Five Ways Counties Can Leverage Real-Time Technology to Improve Behavioral Health Outcomes

Bamboo Health

Counties play a pivotal role in shaping the health and well-being of their communities. In today's healthcare environment, real-time technology is a necessity for delivering improved care and outcomes. With historic investments flowing from both the **CMS Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP)** and the **Opioid Settlement Funds**, counties have an unprecedented opportunity to work closely with states and other providers to modernize behavioral health systems, address equity gaps and ensure sustainability.

Discover five strategies counties can use to strengthen technology to strengthen provider and community networks.

1. INVEST IN SECURE DATA SHARING AND INTEROPERABILITY

By investing in secure, real-time data-sharing platforms, providers across different organizations can access real-time critical patient information. This reduces duplicate testing, improves care coordination and gives providers a full picture of a patient's history to make better clinical decisions.

2. IMPROVE CLOSED LOOP REFERRAL PROCESSES

Closed-loop referral platforms ensure no one falls through the cracks. Counties can align opioid funds to track referrals from initiation to completion, particularly for substance use disorder (SUD) treatment and recovery supports, and use RHTP dollars to strengthen rural provider networks and expand coverage. Together, this creates a more coordinated and responsive ecosystem.

3. CLINICAL DECISION SUPPORT TOOLS

AI-powered analytics, Information Assist workflows and predictive modeling tools have the potential to support providers in identifying high-risk patients, anticipating hospital re-admissions and prioritizing outreach during the pivotal moments when patients need it most. These tools empower providers to intervene early and improve outcomes.

4. STREAMLINE ADMINISTRATIVE WORKFLOWS

Investing in automation and digital solutions, such as a closed-loop referral platforms and 988 tools, can help streamline workflows and reduce administrative burden. This allows clinicians to spend more time with patients instead of navigating paperwork and administrative bottlenecks.

5. ENSURE CONTINUITY OF CARE DURING CRISIS

A robust crisis management system ensures a "no wrong door" approach, connecting call centers, mobile crisis teams, EMS and law enforcement. Counties can leverage opioid settlement dollars to scale crisis stabilization units and diversion programs, while RHTP funding can expand access in rural areas with limited behavioral health infrastructure.

What will your county do to improve health outcomes?

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