RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT ON

Mental and Behavioral Health

From the stigma of mental illness to the lack of evidence-based treatments, patients and families face significant barriers to accessing quality mental health care. The need to improve our approach to mental and behavioral health is made more urgent by the prevalence and burdensome nature of mental health conditions.

1 IN 5

adults in the United States had a mental health disorder in 2017

$6 TRILLION

estimated global cost of mental health disorders by 2030

Source: National Institute of Mental Health

Research Addressing Questions That Matter

PCORI funds comparative clinical effectiveness research (CER) to determine which healthcare options work best for which patients, based on their needs and preferences. CER produces evidence that helps people make better-informed healthcare choices.

CAREGIVER

Could working with a family navigator, such as a peer coach or counselor, help me get the best possible care for my child’s mood and behavior problems?

CLINICIAN

Can health care providers like me use telehealth to deliver mental health services as effectively as in-person care to patients in rural areas?

Consequences of Changing, Adding Medications for People with Schizophrenia

This study reviewed how different drug combinations work for people with schizophrenia. The researchers found that people already taking an antipsychotic drug had different benefits and negative outcomes when they used another antipsychotic or added an antidepressant, anti-anxiety medication, or mood stabilizer. These results can help people with schizophrenia and their doctors when they consider adding medicines to patients’ treatment plans. More details are at www.pcori.org/Stroup206.

Behavioral Health Homes Improve Outcomes

Behavioral health homes, a patient-centered way of coordinating care for patients with both mental and physical health needs, can help people with serious mental illnesses manage their conditions. Two ways of providing a behavioral health home—a patient self-directed approach and a clinician-supported approach—both significantly increased patients’ knowledge and confidence to manage their own care and increased their engagement in care, but the provider-supported approach did so faster. More details are at www.pcori.org/Schuster128.
Building Capacity for Patient-Centered Research

PCORnet®, the National Patient-Centered Clinical Research Network, is a PCORI-funded initiative that enables patient-centered clinical research to be conducted faster, more easily, and more efficiently. It does so by tapping into rich sources of real-word data collected during routine care through electronic health records, patient-reported outcomes, health claims, and other sources and through partnerships among patients, clinicians, researchers, and health systems and plans.

PCORnet is facilitating research on mental and behavioral health. For example, a study is comparing the effectiveness of selecting drug treatments for depression by using pharmacogenomic testing versus making selections based on best practice guidelines.

As of July 2021, PCORI has awarded $678 MILLION TO FUND 152 comparative clinical effectiveness research studies related to mental health.

**BY THE NUMBER OF PROJECTS**

**Most Studied Conditions**

- Depression: 51
- Substance Abuse: 32
- Anxiety Disorders (including PTSD): 29
- Bipolar Disorder: 16
- Schizophrenia and Psychotic Disorders: 11
- Neurodevelopmental Disorders (including Autism and ADHD): 6

**Areas of Care Addressed**

Total: 124

- Prevention: 17
- Screening: 7
- Diagnosis: 3
- Treatment: 31
- Other (methods/systems-focused): 1

**Most Studied Populations of Interest**

- Racial/Ethnic Minorities: 103
- Low Income: 80
- Women: 64
- Individuals with Multiple Chronic Conditions: 37
- Children: 37
- Urban: 35
- Rural: 34
- Older Adults: 25
- Low Health Literacy/Numeracy: 14
- Veterans: 13