THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM

Integrating Behavioral Health to Support People Living with Diabetes

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Introduction

- Providing Access to Healthcare (PATH) Clinic is an interprofessional clinic for uninsured and underserved patients with uncontrolled diabetes.
- In 2015, PATH Clinic embedded a behavioral health integration (BHI) team including a licensed independent clinical social worker (.5 FTE), a licensed medical social worker/ BHI Care Coordinator (.5 FTE), two psychiatric-mental health nurse practitioners (0.1 FTE each), and a psychiatrist (.1 FTE).
- The BHI team developed algorithms for identifying patients with depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, substance use disorder, suicidal ideation, and diabetes distress.
- The BHI team developed four Levels of Care to guide medical provider decision-making for referring patients for counseling and psychiatric medications.
- The BHI team conducts quarterly reviews for patients level 2-4 and enters recommendations in the patient’s chart to benefit and share information both the medical and BHI teams.

Methodology

- Each patient is screened for depression (PHQ-9), anxiety (GAD-7), and diabetes distress (DDS-2, and if >3, with DDS-17).
- If PHQ-9 >9, patient also receives screening for mood disorder (MDQ). If positive, patient is referred to BHI team.
- If patient responds affirmatively to question 9 on PHQ-9, Columbia Suicide Screening is administered. Then screener follows algorithm for notifying provider and/ or escalating care.
- Patients with elevated diabetes distress are referred to LICSW for therapy with motivational interviewing approach.
- Diabetes provider follows algorithm for initiating antidepressant/ anxiolytic when PHQ-9 and/ or GAD-7 is elevated. At follow-up, diabetes provider may increase therapy twice before referring to BHI team for assistance with medication management.
- Levels of Care have been established to guide both teams to know when to automatically refer to BHI team for therapeutic medication management (e.g. tobacco or other substance use, positive MDQ screen, serious mental illness, suicidal ideation).
- Diabetes team may also refer patients to BHI team anytime for additional support.

Purpose

- To describe how behavioral health integration can be used in an interprofessional clinic for limited-resource individuals living with diabetes to increase medical provider confidence in initiating psychiatric medications and treatments and decrease patient mental health burden.

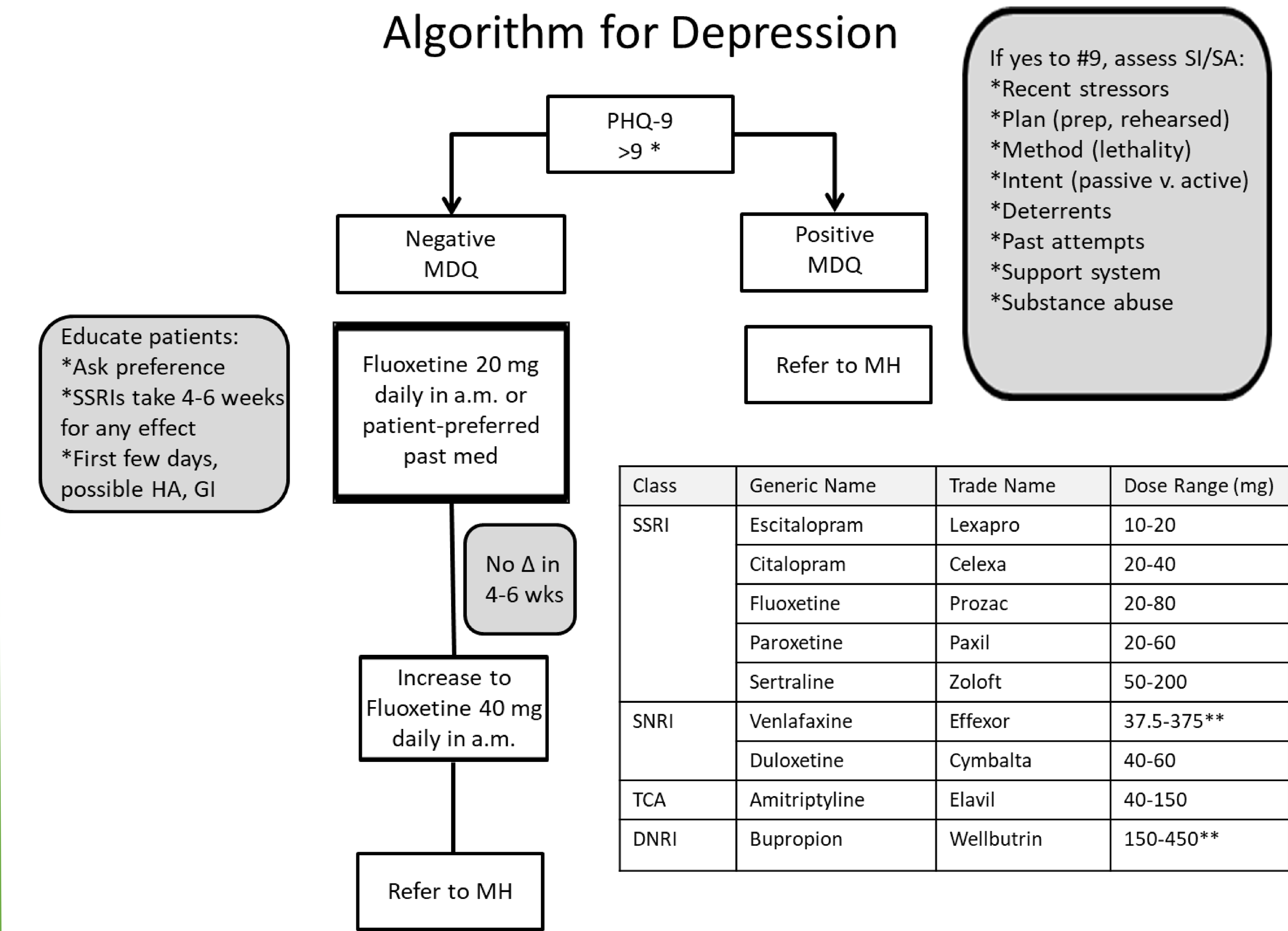
Results

- The Integrated Practice Assessment Tool (IPAT) was used to assess the level of collaboration/integration defined by the Standard Framework for Levels of Integrated Care.
- The IPAT revealed that the clinic was at a Level 6 (highest) level of integration; deeming the clinic has full collaboration in a transformed/ merged integrated practice.
- Since integrating behavioral health, medical providers report more confidence with initiating and advancing psychiatric medications and/ or self-assurance in referring to the BHI team.

Recommendations:

For clinics and providers treating limited-resource patients living with diabetes, it can be feasible to incorporate behavioral health.

Integrating behavioral health can increase provider confidence in managing mental health conditions and support patients in achieving better mental health outcomes more quickly.



Class	Generic Name	Trade Name	Dose Range (mg)
SSRI	Escitalopram	Lexapro	10-20
	Citalopram	Celexa	20-40
	Fluoxetine	Prozac	20-80
	Paroxetine	Paxil	20-60
	Sertraline	Zoloft	50-200
SNRI	Venlafaxine	Effexor	37.5-375**
	Duloxetine	Cymbalta	40-60
TCA	Amitriptyline	Elavil	40-150
DNRI	Bupropion	Wellbutrin	150-450**

Conclusion

- Behavioral Health Integration can be achieved without hiring mental health providers full-time.
- Providing evidence-based algorithms for the diabetes management team to initiate management for mood can increase provider confidence in initiating therapy.
- Periodic case review conducted by the BHI team can allow diabetes management team to receive feedback from mental health providers about when advancing therapy may be indicated.

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Glossary

BHI: Behavioral Health Integration
GAD-7: Generalized Anxiety Disorder
MDD: Mood Disorder Questionnaire
PHQ-9: Patient Health Questionnaire
DDS: Diabetes Distress Scale
LICSW: Licensed Independent Clinical SW
PATH: Providing Access To Healthcare
PMNHP: Psychiatric-Mental Health NP

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