COLLABORATIVE CARE: A step-by-step guide to implementing the core model

Lay the foundation

Collaborative Care is a new way of doing medicine and requires an openness to creating a new vision that everyone supports.

Plan for Clinical Practice Change

Time to clearly define care team roles, create a patient-centered workflow, and decide how to track patient treatment and outcomes.

Build your Clinical Skills

Effective Collaborative Care creates a team in which all of the providers work together using evidence-based treatments.

Launch your Care

Is your team in place? Are they ready to use evidence-based interventions appropriate for primary care? Are all systems go? Time to launch!

Nurture your Care

Now is the time to see the results of your efforts as well as to think about ways to improve it.

- Develop an understanding of the Collaborative Care approach, including its history and guiding principles.
- Develop strong advocacy for Collaborative Care within organizational leadership and among the clinical team.
- Create a unified vision for Collaborative Care for your organization with respect to your overall mission and quality improvement efforts.
- Assess the difference between your organization’s current care model compared to a Collaborative Care model.
- Identify all Collaborative Care team members and organize them for training.
- Develop a clinical flowchart and detailed action plan for the care team.
- Identify a population-based tracking system for your organization.
- Plan for funding, space, human resource, and other administrative needs.
- Plan to merge Collaborative Care monitoring and reporting outcomes into an existing quality improvement plan.
- Describe Collaborative Care’s key tasks, including patient engagement and identification, treatment initiation, outcome tracking, treatment adjustment and relapse prevention.
- Develop a qualified and prepared care team, equipped with the functional knowledge necessary for a successful Collaborative Care implementation.
- Develop skills in psychotherapy treatment that are evidence-based and appropriate for primary care (e.g. Problem Solving Treatment, Behavioral Activation, etc).
- Implement a patient engagement plan.
- Manage the enrollment and tracking of patients in a registry.
- Develop a care team monitoring plan to ensure effective Collaborative Care monitoring and reporting outcomes.
- Develop clinical skills to help patients from the beginning to the end of their treatment, including a relapse prevention plan.
- Implement the care team monitoring plan to ensure effective team collaborations.
- Update your program vision and workflow.
- Implement advanced training and support where necessary.

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