



Integrated Healthcare At Thresholds

Making Physical Wellness A
Part Of Recovery

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Early Mortality In Severe Mental Illness

- 19th Century reports of mortality of 1.4x the rate of general population
- 20th century studies find rates of 1.4 to 2.6x
- Life expectancy is probably 10-20 years shorter than general population
- Only 1/3 of early mortality is explained by suicide and unnatural causes



Leading Contributors to Early Mortality

- Obesity
- Substance abuse
- Cardiovascular disease (including hypertension and COPD)
- Diabetes
- Sedentary lifestyle
- Poor nutrition
- Smoking



Access To Health Care

- An issue for all people with limited income, particularly preventive care
- Over use of emergency and specialty care
- Complicated by mental illness
- Significantly lower rates of primary care
- Significantly lower rates of routine testing
- Very poor dental care
- Little integration of primary care and psychiatry



A Few Observations

- The leading contributors include significant preventable causes
- Lifestyle issues are significant
- Iatrogenic effects of medications are significant
- Inattention by medical and behavioral health professionals is significant
- And inadequate care is probably very expensive!



Thresholds

- Providing services since 1959
- Works with people disabled by mental illnesses
- Recovery mission, committed to use and evolution of EBPs
- Based in Chicago with almost 70 program sites in 4 counties
- \$51mm budget, 850 staff
- ACT, residential, vocational, clubhouse, crisis, child/adolescent, etc. services.



In the Late 1990's Thresholds...

- Began to see increase in diabetes (linked to increased use of atypical antipsychotics)
- Began to see an aging client population
- Began to see increasing difficulties with healthcare access
- Became generally more aware of wellness movement



Our Mission

- “to help people with severe mental illnesses to reclaim their lives...”
 - Using a wellness and rehabilitative framework
 - Focus on increase in quality of life
 - Need to preserve/maximize residual functioning
 - Belief that better physical health makes recovery easier



Paxton House

- Opened in 2002
- Residence for up to 12 individuals with severe diabetes
- Integrated nutritional, medical, educational supports
- Heavy emphasis on lifestyle factors
- Exercise program & equipment
- Mixed outcomes: Works well for those who like it, many members are reluctant to engage in the service



Integrated Health Care (IHC)

- Partnership with UIC College of Nursing
- Began in 1999
- Advance practice nurse driven
- Primary health care focus
- Integrated directly into Thresholds program sites
- Integrates primary care and behavioral health



Locations

- Thresholds South (a clubhouse, south side)
- Young Adult Program (a high school and vocational service, north side)
- Mothers Project (one day a week well baby clinic)
- Miles Square Health Center (temporary west side)



Staffing

- Led by UIC nursing faculty
- AP nurses responsible for care
- Heavy use of graduate nursing students
- Integrated with/supported by Thresholds staff
- Shared clinical information
- Medical oversight provided through nurses



Services

- Primary care
- Assessment, routine check-ups
- Lab work & routine tests
- Education & lifestyle work
- Support for Thresholds program staff
- Support for psychiatric staff



Spin-Offs

- Walking groups
- Paxton House
- Nutritional education for members and staff
- Smoke cessation supports
- Weight loss supports
- General staff consultation



RWJ Support

- Three year project
- \$450,000 RWJ matching grant
- Focus on initial medical assessment and plan for all Thresholds members
- Focus on finding sustainable reimbursement structure



Meds On Time

- Medication compliance is a significant source variance in treatment outcome and a major source of risk
- Partnership with C&M pharmacy (and others)
- Multi med blister packs
- Color coded by time of day
- Delivered within 24 hours
- Many advantages to this pharmacy managed system



The Future

- Expanded IHC clinics
- Further integration of lifestyle management/improvement in behavioral health work
- Evidence based practice for physical wellness. Expansion of Illness Management & Recovery? Pharmacy component to the Medication EBP?