Sustainable Futures: Why Behavioral Health Needs Technology Innovation

PRESENTERS

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Dr. Rola Aamar is currently the Clinical Effectiveness Consultant at Relias for behavioral health, bringing her clinical and operational knowledge of integrated care, data analytics, and behavioral healthcare to support client use of analytics to improve clinical performance and patient health. Dr. Aamar completed her Ph.D. at Texas Tech University, where she focused her clinical research on the importance of treatment alliance between patients and healthcare providers to address treatment attrition and treatment adherence. Prior to Relias, she developed and managed integrated care programs in primary care clinics, specialty clinics, community health centers, schools, and hospitals.

Vicki Ittel, Ph.D., MBA
Director, Behavioral Health Solutions
Relias

Dr. Vicki Ittel, Ph.D., MBA is the Director of Behavioral Health Solutions for Relias. In that role, Dr. Ittel works with payers, providers, professional trade organizations, and government entities to design and apply digital analytical solutions that improve patient outcomes and create systemic change. Prior to joining Relias, Dr. Ittel held C-level positions at several national health plans and formed several companies providing Medication Assisted Treatment to individuals with opioid use disorder. Dr. Ittel is passionate and committed to using innovative technological applications in healthcare transformation.

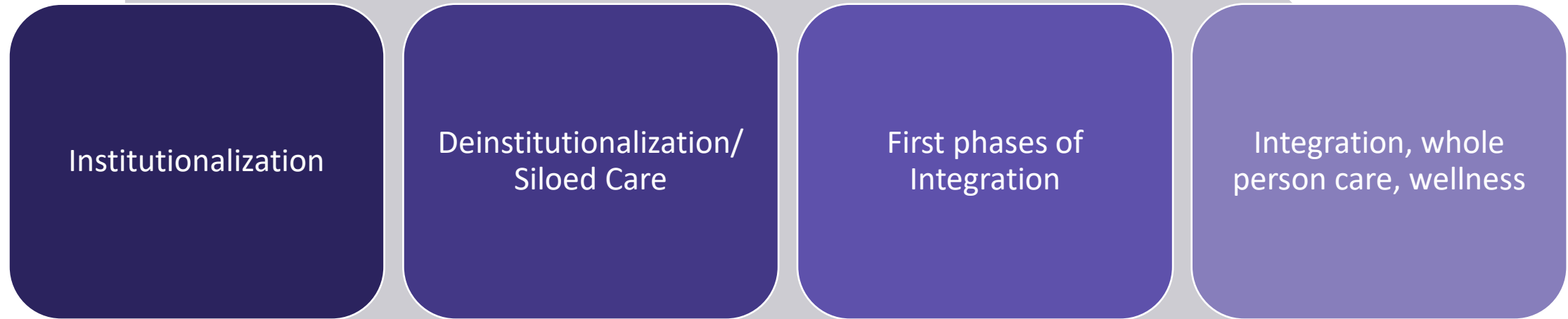# To measurably improve the lives of the most vulnerable members of society and those who care for them.

Objectives

• Articulate the technology strategies used by behavioral health organizations to support sustainability

• Compare how technology adoption allows for innovation across service delivery, staff management and support, and patient care

• Identify one strategy to implement to promote the success of your organization

Poll Question: What kind of organization do you work for?

- Community Mental Health Clinic

- Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic

- Children, youth, and family serving org

- Social services

- Other

Evolution of Behavioral Health

Institutionalization

Deinstitutionalization/ Siloed Care

First phases of Integration

Integration, whole person care, wellness

What Should The Next Wave Of Behavioral Health Focus On?

- Centering mental, emotional, and social health as a cornerstone of human wellbeing

- Ensuring access to preventative services to improve mental health and quality of life

- Programs dedicated jail and juvenile justice diversion

- Increasing access to mental health services through high-quality provider-facing services and technology-based resources between visits

Poll Question: How satisfied are you with your organization's technology integration?

- Not at all satisfied – we have much to improve

- Not very satisfied – some improvement needed

- Neutral

- Satisfied – we are improving in this area

- Very Satisfied – we are making great strides

Technology & Behavioral Health

Behavioral health organizations needed technology to sustain service lines

Technology cannot / will not replace human interaction

Social Media

- Makes mental health relatable

- Creates awareness around psychological and social factors of health

- Provides resources, connection, and community for mental health needs

- May contain misinformation and unhelpful or even harmful resources

Patient Support

– Telehealth services

– Wearables

– Self-management apps

– Patient health portals

Provider Support

– Telehealth service

– EHR/EMR

– Care coordination software

– Staff onboarding and training software

– Virtual reality

– Teleconferencing for internal meetings

– Linkages to prescribing databases

Organizational Support

– Finance management

– Reporting dashboards

– Population health management

– Staff onboarding and training software

– Teleconferencing for internal meetings

– HIE integration/access

– Advanced analytics

Medical Technology Integration

What role can medical technology play in delivery of quality behavioral health care?

– Blood pressure cuffs

– Blood glucose monitors

– Biofeedback tech

Poll Question: If you could apply more technology to one area of your organization, what would it be?

- Telehealth and patient engagement technologies

- Patient and population health management tools

- Finance management and Reporting dashboards

- Staff onboarding, training, and retention

- Advanced analytics (predictive analytics, AI, decision support)

Benefits & Barriers of Technology Integration

Benefits

- Increase access to services

- Can fill in the gaps created by workforce shortage

- Offers a variety of resources for patients

Barriers

- Accessibility of technology for patients

- Long-term adoption requires manageable workflows for staff rather than quick temporary fixes

- Lack of evidence-based research on consumer apps

From the Field: Patient Support & Health Equity

- Serving a large migrant farmer worker population

- Technology helped sustain service delivery at the beginning of the pandemic

- As clinics began to reopen they learned that some of their most vulnerable populations were not receiving the care needed because of tech
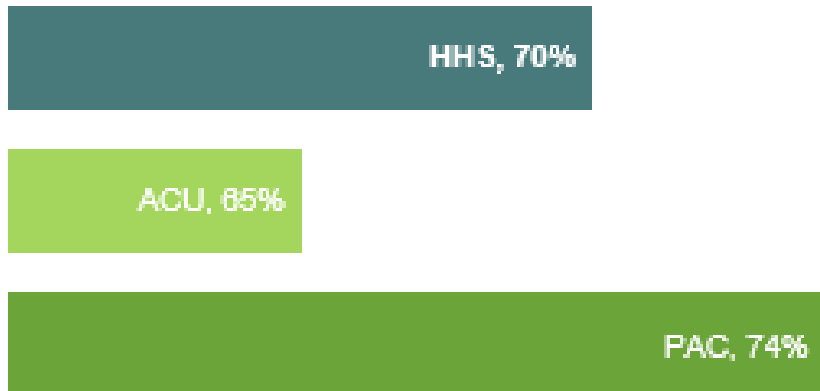
CCO, FQHC, Southeastern US

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Poll Question: What is the biggest staff-related concern in your organization as you move into the next year?

- Increased stress

- Higher turnover

- Difficulty in hiring

- Increase in use of sick days

- Concerns about safety

Importance of Staff Development

70% of HHS organizations believe **training and development** is extremely important.

HHS, 70%

ACU, 85%

PAC, 74%

Q: How important is staff development training when considering all of your organization's top priorities? (% that responded "extremely important")

53% of HHS organizations say online training has increased in importance since the pandemic began

Check out the Relias Suicide Assessment and Intervention Simulation Course **here**!

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Poll Question: What is an area of priority in your organization as we move in to 2022?

- Managing turnover in your workforce

- Securing funding to keep programs open

- Increasing support of staff health and wellness

- Managing the transition to telehealth

- Providing enough and adequate services to match patient needs

From the Field: Tech & Organizational Excellence

"We pride ourselves on being forward thinking and innovative with our use of technology. And we have applied a blend of technology solutions and resources to meet our business needs. I think one strength of our has been that all our data is housed in our warehouse… Technology is more essential now than ever before. From a business operations perspective, it has allowed us to manage our business and ensure ongoing service provision through the most unprecedented experience of most of our careers."

COO, Regional Payer, Rural Midwest US

Organizational Success

- Adequate financial investment and consistent funding streams

- Adequate staff training and support

- Tracking outcomes on the effectiveness of technology implementation

- Understanding what works for your organization's unique needs

- Be intentional about how technology fits into your overall strategic plan

Technology Adoption/Cultural Success

- Availability and affordability of technology for patients

- Ensure staff and leadership buy-in

- Regularly assess changing needs of your patients and staff

- Technology literacy

- Alignment with cultural and social values, especially for marginalized populations

- Will any of the technologies increase health inequity?

THANK YOU

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