



SUMMARY NOTE

iFHP Big Ideas Week Connect | 19 – 23 June 2023

“Transforming Mental Healthcare”

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The barriers to provide the right care, coaching and treatment in mental health were outlined. These still persist as lack of physical resources, fragmented care, compliance issues and stigma associated with seeking help. Only [47.2%](#) of those that identified as needing assistance with their mental wellbeing received support. Thus, there is still a wide gap to fill in terms of education, access and adopting the most appropriate care & funding model.

The scope of supporting those with mental health & wellness needs spans a wide spectrum and thus providing the correct level of care via the correct channel is critical. A recent report highlighted, that from 100 members 75 would benefit from general wellness, 24 would need a higher level of intervention and 1 member would require a longer and more clinical intervention.

Estimates vary but with costs ranging from 2.8x – 6.2x with those presenting with both mental and physical conditions, the role of identifying the right level of longitudinal support is key to manage costs.

Headspace highlighted the role of behavioral health coaching in their healthcare application and its benefits in improving access and reducing stigma. Behavioral health coaches are graduate-level professionals who connect with members on-demand through discreet and confidential chat platforms, resembling texting with a family member or friend. This synchronous interaction in real-time eliminates waiting periods for responses, making it easier for individuals to seek support.

This accessibility encourages people to overcome barriers and ask for assistance, especially in situations where traditional approaches may have been challenging or stigmatising.

Behavioral health coaches work on building trust, rapport, and listening to members' concerns. This coaching layer of care fills a crucial gap in the behavioral health space, providing a much-needed support system for those who may not meet criteria for therapy or psychiatry but still require assistance.

Coaches continue to support individuals even as they transition to therapy, ensuring continuity of care and acting as a valuable resource for motivation and accountability.

The financial implications of this model were evidenced. This approach has shown to increase utilization, improve access, and decrease costs compared to traditional models. Recent data illustrated that in a traditional singular modality of care 10/25 members were treated at a cost of ~\$11k. Utilising a continuum of care approach on-line 20/25 of members were supported digitally (5 sought additional care) with an average cost of care of ~\$7.

In conclusion, integrating behavioral health coaching as a crucial layer of care in the healthcare system offers numerous benefits. It improves access to support, reduces stigma, and provides timely assistance to individuals with mental health concerns. By combining convenience, confidentiality, and a collaborative care approach, this model demonstrates scalability, positive financial outcomes, and a transformative way to address mental health needs.

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