

Mental Health Referrals in the Aftermath of COVID-19

Hilary M. Bowers, MD, FAAP

Director of Behavioral and Mental Health Services

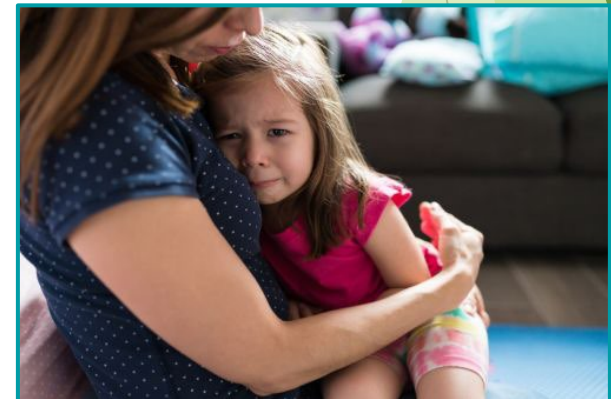
Children's Primary Care Medical Group

▶ No conflicts of interest to disclose



Overview and Objectives

- ▶ Youth Mental Health Crisis
- ▶ System of Care Challenges
- ▶ Potential Remedies



Children and Adolescents Pre-COVID 19

- ▶ 20% with behavioral / mental health diagnosis
- ▶ 10 years between first symptoms and care
- ▶ ~33% first care in ER
- ▶ Suicide
 - ▶ 2nd cause of death - teenagers
 - ▶ Teen suicide increased 56% 2007 - 2017



Youth Mental Health Crisis During COVID-19

- ▶ 44% high school students feel persistently sad or hopeless
- ▶ 20% seriously considered attempting suicide
- ▶ 57% increase in death by suicide among youth ages 10-24 years from 2007 - 2018
- ▶ Youth depressive and anxiety symptoms **DOUBLED** during the pandemic
- ▶ **40% INCREASE** in high school students feeling sadness or hopelessness 2009 - 2019



Mental Health on National Stage

- ▶ March 1, 2022, State of the Union: **President Biden** announced an ambitious plan to address the country's mental health needs, presenting it as an issue with bipartisan support.
- ▶ December 7, 2021, U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy, M.D. issues a new **Surgeon General's Advisory** to highlight the urgent need to address the nation's youth mental health crisis



We are all feeling it!

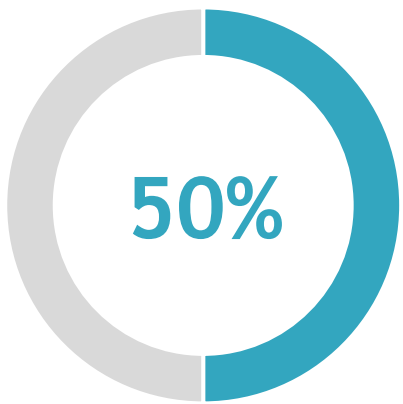
- ▶ 2019 in California:
 - ▶ 1 counselor for every 626 students
 - ▶ 1 psychologist for every 1,041 students
 - ▶ 1 social worker for every 7,308 students

- ▶ California's student-to-counselor ratio is the **fifth-highest** in the United States

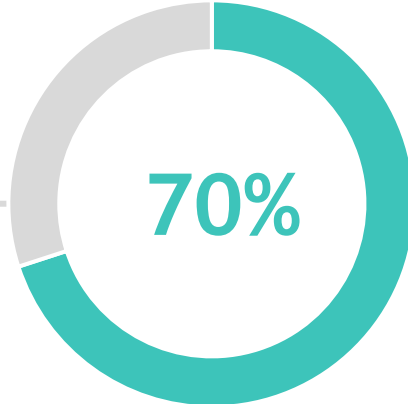
LIMITED AMOUNT

Mental Health in Primary Care

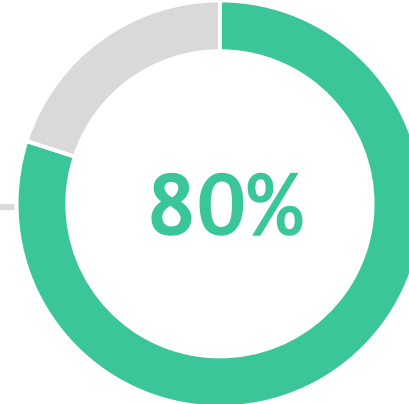
The rate of psychosocial problems identified by primary care providers (PCPs) has more than doubled.



pediatric office visits involve behavioral, social-emotional, developmental concerns

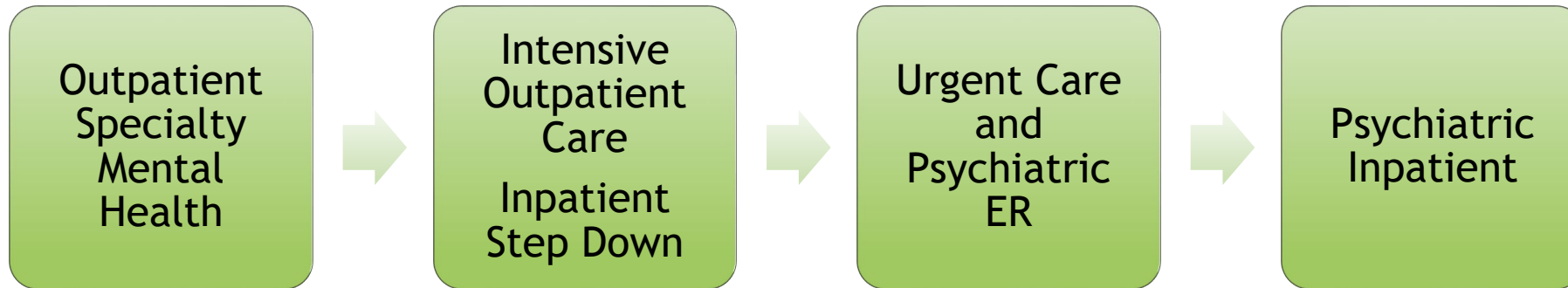


behavioral health medications are prescribed by Primary Care

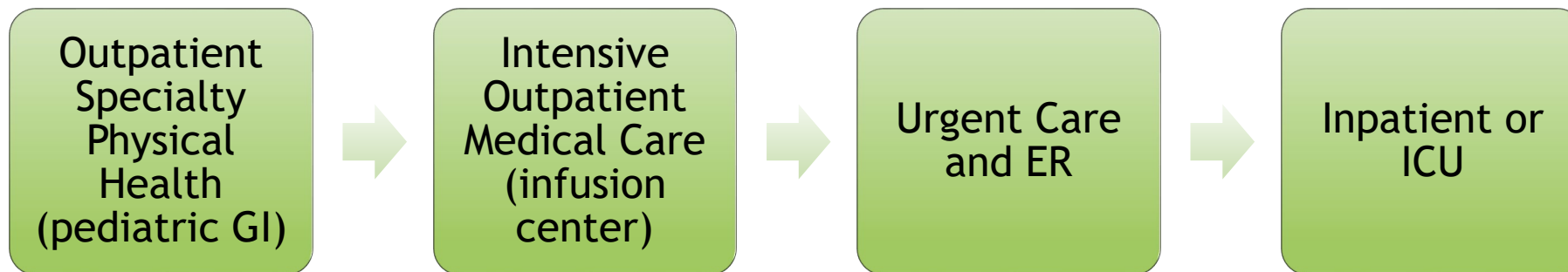


patients with mental illness are managed by Primary Care

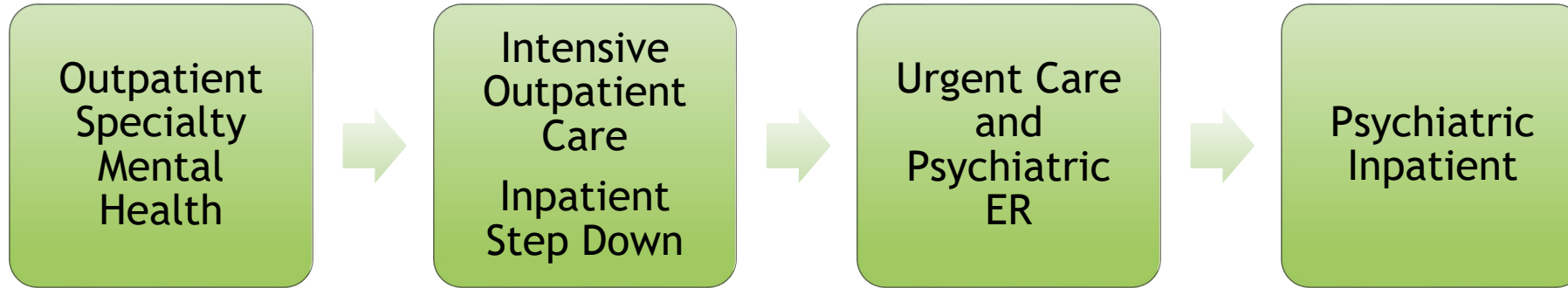
Mental Health Continuum



Physical Health Continuum



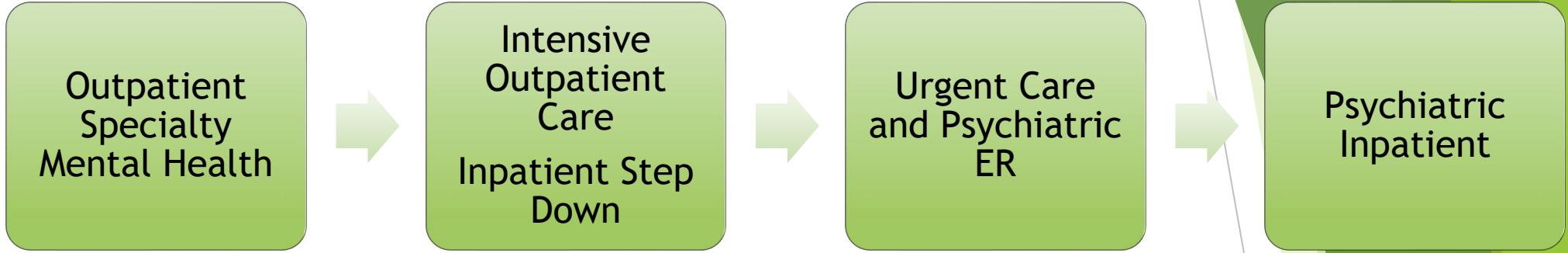
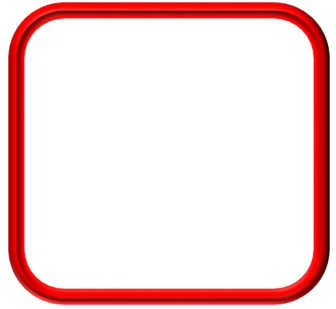
Mental Health Continuum



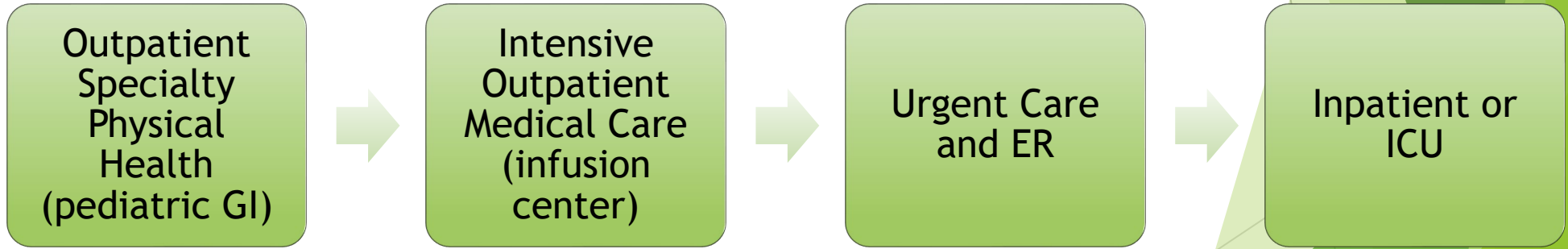
Physical Health Continuum



Mental Health Continuum



Physical Health Continuum



Hakhel (Hebrew: הקהל)

- ▶ Pronounced haqhēl
- ▶ Jewish year of 5783
- ▶ Meaning - Assemble

CPCMG By The Numbers

- ▶ 28 offices
- ▶ 150 clinicians - MD/DO/NP/PA
- ▶ 280,000 patient lives
- ▶ Largest provider of safety net care in the state of California

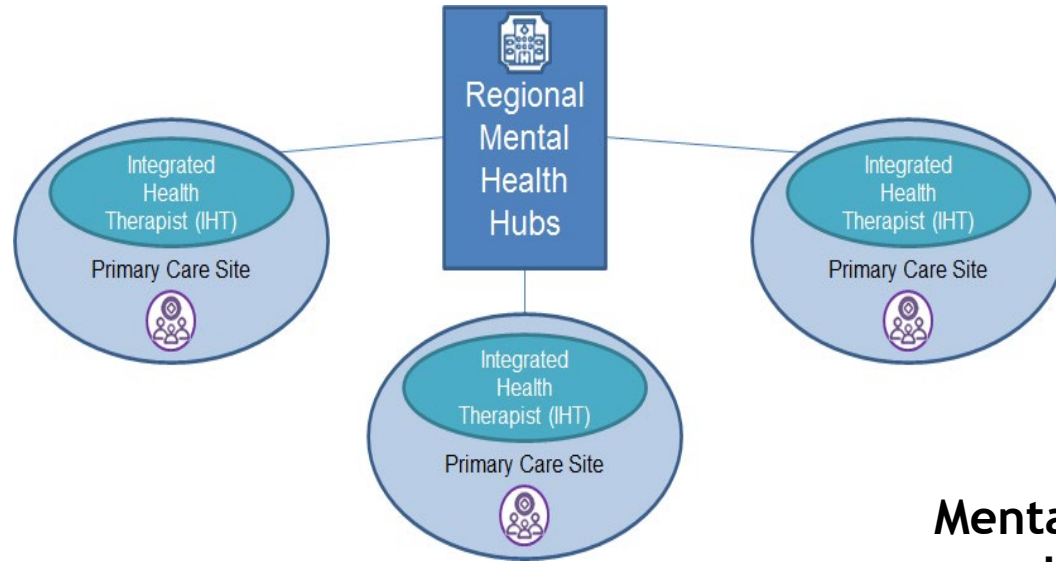
Patient Screening

- ▶ PHQ
- ▶ GAD-7
- ▶ PSC-17
- ▶ ACEs/PEARLS

Clinician Education

- ▶ REACH PPP Training
- ▶ RCHSD PCBHI IHT Talks
- ▶ Open Education Meetings - CPCMG
- ▶ Mentoring

Rady Children's Mental Health Integration: Hub and Spoke Model



Primary Care Spokes

- Warm Hand Offs
- Assessments
- Brief goal/solution-focused therapy (4 visits)
- Care Coordination
- Preventative work and lower complexity
- Co-manage with PCP

Mental Health Hubs

- Brief goal/solution-focused therapy (<12 visits) +/- Groups
- Psychiatric consultations
- Care Coordination
- More complex pathology, higher risk
- Co-manage with PCP



Integrated Care

▶ Challenges

- ▶ Stigma
- ▶ Billing
- ▶ Documentation
- ▶ Different cultures

▶ Benefits

- ▶ Access
- ▶ Clinician support
- ▶ Collaborative care
- ▶ Consistent care team

Small Actions Make a Big Difference

- ▶ Say “Hello!” in preferred language
- ▶ Wave when seeing someone
- ▶ Create a welcoming environment
- ▶ Opportunities for group work
- ▶ Elevate youth voice
- ▶ Provide opportunities for sharing



Biofeedback

- ▶ Color visualization
- ▶ Painting your happy place
- ▶ Conscious breathing



Breathing as a Coping Skill

- ▶ Breathe in 4 counts
 - ▶ Hold breath for 4 count
 - ▶ Slowly exhale for 4 counts
 - ▶ Hold for 4 counts
 - ▶ Repeat
- ▶ Breathe in tracing outside of pinky
 - ▶ Breathe out tracing inside of pinky
 - ▶ Continue with each finger



Whole Body Scan

- ▶ What are you feeling
- ▶ Where are you feeling it
- ▶ Pay attention to each part of your body
- ▶ Notice aches, pains, tension or discomfort
- ▶ Acknowledge the emotion
- ▶ Overly tense and release muscle groups

Resources

▶ Talk to your Pediatrician!

- ▶ Children's Primary Care Medical Group

www.cpcmg.net

- ▶ Rady Children's Hospital San Diego

www.rchsd.org

- ▶ Children's Physicians Medical Group

www.cpmgsandiego.com



Resources

- ▶ National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
<https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org>
988
- ▶ Crisis Text Line
<https://www.crisistextline.org>
Text HOME to 741741
- ▶ 2-1-1 San Diego
www.211sandiego.org
- ▶ National Alliance on Mental Illness
<https://www.nami.org/Home>
- ▶ Post Partum Health Alliance
<https://postpartumhealthalliance.org/>
619-254-0023
- ▶ It's Up to Us
<https://up2sd.org>

Resources

- ▶ Healthy Children.org by American Academy of Pediatrics
www.healthychildren.org
- ▶ American Psychiatric Association
www.psychiatry.org
- ▶ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
www.cdc.gov
- ▶ Riverside County Department of Public Health
www.countyofriverside.org
- ▶ San Diego County Department of Public Health
www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/hhsa/programs/phs.html

Resources



- ▶ Smart Care / Behavioral Health Consultative Services - Vista Hill

<https://www.smartcarebhcs.org/>

858-956-5900 - Parent Line

858-880-6405 - Peer to Peer Line



OMG

- ▶ **Optimism**

- ▶ It is something that you look for

- ▶ **Magic**

- ▶ Ability to create the unthinkable from what you cannot see
- ▶ Look for ways to disrupt your own cadence

- ▶ **Gratitude**

- ▶ Pushing people to find new ways to gain/learn/know and be more



Questions



- ▶ Hilary M. Bowers, MD, FAAP
- ▶ hbowers@rchsd.org