



## Defense Health Agency (DHA) Clinical Communities Speaker Series

### 2024 OCT CCSS: Fostering Quality and Excellence in Military Specific Care

#### **S05: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) Perspectives on Integrated Care and Its Implications to Clinical Practice**

##### **Resource List**

The American Psychological Association (APA) believes in adopting evidence-based integrated behavioral health services, recognizing that a one-size-fits-all model will not work for all primary care settings. Instead, APA emphasizes that the primary care practice's needs, internal and community-based resources, practice-based goals, and, importantly, patient population be the drivers for determining the best approach to care. Ideally, each primary care clinic will have the option to choose the model or combination of models that will best address the behavioral health needs of its patient panel and that the services provided will be flexibly implemented over time based on patient and practice needs. According to the article [Behavioral Health Integration Fact Sheet](#) (2022), adopting integrated behavioral health approaches that support the uniqueness and needs of the specific patient population and primary care team appropriately will best address population health overall.

Many women experience changes in their mental health during the perinatal period. Poor mental health can negatively affect women's health and the well-being of their babies and families. Equally, poor health or difficult circumstances in the lives of women, their babies and families can negatively impact women's mental health. Maternal and child health (MCH) services during the perinatal period provide a unique opportunity for service providers to connect with women and provide support. Consequently, the World Health Organization (WHO) wrote [Guide for Integration of Perinatal Mental Health in Maternal and Child Health Services](#) (2022) to provide information about how staff in MCH services can provide mental health promotion, prevention, treatment, and care. Supporting good mental health can improve health outcomes, and the quality of MCH services for all women can be improved by creating an environment where they feel safe to discuss any difficulties they are experiencing in a respectful and caring environment that is free from stigmatization.

According to the article [Association of Integrated Mental Health Services with Physical Health Quality Among VA Primary Care Patients](#) (2022), across a large health system with nationally implemented PC-MHI, patients cared for in primary care clinics where integrated mental health specialists reached a greater proportion of patients had significantly better diabetes and blood pressure control, than those in clinics with lower PC-MHI reach. Experiences of the VA—one of the largest programs to integrate mental health and primary care services to date—provide optimism about the expected effects of large-scale PC-MHI implementation on physical health outcomes. Future evaluations of health care system-wide implementation of integrated mental health care can further investigate the relationships between integrated primary and mental health care and patient physical health outcomes, including what specific clinic-level features of PC-MHI have the most impact.



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### References

American Psychological Association. (2022). *Behavioral Health Integration Fact Sheet*. APA.

<https://www.apa.org/health/behavioral-integration-fact-sheet>

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World Health Organization. (2022). *Guide for Integration of Perinatal Mental Health in Maternal and Child*

*Health Services*. WHO. <https://iris.who.int/bitstream/handle/10665/362880/9789240057142-eng.pdf?sequence=1->