Semi-annual internal Health and Safety Risk Assessments are conducted to identify architectural barriers.
- Ongoing team member monitoring assures safe and ADA accessible access to facilities, available and clearly marked parking spaces for the disabled, ramps that are not blocked.
- Barriers are addressed and recommendations are made to Leadership when appropriate.

Environmental barriers can be any characteristic of the setting that compromises, hinders, or impedes service delivery and the benefits to be gained.

- Semi-annual internal Health and Safety Risk Assessments are conducted to identify environmental barriers.
- Any individual may identify environmental barriers. Issues may be reported through various forums including but not limited to team meetings, committees, satisfaction surveys, and complaints and grievances.
- Barriers are addressed and recommendations are made to Leadership when appropriate.

Attitudinal barriers may include language used in literature or communication, how individuals are viewed and treated, whether or not input is solicited and used, eligibility criteria that screens out individuals with specific types of disabilities.

- BCBH participates in community education and awareness outreach activities and provides training and education to team members aimed at reducing stigma
- Customer input and stakeholder feedback regarding attitudinal issues and barriers to services is obtained through complaints and grievances, surveys, community forums, therapeutic groups, etc.
- Barriers are addressed and shared with management for consideration.

Financial barriers may include insufficient funding for services and supports.

- Ongoing reviews of current and pending contracts ensure service and capacity standards are met.
- State contracts, assistance grants, third party insurance agreements and the provision of a sliding fee scale are actively pursued.
- BCBH explores new opportunities and diversification of programs, services, and revenue sources.
- The Executive Committee focuses on improving operational performance and efficiencies within all programs.

Employment barriers may include lack of applicants, efficient systems to effectively hire, BCBH is committed to employing skilled team members and assisting persons served in overcoming barriers to employment.

- Team Resource policies, the Affirmative Action and Cultural Diversity plans are reviewed regularly to ensure legal requirements are met, and a non-discriminatory and culturally diverse environment is promoted
- To reach a diverse applicant pool, job vacancies are posted at BayCareJobs.com and other websites.
- Team members, coordinators, and managers provide input to leadership regarding the unique needs of the persons served or anticipated population to serve in the effort to hire team members with unique competencies.
- When a person served in not employed, and expresses a desire to work, staff may assist persons served in overcoming barriers to employment through the provision of referrals and service plan goals to help the person identify resources, mental health and / or substance use issues that may interfere with seeking and or obtaining employment.

Communication barriers may include the absence of a telecommunication device for the deaf and the absence of material in a language or format that is understood by the persons served.

- Each BCBH program location has a designated a Single Point of Contact responsible for ensuring effective communication with customers or companions who are deaf or hard of hearing, and or individuals who are limited English Proficient.
- Age and/or population specific evidence based, and emergent best practice materials are used in various settings throughout the service continuum. Additional materials are purchased as appropriate.
- Barriers are addressed and recommendations are made to Leadership when appropriate.

Technology barriers may include any barrier that would prevent the necessary transmission and receipt of essential data to provide person served care, operational sustainability, and organizational efficiencies.

- BCBH researches, provides, installs and supports any hardware or software that would reasonably assist a team member with a handicap or disability to perform their job function or a person served to access services.
- Barriers are addressed and recommendations are made to Leadership when appropriate.

Transportation barriers may include persons being unable to reach service locations at all or to participate in the full range of services and other activities

- Ongoing communication and relationship building between BCBH and community providers assures successful transportation coordination.
- Select BayCare programs utilize vans and cars for transportation services and purchase bus tickets / passes, taxi vouchers, and other hired services.
- Information related to transportation barriers is shared with management for consideration and follow-up.

Community Integration barriers Identify may include any barriers that would keep the persons served from returning to full participation in their community.

- Team members utilize the Resource Guide to assist customers gain access to activities and services within their community.
- Transition/Discharge/Aftercare plans are created at or near the time of admission to ensure community integration is addressed throughout the course of treatment.
- Barriers are addressed with Coordinators and or Managers when appropriate.

Other Barriers include those beyond the categories listed above that limit impede access BCBH programs, services, or employment.

- BCBH receives input from team members, customers and stakeholders that may identify additional barriers through the Strategic Planning Survey process, satisfaction surveys, person served feedback, Team Member as Customer Surveys, and other venues.
- Barriers are addressed and recommendations are made to Leadership when appropriate.

ACTION PLAN INCLUDING TIMELINES FOR ANY IDENTIFIED ACCESSIBILITY BARRIERS

| Barrier Identified | Actions to be Taken | Target Date | Completion Date |
|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------|------------------------|
| Access to Services | Expansion Plan to hire over 60 new psychiatric and therapy providers | 2022 | Ongoing |
| Access to Services/ Employment | Behavioral Health Specific Job Fairs | 2021 & 2022 | Ongoing |
| COVID-19 Pandemic/Transportation | Ability to provide ongoing telehealth services to persons served | 2021 | August 2021 |
| COVID-19 Pandemic | Adjustment on Exposure and Return to Work Guidance | 2021 & 2022 | Ongoing |
| COVID-19 Pandemic | Continue Modified Open Access at BCBH locations | March 2021 | March 2021 |
| Architectural | BCLM Clearwater ADA door installed | July 2021 | July 2021 |
| Financial/Humana MCR | BayCare MC investigating par/non-par issues | December 2021 | Ongoing |

Progress made in the removal of identified barriers

Ongoing COVID-19 pandemic continued to negatively affect many patients and team member’s mental health and created various barriers for those receiving or newly seeking mental health or substance use services. BayCare Health System, starting in 2020, continues to send ongoing COVID-19 Communication emails, update the COVID-19 Intranet page, restructure visitations, and continued the expansion of telehealth services for our patients. Social distancing and meeting requirements, team member guidance, and mask requirements all continue to be reviewed as spikes in COVID-19 occur. Many protocols implemented in the start of the pandemic continue to be relevant and in use today.

Barriers identified in 2021 and actions taken to remove and or mitigate those barriers were outlined in the Updated 2022 BCBH Accessibility Plan.