

# Integrated Behavioral Health in Primary Care



Mary R. Talen • Aimee Burke Valeras  
Editors

# Integrated Behavioral Health in Primary Care

Evaluating the Evidence,  
Identifying the Essentials

 Springer

*Editors*

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*To our families:  
Thomas, Aaron, and Emily  
Andy, Ayanna, and Alique*



# Foreword

## The Landscape of Integrated Behavioral Health Care Initiatives

Five decades ago, orthodoxy reigned in the canons of medical science: medical breakthroughs, scientific discoveries, and lifesaving procedures were occurring at an ever-increasing pace, and new specialties and subspecialties were brought into existence to accommodate these new discoveries and incorporate them into clinical care. Medical progress was understood as inexorably linked to deeper and more narrowly focused biological and biochemical inquiry. Biomedicine reigned supreme. The generalist heart of the health care system was being hollowed out, disappearing, supplanted by an explicit priority for specialism and a burgeoning army of specialists and subspecialists.

A few observers noticed that this biomedical hyper-specialization, however conducive to discoveries at the molecular level, was also exacerbating the fragmentation in an already-fragmented health care system. Within such a system, clinicians were unable to make good use of these marvelous discoveries. Diseases were understood, but patients weren't getting healthier. This problem led to three developments: (1) a new, more comprehensive, and integrated model of medical science and health care, the biopsychosocial model; (2) a new appreciation of the shortfalls in health care; and (3) recommendations to redesign the health care system with a foundation of primary care, to better remedy these perceived shortfalls (vide the Millis, Willard, and Folsom Reports).

Family Medicine was born, and took off, together with General Internal Medicine and General Pediatrics, to heal this fragmentation and to lay in a foundation for our health care system that was personal, coordinated, and comprehensive. Behavioral health was baked into Family Medicine from the beginning, principally as a training requirement. But there were many problems with this initial rollout:

- First, there was little agreement on what was meant by integration, behavior, and other basic terms.
- Second, the research support was thin and inconsistent.

- Third, there were unanticipated difficulties with actually incorporating behavioral health care into primary care effectively. Local variations in the primary care settings, and the context in which they existed, made it difficult to arrive at general principles – implementation was maddeningly local.
- Fourth, there were plenty of behavioral clinicians around, but they hadn't worked in primary settings. Transition from one setting, culture, and paradigm was jarring.
- Fifth, there are costs associated with integration that were difficult or even impossible to cover, particularly in a fee-for-service, behavioral carve-out environment.
- Finally, purchasers, payers, and even patients had no experience with this kind of care, didn't realize its advantages, and as a result, weren't particularly motivated to advocate for it.

This is not how the world of integrated behavioral–primary care looks today. In fits and starts, there has been significant progress on many of these fronts. This kind of integrated care turns out to be a very good idea, with solid evidence (that can be found in the pages that follow) behind it. There have been beautiful conceptual formulations of how this kind of care can look, how behavioral and primary care clinicians can be trained to work together, and how clinics, payers, purchasers, and policymakers can respond to this opportunity and succeed.

The notion of integrated primary care has taken hold and looks like it is here to stay. But there are still problems aplenty. The very growth of interest in whole-person primary care itself creates problems. For the first time, it is becoming impossible to keep up with the literature – with the trials, demonstration projects, pilots, and innovations across the nation. We have not yet developed the means to learn from the experience of others. We still suffer from a crippling lack of agreement about our terms, criteria, prerequisites, and principles. We have not yet made a sufficiently compelling case for integration that disrupting the status quo seems worth it to those doing well today. We don't know how to design trials for these incredibly complex, multilevel transformations that will tell us whether we are making progress. So today, even though we can be heartened by the ever-widening support for and adoption of integrated forms of care, there remains resistance, confusion, and challenge in the field of integrated care.

Talen and Valeras, along with their distinguished authors, understand the state of the field, the problems and barriers we are facing, and what must be done next. They have aimed this book squarely at the problems in the field *today*. It is fitting that in a field that avers the primacy of integration and coherence, this book advances this field's coherence. To begin, the reader will find a rigorous and defensible shared lexicon, an early report on a beautiful pre-empirical research effort still under way that clears out one of the most consistent impediments to progress in science. Other authors have reviewed the scattered and inconsistent literature on clinical integration and pulled it into a useful, internally consistent framework – they have organized wildly variable evidence and data into a sensible, consistent matrix that is easy to read and use. Now we can see where we are! Now we can see what to do next, from the simple to the complex. And this is not only true for clinical or operational dimensions of collaboration, but also the policy, macro dimension, as well.

It will take good policy to sustain collaborative care, and this book points the way ahead for policymakers and funders.

Finally, this volume reminds us that collaboration goes beyond those in primary care and those in the behavioral sciences. We must collaborate with the patient, the patient's family, the patient's community, and others. Some of the principles are the same, and yet effective collaboration requires that we approach each of these partners humbly, carefully, and on their own terms and find a unique way to make that partnership work. This book equips the field with advice and warnings that make these extended collaborative partnerships more likely to succeed.

You have in your hands a book that fits its times, that meets the field right where it needs most. Read this and you will surely emerge more knowledgeable and better equipped to join the rising tide of patients, clinicians, practice leaders, educators, researchers, policymakers, carriers, and purchasers whose lives, health, and welfare are improved by collaborative care.

Frank V. deGruy  
Susan H. McDaniel



# Acknowledgments

We cannot find the right words to adequately acknowledge the important influences of a diverse group of colleagues who have shaped this book—some in unintentional, simple ways, and others who were the backbone for this project. We want to recognize those who have sustained this project from an idea to a completed manuscript. The idea for this book came serendipitously when I (Mary) visited Maine and met pioneering integrated behavioral health care providers through MeHAF (Maine Health Care Access Foundation). Laura Ronan, a consultant at MeHAF, and I sparked up a conversation where we shared a secret about feeling like we were in a swirl of confusion in this field. She propelled the initial goal of this project—to provide some order to the chaos—and helped set guidelines for evaluating behavioral health initiatives. Laura, who has the talent for drilling down to the details, wanted to decipher the passion and vision conversations from the evidence-based practice statements. With her love of charts, she helped organize the “data” and helped define the common components of integrated behavioral health initiatives. By chance, Bill Gunn introduced me to Aimee Valeras who was able to walk onto this ambitious project as a coeditor in November of 2011. She brought to this project her strong clinical experience, keen critical analysis, and editorial skills.

The third serendipitous event was meeting CJ Peek at the CFHA annual meeting in 2010 and learning more about his efforts to form a lexicon for the stakeholders in integrated behavioral health. Without his tenacious efforts to organize the community, we would still be floundering. CJ Peek has an unassuming, approachable style with an engineer’s sensibilities in his work. He has the knack for communicating sophisticated, robust concepts as if you were talking at the kitchen table. He is an expert at turning dry academic writing into something that has a narrative flow. We have turned to CJ at every juncture and impasse and he generously gave his time, detailed suggestions, and thoughtful revisions. He would pose questions to help us and other authors better articulate our subject. Without the lexicon and parameters, this book project would not be.

The last serendipitous event was the willingness of our stellar roster of authors who joined this endeavor. We were continually surprised whenever we approached experts in the field with their level of interest, openness, and investment in writing on their topic. Our regular conference calls with our authors were mini-tutorials that helped us connect the dots between a host of projects and perspectives from diverse groups around the USA. These authors devoted more time than they initially anticipated and shaped the way that we think about the breadth and depth of behavioral health and all of its nuances of meaning and reiterations of practices. We are thankful for the opportunity to have worked with such a talented group.

Lastly, we want to acknowledge the support of our institutions. I (Mary) have had the luxury of working within several family medicine residency programs that provided the rich experiences and support for integration of behavioral health—in particular Lorraine Stephens, MD, at Bethesda Family Medicine in Cincinnati, Ohio; Yvonne Murphy, MD, at MacNeal Family Medicine, Chicago; and Deb Edberg, MD, Lee Francis, MD, David Buchanan, MD, and Anuj Shah, MD, at Northwestern University–Erie Family Health Center’s Family Medicine programs. I also want to acknowledge a few colleagues who have influenced my professional development over the years—Timothy Horton, Ph.D., Michael Floyd, Ed.D., Julie Schirmer, LCSW, Ed Shahady, MD, Randy Longenecker, MD, Cheryl Levine, Psy.D., and Scott Fraser, Ph.D. I (Aimee) have received unwavering support from the New Hampshire Dartmouth Family Medicine Residency and Leadership Preventive Medicine Residency housed at Concord Hospital Family Health Centers, in particular, Joni Haley, MS; Bill Gunn, PhD; Dominic Geffken, MPH, MD; Doug Dreffer, MD; Marie Wawziniack, RN; and Dan Eubank, MD. Angela Phillips, LICSW, David Twyon, LICSW, Lori Pelletier-Baker, LICSW, and Jeannine Ouelette, LICSW, regularly implement some of the most groundbreaking practices of integrated behavioral health care, and I learned from them and laughed with them throughout this process.

As coeditors, we want to acknowledge our simpatico relationship. We easily shared responsibilities, talked about our new discoveries, and relished in making connections between the evidence-based practices and our own experiences. Email, texting, conference calls, and in-person meetings became a regular part of our daily communication routines. It is rare to have such a mutually admiring relationship. We are finding more and more ways that our lives overlap and professional interests merge. We may have another book in us.

Lastly, our families have been the backbone of support throughout the process of editing this book.

My (Aimee) husband, Andy, was steadfast in his support of me joining Mary in this project. He inquired genuinely about the content and process of each chapter because he sincerely wanted to learn as much as he possibly could about integrated care. On a regular basis, I get the unique opportunity to work alongside him and partner together to put theory and evidence into practice. Together, and through the process of engaging with this book, he has helped me hone my skills as a social worker with a true biopsychosocial approach and he has earned a reputation as a physician who sees the whole person. During the life of this book, my days were

packed with joy and love and energy, as my wonderful son, Alique, joined our family and my caring daughter, Ayanna, became a big sister. My two toddlers were patient with me when this book stole my attention, and they gave me the best possible reason to “get the work done.”

If it weren't for my (Mary) husband, Thomas Dozeman, telling me that I had a book in me that I had to get out, I never would have taken this on. He was like my marathon coach balancing the messages “you can do it” with “just do it.” My children, siblings, and parents have given me the rich balance in life that fuels my passion for a family-focused foundation for wellness and behavioral health.



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