

Primary Care Behavioral Health Partnerships Advancing & Transforming Health Sciences (PCBH PATHS): Provider Wellness Initiative

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ABSTRACT

The PCBH PATHS initiative is a workforce development pipeline to train the next generation of healthcare professionals to address gaps in skills, and design and deliver (IBH) in the Rio Grande Valley (RGV), Texas – a medically underserved area (MUA). UTRGV has a strategic priority to “Promote a culture of health and well-being for UTRGV and surrounding communities that employs a holistic approach to wellness, health, medical education, training, and research,” as well as key initiatives for integrating, coordinating, and leveraging programs and resources to support activities that enhance health and wellness and increase healthcare delivery to underserved communities. Our initiative, aligned with UTRGV strategic priorities and key initiatives, will integrate basic (model specific strategy and operational elements), midlevel (role identity and profession specific behavioral competencies specific to each health profession), and advanced (behavioral medicine clinical skills) applications of the evidence based PCBH model of delivery. In support of the national and HRSA priorities, the PCBH PATHS initiative will have a curricular priority for training providers in Opioid Use Disorder (OUD)/ Substance Use Disorders (SUD), increasing the number of graduates with Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT)-Waiver training, and advancing psychological skills to self-monitor and manage clinician well-being. Based on evidence from Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and its link to behavioral, physical, and addictive disorders, trauma-informed care (TIC) will serve as the foundation for MAT, OUD/SUD training. By year 2024, PCBH PATHS will help sustain wellness committees and practices as part of PCBH PATHS implementation. Additionally, a measurement feedback system (MFS) will assess improvements in trainees’ wellness through self-monitoring and Rapid Cycle Quality Improvement (RCQI) initiatives by program committees and clinic committees.

SYSTEMATIC CHANGE FOR WELLNESS

The major objectives of PCBH PATHS are to develop a Measurement Feedback System (MFS) and implement Rapid Cycle Quality Improvement (RCQI) initiatives as systematic approaches to wellness. Based on research and findings over the impact of provider wellness on the quality of care provided, there is a clear understanding of the significant relationship between these two variables. In recent years, the goal of improving wellness among medical learners has garnered attention from many in the field.

UTRGV PCBH PATHS Partnered Program

School of Nursing	25 learners/yr
Physician Assistant Studies Program	100 learners/yr
Department of Psychiatry	6 learners/yr
Masters Level Mental Health Programs	190 learners/yr
Department of Family Medicine	18 learners/yr
Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology	4 learners/yr
Department of Internal Medicine	30 learners/yr
Undergraduate Medical Education	55 learners/yr

WELLNESS RESEARCH & PROJECT INITIATIVES

Medical Learner/Trainee Focus Groups

To help us better direct our efforts in developing processes for PCBH PATHS wellness initiatives, we opted to hold **Focus Groups** with medical learners/trainees from several partnering programs. In these focus groups we discuss wellness, well-being, burnout, and other related topics. Our aim is to learn about the depth of wellness and its causes from the perspective of a medical trainee. Findings from these focus groups will allow wellness committees of partnered programs, to develop evidence based, RCQI initiatives.

Additionally, as the current pandemic has had a drastic impact on how these medical learners go through training and their courses, a select set of questions were added to collect qualitative data on how their management of wellness has been affected, specifically by the changes from the pandemic.



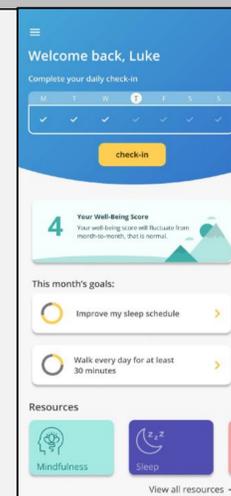
COVID-19 Impact



As with many crisis events such as the current situation of COVID-19, we believe medical learners use strategies that vary based on different points in time. Specifically, strategies on how they maintain wellness/ well being before, during, & after a crisis. Because of this, specific questions were added to document how medical learner wellness has been impacted.

Measurement Feedback System (MFS)

The aim of the PCBH PATHS MFS is to systematically enhance psychological well-being and connect individuals to the appropriate resources. Typically, an MFS relies on a patient provider relationship. To account for the lack of a provider in this design, frequent check-ins and self-monitoring processes will act to stimulate the provider component. Through the development of an MFS based mobile application, measurement assessments will be offered to trainees to help them gauge their overall sense of wellness and build their “wellness profile”. Upon completion of these assessments, informational and interactive resources will be recommended to the trainee as a way of shifting attention to stimulating and redirecting behavioral processes. In lieu of direct intervention, these resources will help provoke curiosity and awareness as well as improve trainee wellness by helping to facilitate necessary behavior change.



DISCUSSION

- Through the eventual completion of the focus groups with medical learners, PCBH PATHS researchers will collect data from a diverse set of views and arrive at a final consensus about how medical learners collectively view the concepts of wellness and how they maintain well-being.
- Findings from focus group data presented to partnering program will be used as a tool for program-level wellness committees to lead and conduct Rapid Cycle Quality Improvement (RCQI) projects. RCQI projects will maintain long-term structured wellness initiatives to meet the needs of each respective program.
- The influence from to institutional changes for the pandemic has required adaptations in developing and collecting data for PCBH PATHS wellness initiatives.
- The development of the MFS based mobile application is a revolutionary step for partnering programs to make data-driven decisions regarding wellness.
- Development of the mobile application has brought many considerations on the types of measurements used to quantify target metrics. Specifically, identifying and utilizing a single assessment that provides a more comprehensive view of an individual's wellness.
- Through this mobile application, trainees will have easy accessibility to appropriate resources as they build up their individual “wellness profile”. These profiles will include learner-level data, such as personalized resource feedback, completion progress, and testing results.

FUTURE WELLNESS STRATEGIES

Completion of the current stage of our wellness research and projects should yield findings that drive PCBH PATHS goal for systematic change of addressing wellness. Future work by the UTRGV PCBH team will include: [1] Support programs as projects and policies are developed to address the wellness of medical trainees, [2] Launch of the mobile application being developed in conjunction with the MFS, and [3] The use of aggregate MFS data for use in the RCQI component of the project.

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