

# Talking Points: Integrated Care

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## 3 Key Messages:

**Who is Integral Care?** Integral Care supports adults and children living with mental illness, substance use disorder and intellectual and developmental disabilities in Travis County.

**What is integrated care?** Integrated care supports an individual's mental *and* physical health. It blends both mental and primary health care in one location to support the whole person – body and mind.

**Why is integrated care important?** Chronic health conditions, like diabetes and heart disease, can negatively impact an individual's mental health. And, poor mental health can negatively impact an individual's physical health when health conditions are not addressed.

- In fact, adults in the U.S. living with serious mental health conditions die on average 25 years earlier than others, largely due to unaddressed, treatable medical conditions.

## What is integrated care?

- Integrated care supports an individual's mental *and* physical health. It blends both mental and primary health care in one location to support the whole person – body and mind.
- A team of mental and primary healthcare providers use a collaborative approach, sharing their knowledge and experience, to improve health outcomes for clients.

## Why is integrated care important?

- Chronic health conditions, like diabetes and heart disease, can negatively impact an individual's mental health. And, poor mental health can negatively impact an individual's physical health when health conditions are not addressed.
  - For example, if an individual experiences an acute episode of depression, it can be hard to carry out their normal daily activities - taking their medication, eating healthy, sleeping well, getting exercise, etc. If this individual also has diabetes, that episode of depression can seriously impact their health.
- In fact, adults in the U.S. living with serious mental health conditions die on average 25 years earlier than others, largely due to unaddressed, treatable medical conditions.
- When mental and physical health care are intertwined within healthcare delivery systems, health outcomes improve.

## How does integrated care benefit the individual?

- Coordinating primary and mental health care improves access to care and overall health outcomes. It's convenient for the individual as all of their health needs can be met in one place.
- Access to mental health care in a primary care setting can also help ease the concerns of people worried about stigma associated with receiving mental health care.
- Integrated care can help normalize mental illness and substance use disorder so they're seen as any other physical health condition.

## How many integrated care clinics does Integral Care operate?

- Integral Care started offering integrated care in 2010.
- Integral Care has four integrated care clinics that provide mental and primary health care for adults who live with mental health issues and/or use drugs or alcohol. Two of our integrated care clinics also serve children and families.

## How does Integral Care work with clients in this setting?

- In one of our integrated care setting, clients might work with one of our psychiatrists, caseworkers or counselors to support their mental health and emotional needs. A wellness specialist might help with their nutrition and exercise goals, or help them quit smoking. A client might also work with one of our employment specialist to support their job search.
- For their primary care, clients will have access to physical exams, sick visits and treatment for long-term health problems like heart disease and diabetes.
- Mental health care and primary health care providers work together in the clinics and collaborate on care plans.

## How do mental and primary healthcare providers work together?

- Integral Care's Mental Health Team and a Primary Health Care Team treat clients in a collaborative and holistic manner that allow for more well-rounded treatment for our clients. The teams are in constant communication with each other to develop a treatment plan that is inclusive of both the client's physical well-being and mental health.
  - Our Medication Assisted Therapy Program, which helps adults who are addicted to drugs like heroin and prescription pain medicine, is a good example of integrated care. Primary Care Partner and Provider CommUnityCare administers medication to help stop withdrawal symptoms and Integral Care provides mental health services including counseling and case management.

## Who is Integral Care?

- Integral Care helps people build health and well-being so everyone has the foundation to reach their full potential.
- We support adults and children living with mental illness, substance use disorder and intellectual and developmental disabilities in Travis County.
- Our services include a 24-hour helpline for anyone who needs immediate support, ongoing counseling to improve mental health, drug and alcohol treatment to help with recovery, and housing to regain health and independence.
- Integral Care helps provide a strong foundation for well-being.
- Founded in 1967, we are the Local Mental Health and Intellectual and Developmental Disability Authority for Travis County.