

Transforming and Expanding Access to Mental Health Care in Urban Pediatrics (TEAM UP): Co-creation and Evaluation of a Pediatric Integrated Behavioral Health Model

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RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

- Background:** One out of five children in the United States has a mental health issue,¹ and 80% of these children do not receive an adequate diagnosis.² Barriers are greater for minority and low-income children.³

TEAM UP is a community health center (CHC) based integrated behavioral health (BH) initiative designed to transform pediatric primary care and increase access to a full range of BH preventative and treatment services.

- Objective:** To present the early results from the evaluation of TEAM UP
- Setting:** Urban federally qualified CHCs that serve ethnically diverse, low-income children

POPULATION STUDIED

~20,000 children ≤18 years who receive care at 3 CHCs that participate in TEAM UP

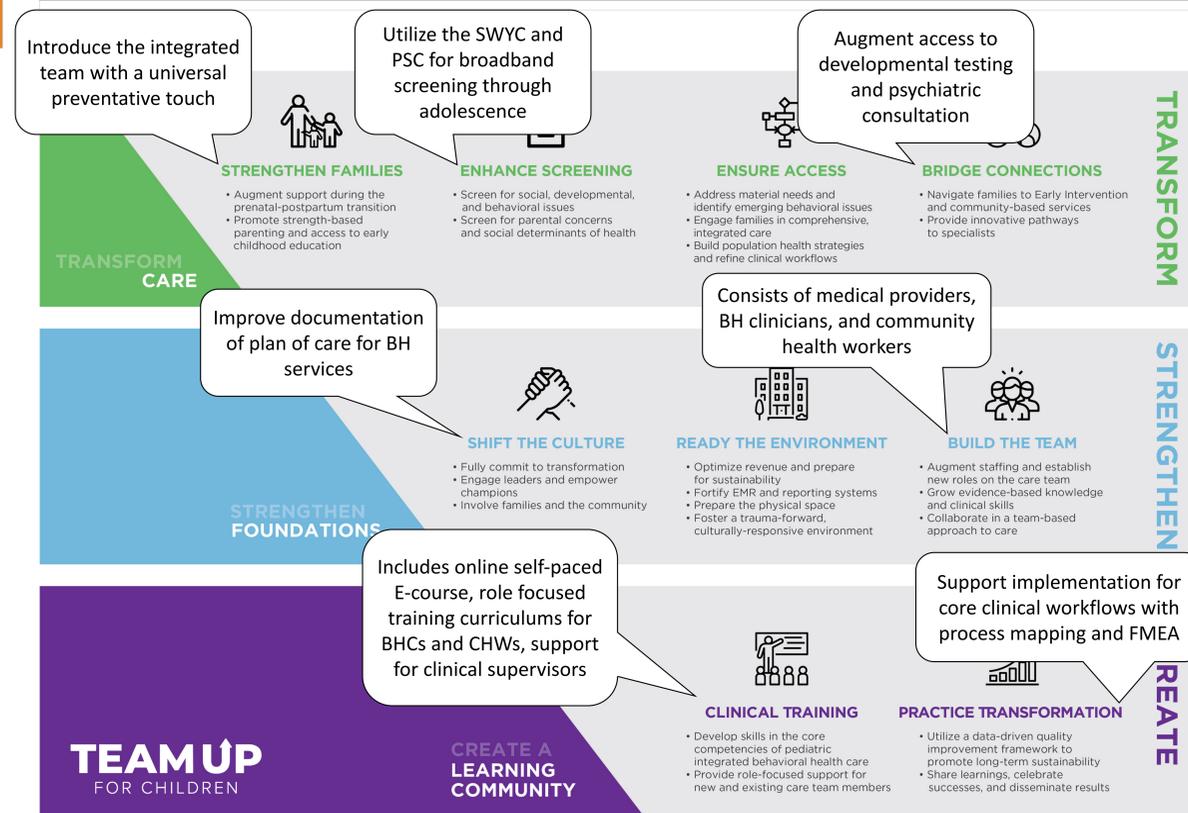
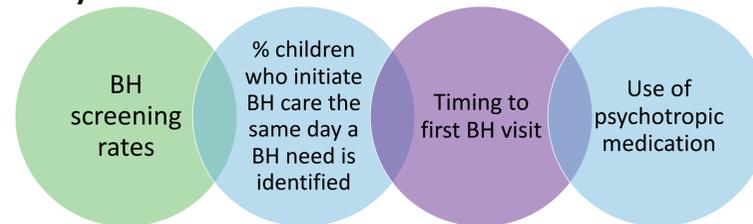
PRINCIPAL FINDINGS

- Compared to statewide averages, TEAM UP CHCs achieved and maintained high rates of BH screening for children of all ages.
- Approximately half of school-aged children and adolescents with a BH issue received a warm handoff (WHO) to a BH clinician.
- Children who received a WHO were seen sooner for a second BH visit than children who engaged in a “cold” handoff (i.e., contact with a BH clinician at a later date than when BH concern was first identified).
- Psychotropic medication prescriptions did not increase over time with implementation of expanded services provided by TEAM UP.

STUDY DESIGN

- Grounded in the National Academy of Science, Engineering and Medicine's prevention framework
- TEAM UP model includes a primary care team of medical providers, behavioral health (BH) clinicians and community health workers.
- Implementation is supported through a learning community, providing clinical training and technical assistance within a data-informed, quality improvement (QI) framework.
- Independent evaluation uses data extracted from the CHCs' electronic health record (EHR) systems to report back to the CHCs on a quarterly basis to facilitate QI work.
- Clinicians and researchers co-developed metrics that are feasible to collect from EHR systems. Data are used to continually “prove and improve” the TEAM UP model.

Key metrics of the mixed methods evaluation include:



IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE

- TEAM UP has been expanded to 4 additional CHCs and now covers ~25% of the state's Medicaid-enrolled children.
- Ongoing evaluation is focused on model scale-up and sustainability.

CONCLUSION

The TEAM UP model was successfully implemented in 3 CHCs and resulted in improved access to BH services without concomitant increase in psychotropic medication use.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

All activities within the TEAM UP for Children initiative are made possible through the contributions of the TEAM UP partners. Funding for the TEAM UP for Children initiative is provided by the Richard and Susan Smith Family Foundation and The Klarman Family Foundation.

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