

Institutionalize Alternative Pathways to Treatment and Recovery and Improve Outcomes

ESSENTIAL ELEMENT 7: Other Pathways and Strategies to Treatment and Recovery

POLICY

Courts should work with state agency partners and community-based providers to create and maintain alternative and sustainable pathways to evidence-based treatment and recovery support.

EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES

Embedding Recovery Support Navigators or Community Behavioral Health Liaisons into the court is a model for consideration. Navigators/Liaisons work for licensed treatment providers and are available on-demand to meet with individuals who display indications of behavioral health needs to: build rapport and trust in a confidential and non-judgmental space; assist in identifying level of motivation and current needs; help with enrollment and adjustments to Medicaid coverage; and facilitate access to community-based treatment, recovery support, and comprehensive care coordination. Navigators can also assist with connections to pressing needs beyond behavioral health such as food insecurity, housing instability, family support, and workforce development. Community Health Workers employed by Community Health Centers are another model for navigation and care coordination services. Recovery Coaches and Forensic Peer Support Specialists can also assist

with navigation as well as provide lived experience perspective, engagement, and support.

Court-based access to telehealth services for on-demand screening, evaluation, and navigation is an additional model to be considered. This model can improve timely access and assist with capacity challenges created by staffing shortages in many states.

An individual appointment process as opposed to a high-volume docket may also be considered. This model allows for planning care coordination tailored to the unique needs and strengths of the individual.

GETTING STARTED

States with Certified Community Behavioral Health Centers (CCBHCs) should work to establish partnerships for timely access to screening, evaluation, care coordination, and connections to treatment as per the federal CCBHC mandate. Courts should also partner with state Medicaid agencies, community-based providers, and community health centers, to identify navigation/liaison programs that currently exist and create collaborations to bring navigators into the courts.

NEXT GENERATION

Innovation, Technology, New Practice

Partnerships with academic institutions to host a database of navigation/liaison intake information, provide deidentified and aggregate data to the courts and partners, and assist in evaluation of navigation/liaison services should be considered. Data sharing agreements should be put in place between courts, providers, and evaluators to ensure client confidentiality is protected, care is coordinated, courts are aware of progress, and outcomes are measured.

Research shows that telehealth solutions for screening, assessment, and treatment produce outcomes that are as good or better than in-person versions of the same interventions. Courts should consider when and where to use teleservices, even when in-person options are available, given efficacy and potential reduced cost to provide services.¹ Consideration should be given to equipment, logistics, and coordination, both in the courthouse and in provider agencies.

Institutionalization, Sustainability, Funding

Courts should collaborate with state Medicaid agencies to leverage federal resources and create sustainable pathways to treatment and recovery support.

Data on navigation, telehealth, and the individual appointment approach should be collected, analyzed, and shared with key leadership and partners.

¹ [Providing Court-Connected Behavioral Health Services During the Pandemic: Remote Technology Solutions](#)

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RESOURCES

[Community Behavioral Health Liaisons \(CBHLs\)](#) (Missouri Behavioral Health Council)

[Project NORTH \(Navigation Outreach Recovery Treatment and Hope\)](#) (Massachusetts Trial Court)

[Providing Court-Connected Behavioral Health Services During the Pandemic: Remote Technology Solutions](#) (National Center for State Courts)

[Statewide, Regional, and Trial Court Behavioral Health Positions are Recommended](#) (National Center for State Courts)

