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RECENT EVENTS

8th Annual Symposium: Mental Health from a Systems Perspective (February 2, 2021)

The 8th Annual Healthcare Systems Engineering Symposium, co-sponsored by LVBCH and the Lehigh University Healthcare Systems Engineering Program, featured a panel of mental health experts who discussed ways to improve mental health services.

Serving on the panel were:

- Dominick DiSalvo, MA, LPC, Corporate Director of Clinical Services of KidsPeace
- Darcy Gruttadaro, JD, Director of Center for Workplace Mental Health at the American Psychiatric Foundation
- Matthew Press, MD, Physician Executive, Penn Primary Care at Penn Medicine
- Michael Thompson, President & CEO of the National Alliance of Healthcare Purchasing Coalitions (NAHPC).

To address a woefully short supply of psychiatrists, the panel endorsed the collaborative care model of care. Based in primary care team, collaborative care places a behavioral health care manager who works closely with the primary care physician (PCP) and a consulting psychiatrist.

“It’s a rare thing in American health care to find something that improves quality and lowers costs,” he said. “For every \$1 you spend on collaborative care, you see a return of \$6 on your total healthcare spend.” Collaborative care spreads psychiatrists across a much broader population of patients. In the U.S. less than half of psychiatrists participate in networks and less than half of all U.S. counties have a single psychiatrist. To support collaborative care, four years ago Medicare created payment codes that enable PCPs to bill for these services. He urged employers to make sure their insurance plans encourage collaborative care.

Thompson said the National Alliance recognizes that employer plans with wholistic strategies and more integrated approaches outperform financially. Interestingly, when we take the wholistic approach, we spend more on mental health, but less on total health care. One’s diabetes, obesity and mental health are all intertwined. Collaborative care identifies and addresses issues early when they are less costly to treat. It also affects employee productivity.

Gruttadaro added it makes sense to screen in primary care because it’s a low stigma setting. In fact, the American Psychiatric Foundation (APF) has made expansion of collaborative care its number one priority

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in 2021. APF will ask Congress for federal funds to set up technical assistance centers to help PCPs change workflows to support collaborative care. Primary care can address depression, substance abuse, trauma and anxiety.

DiSalvo said we also have to invest in increasing access for children whose parents cannot afford a phone or laptop so they can get the quality mental health care they need. We need to increase ancillary services such as bus fare for children to get to appointments or for parents to visit hospitalized children. Because no one else was addressing the problem, KidsPeace partnered with LIFT so families can visit their kids. Also, he encouraged employers to remove stigma surrounding behavioral health so workers will feel comfortable asking for time off to arrange for behavioral health services for their children.

Gruttadaro added that employers should recognize their powers, work with their coalitions and ask for better mental health care for their employees.

ABOUT DOMINICK DISALVO



Dominick DiSalvo, LPC, is the Corporate Director of Clinical Services at Kidspeace. He is a Nationally Certified Trauma Therapist and LPC with significant training and experience with the development of Residential Programs that infuse trauma informed clinical programming with evidence based behavioral targets that build upon individuals' strengths to help increase the overall quality of life of adolescents and teenagers. Prior to joining Kidspeace, DiSalvo worked at the Devereux Foundation, Foundations Behavioral Health, and Bethanna Residential Treatment Facility in various administrative and clinical roles. He was appointed to the Juvenile Justice Task Force, named Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Pennsylvania Council for Children and Youth Services, selected as a member of H.R. 4980 Implementation Workgroup for the State of Pennsylvania to identify treatment for Human Trafficking Victims, and received the 2017 KidsPeaces Leadership Award and 2018 Valley Against Sex Trafficking Freedom Fighter Award. He is also a published author, adjunct professor, and has presented at the local and national level. He received his B.A. in Psychology from Lock Haven University and completed his Masters and Post-Graduate work in Clinical/Counseling Psychology at LaSalle University.

ABOUT DARCY GRUTTADARO



Darcy Gruttadaro is the director of the Center for Workplace Mental Health. As director, she works with her team in developing high impact programs, resources and case studies to support mentally healthy workplaces. Our work includes collaborating with employers in raising awareness, creating mentally healthy organizational cultures, and improving access to mental health services and supports. The Center works with organizations of all sizes from Fortune 100 companies to small family owned businesses in creating effective approaches to improving the mental health and well-being of employees and their families.

Before joining the Center, Ms. Gruttadaro served in multiple senior level positions with the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). Ms. Gruttadaro has expertise in expanding evidence-based practices, improving early intervention, designing insurance coverage for mental health services and building an array of effective services and supports that promote resiliency and recovery.

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ABOUT MATTHEW PRESS, MD



Matthew Press, MD, MSc is the Physician Executive of Penn Primary Care and the Medical Director of the Primary Care Service Line at Penn Medicine. In these roles, he helps lead clinical operations, practice transformation, and population health management across a network of 90 primary care practices in the University of Pennsylvania Health System. Dr. Press practices general internal medicine and is engaged in research in the areas of population health and payment reform. From 2018-2020, he served as Interim Chair of the Department of Family Medicine and Community Health in the Perelman School of Medicine.

Prior to his positions with Penn Medicine, Dr. Press was a member of the senior leadership team at the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation at CMS, where he helped develop and implement several new payment and care delivery models including ACOs, bundled payments, integrated mental health, and medical homes, as well as the Health Care Payment Learning and Action Network, a national public-private partnership dedicated to health care payment reform. His work has been published in the New England Journal of Medicine, JAMA, and Health Affairs and has been covered by The New York Times and the Associated Press. He received his MD from Brown University and completed his internal medicine residency and the RWJF Clinical Scholars Program at the University of Pennsylvania.

ABOUT MICHAEL THOMPSON



Michael Thompson is the President and CEO of the National Alliance of Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions (National Alliance). The National Alliance is the only nonprofit, purchaser-led organization with a national and regional structure dedicated to driving health and healthcare value across the country. Collectively, it represents over 45 million Americans, spending over \$300 billion annually on healthcare including a broad cross-section of private sector and public sector employers as well as union organizations. Thompson is a nationally recognized thought leader for business health strategies and health system reform.

Prior to joining the National Alliance, Mike was a Principal at PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) for 20 years where he worked as an advisor to employers, health plans, providers, and other healthcare stakeholders. Prior to PwC, Mike served as an executive with diverse roles with Prudential Healthcare for over 17 years. Mike is a Fellow of the Society of Actuaries, serving on the Health Practice Council, and chairs the Medicare Sub-Committee of the American Academy of Actuaries (AAA). He is also widely recognized as a leading national advocate for mental health and wellbeing and is a Past President of the New York City chapter of the National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI).

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