

## Spotlight: Re-Committing to PCBH Program Integration

The San Francisco Health Network (SFHN), a multi-site Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) and part of San Francisco's public health system, is renowned for its unwavering commitment to the health of its residents. The task of providing quality care to such a diverse population presents multifaceted challenges, including dealing with severe mental illness, managing numerous Social Determinants of Health issues, and grappling with a profound shortage of available community resources.

In January 2024, SFHN hosted their quarterly staff meeting spotlighting their Primary Care Behavioral Health (PCBH) program in medical clinics. While PCBH has been an integral part of their organization for some time, since the impact of COVID-19 and over time since the initial implementation, there has been a gradual moving away from its original model and intent over the years. This gathering served as a platform for medical providers, Behavioral Health Consultants (BHCs), and Behavioral Assistants (BAs) to engage in active training and collaboration, recentering the focus of the current program.

Daniela Vela Hernandez, an Improvement Advisor with the CalHIVE BHI collaborative, led a session on the fundamentals of behavioral health integration and participated in breakout sessions by roles to help identify improvements in workflows such as: defining roles, maximizing the roles of all care team members, warm hand-offs, managing interruptions and asking patients social needs question. This initiative supports the SFHN team in their mission to refine the model, bolster patient support, and reduce provider burnout.

While PCBH is occurring network-wide at SFHN, currently the CalHIVE BHI team is piloting improvements at a pilot site, Maxine Hall. Leveraging insights from past experiences, the pilot improvements are strategically designed and being tested to ensure future success.

As SFHN builds on their accomplishments and implement their plans, their unwavering commitment to protecting and promoting the health of all San Franciscans remains evident. The importance of training in PCBH fidelity cannot be overstated as it plays a crucial role in maintaining the integrity of the program, ensuring its effectiveness, and ultimately enhancing patient outcomes.

What's next around PCBH implementation?

Despite the many competing demands, investing time and energy into in-person training is crucial. After the success and engagement of this meeting, the SFHN team is planning quarterly cross-disciplinary PCBH planning meetings for their medical providers, behavioral health providers and adding their medical assistants as well.

