

## Opportunities and Strategies

**Opportunity for Change #1:** Expand and enhance coordination of mental health and substance use care within the primary care setting.

**Strategy 1:** Identify active collaborative care models being implemented in the region and engage the model champions to participate on the Integration Leadership Council.

**Strategy 2:** Initiate a data sharing and integration work group or engage an existing work group (e.g., PHIX partners) to explore how expanded data sharing can improve coordination and collaboration among primary care, mental health and substance use service providers.

**Strategy 3:** Explore opportunities for integration of behavioral health care manager (BHCM) staff within area primary care practices.

**Strategy 4:** Identify active regional navigation systems, peer support and promotor/a programs, and other related resources and engage model champions to inform on ways to enhance coordination of care for individuals and families.

**Strategy 5:** Engage with substance use service providers to strengthen network communication and implementation of best practice substance use prevention, support, and treatment programs.

**Strategy 6:** Increase employer knowledge of the importance of integrated care and employee health insurance coverage options for mental health and substance use care.

**Strategy 7:** Identify model tools to improve knowledge and empower individuals and families to understand care integration and increase their skill in use of third-party coverage options for mental health and substance use care.

**Value Proposition:** Effective integration of mental health and substance use care within the primary care setting contributes to reduction of stigma and negative bias, emotional well-being, effective management of addiction and reduces potential for mental health or substance use related crisis situations.

**Opportunity for Change #2:** Engage with regional employers and higher education institutions to introduce and enhance programs that lead to student completion of degrees, licenses, certifications, and other credentials for immediate and sustainable employment in mental health occupations (e.g., LPC, LMS, LCSW, Licensed Clinical Psychologist, Psych NP).

**Strategy 1:** Obtain current data on supply and demand for various mental health and substance use care positions and the related education programs available to address needs and grow credentialed professionals who will practice in the region.

**Strategy 2:** Implement evidence-based education and training programs for primary care providers (e.g., physicians, nurses, pharmacists) to increase knowledge and skill in effective and efficient mental health and substance use screenings and care coordination.

**Strategy 3:** Explore areas where policy and practice changes will lead to lasting improvements in educational attainment and sufficient employer reimbursement to maintain service availability at optimal levels.

**Value Proposition:** Implementation of model higher education and training programs in the region will reduce reliance on recruitment from other regions, provide opportunities to aspiring local students, and enhance the ability of local health professionals and service providers to maintain vital services at optimal levels. Improving third-party coverage options, knowledge and awareness for employers and employees will contribute to timely treatment and help prevent mental health and substance use crisis situations.

**Progress Indicators:** The Council will track relevant measures regarding data sharing among providers (at the individual case and system levels) and continuity of care between providers over time.

**Consortium 2.0:** Consortium leaders formed a sound foundation in 2015. As a result, El Paso partners have successfully increased mental health and substance use resources for the region, made significant improvements in the behavioral health system of care, and set the stage for the next phase of improvements.

The Consortium helps to foster, strengthen, and properly recognize the integral partnerships that create change in the El Paso region. With the 2021 El Paso Behavioral Health System Assessment, other related data and ongoing community feedback, El Paso County is prepared to take new steps toward achieving an ideal behavioral health system of care.

To view or download the full 2021 El Paso County Behavioral Health System Assessment, visit [www.healthypasodelnorte.org](http://www.healthypasodelnorte.org).

**Get Involved:** The Consortium is committed to ongoing collaboration where all partners are welcome, empowered, and unified to achieve the vision.

To learn more about the El Paso Behavioral Health Consortium, the 2021 El Paso County Behavioral Health System Assessment, or the Consortium Leadership Councils, contact Enrique Mata, Executive Director, Paso del Norte Center at Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute, at [emata@mmhpi.org](mailto:emata@mmhpi.org), 915-253-0287 or Sandra Day, Associate Program Officer, Paso del Norte Health Foundation, at [sday@pdnfdoundation.org](mailto:sday@pdnfdoundation.org), 915-544-7636.



Please Note: The El Paso Behavioral Health Consortium does not provide health services of any type, such as mental health, substance abuse, or other services. The following are resources to help those seeking behavioral health services:  
2-1-1 El Paso Resource Referral System - Dial 211  
24-Hour Mental Health Crisis Line - Dial 9-8-8 or (915) 779-1800  
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - Dial (800) 273-TALK (8255)