

ACCELERATE ACCESS

OPENING NEW DOORS IN MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT

Imagine experiencing severe anxiety or depression and having to wait six months before seeing a mental health specialist. Or nine months. Or a year. More than half of the counties in the Pacific Northwest lack a single practicing psychiatrist, and more than half of people in need of care never see a mental health specialist. We know that two to three people die by suicide every day in Washington — tragedies that serve as a reminder that many more people struggle, daily, with unmet mental health needs.

At UW Medicine, we are committed to bringing mental health care to the places where people can most readily access it: from primary-care doctors' offices to schools, and from community health centers to correctional facilities. We need to open new doors to treatment to lessen the amount of time it takes to get help. Faculty and staff in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences are working to improve access to effective treatment in a variety of innovative ways, as described below.

IMPROVING ACCESS IN PRIMARY CARE



JÜRGEN UNÜTZER, M.D., MPH, M.A.

UW Professor and Chair

Dr. Jürgen Unützer and his colleagues are working to advance an internationally recognized model of care developed at the University of Washington called Collaborative Care. In this approach, experienced psychiatrists and other mental health professionals support primary-care physicians and other healthcare providers in primary-care clinics where many people feel comfortable receiving care. Collaborative Care teams can provide evidence-based treatments for depression and other common mental disorders, resulting in better access to care, better health outcomes, and lower healthcare costs.

PROVIDING MENTAL HEALTH CARE IN SCHOOLS



AARON LYON, PH.D.

UW Assistant Professor

Providing high-quality mental health services in schools — the place where children and adolescents are most likely to receive these services — has an

enormous potential to help kids and families and to make an impact on public health. Through a transdisciplinary collaboration between the UW School of Medicine and the UW College of Education, the School Mental Health Assessment, Research, & Training (SMART) Center, directed by Dr. Aaron Lyon, works to design strategies that help schools implement proven programs and practices that lessen or prevent the mental health and substance-use problems experienced by students.

NURTURING HEALTHY BEGINNINGS



AMRITHA BHAT, MBBS, M.D.

UW Acting Instructor

Investing in the health of mothers and children is one of the best ways to improve the lives of families and to lessen the occurrence of mental health conditions in future generations. Dr. Amritha Bhat and her colleagues are working to increase access to effective mental health care for moms, children and families in Washington and beyond.

CONSULTING WITH TELEPSYCHIATRY



MARCAVERY, M.D.

UW Clinical Professor

Building on a long-standing history of innovation in technology, we enable our faculty to consult, via videoconferencing, with healthcare providers and patients

throughout the Pacific Northwest. Our

Psychiatric Consultation and Telepsychiatry (PCAT) program, led by Dr. Marc Avery, allows psychiatrists and psychologists to work closely with local clinical staff to provide the consultations, collaboration, support and mentoring that enables clinicians to practice at their highest level and to reach more people in need.

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Philanthropy is crucial to the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at UW Medicine, allowing for the development of vital research programs, the recruitment and retention of expert faculty and the training of the next generation of psychiatry experts and leaders.

To support the department, or to learn more about our vision for improving access to effective mental health care, please contact David Chow, director for philanthropy, at 206.543.7252 or chowd@uw.edu. Thank you for your interest in our work.

UW Medicine

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