

SPECIAL eBULLETIN

FOR PROFESSIONAL PROVIDERS

AUGUST 18, 2022

UPDATE: BEHAVIORAL HEALTH TOOLKIT FOR PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIANS

The Behavioral Health Toolkit for Primary Care Physicians has been updated with links to valuable screening tools, guidelines, and other resources to incorporate into your practice. This change includes new sections for autism, eating disorders, insomnia and sleep, and psychotherapy, along with crisis line information.

RESOURCES FOR PROVIDERS

The Behavioral Health Toolkit can be found here:

- Go to the **Provider Resource Center**
- Select **EDUCATION/MANUALS**
- Click **Educational Resources – Member and Provider**
- Scroll down to **PROVIDER TOOLS AND RESOURCES**
- Select **Behavioral Health Toolkit for Primary Care Physicians**

WHY THE TOOLKIT IS IMPORTANT

Behavioral health concerns are at an all-time high in the United States. According to the [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration \(SAMHSA\)](#), 73.8 million adults aged 18 or older were diagnosed with a mental and/or substance use disorder in 2020, an increase of 12.6 million adults from 2019. Further, SAMHSA notes that 5.1 million individuals aged 12–17 had either a major depressive episode or substance use disorder.

Exacerbating this situation are the decreased numbers of behavioral health providers. According to the [2022 State of Mental Health in America Report](#), 24.7% of adults with a mental illness reported an **unmet need** for treatment. A [government report](#)¹ projects a nationwide shortage of 10,000 behavioral health providers by 2025.



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Highmark does not recommend particular treatments or health care services. This information is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. You should determine the appropriate treatment and follow-up with your patient. Coverage of services is subject to the terms of each member's benefit plan. Additionally, state laws and regulations governing health insurance, health plans and coverage may apply and will vary from state to state.

For Highmark members in Delaware, Pennsylvania and West Virginia, the prevalence of behavioral health diagnoses increased in nearly all categories from 2020 to 2021:

Diagnosis	2020	2021	+ / -
Depression	8.9%	9.5%	+.6
Substance Abuse Disorders	6.2%	6%	-.2
Anxiety	6.1%	6.9%	+.8
Other BH Conditions*	7.5%	8.3%	+.8

*Conditions include anorexia / bulimia, bipolar disorder, attempted suicide / self-inflicted injury, other anxiety states, and prolonged posttraumatic stress disorder.

Resources:

¹[National Projections of Supply and Demand for Selected Behavioral Health Practitioners: 2013–2025.](#)