

Spotlight: Chinese Hospital's Work to Improve Equitable Integrated Care

April 2024

Chinese Hospital has a unique and long history as a community-centered health care provider in San Francisco and Daly City. With their participation in CalHIVE BHI, their organization has embarked on an innovative journey to build on their strong existing local connections and patient-centered support through the introduction of behavioral health integration into primary care.

Prioritizing mental health treatment is a response of the key need seen by the Chinese Hospital patients: "In 2021, approximately 57.8 million U.S. adults grappled with mental illness, equivalent to nearly 22.8% of the population. This represented an alarming increase of 7.8 million individuals since 2016. Of particular concern is that 16% of these individuals are Asian Americans, underscoring the widespread impact of mental health issues in this diverse community."^{1, 2}

Specific examples of barriers faced by Asian Americans seeking behavioral health care include:

- *Language barriers*: Many encounter difficulty accessing care due to language differences.
- *Stigma and cultural beliefs*: Cultural stigma and beliefs can discourage individuals from seeking help.
- *Perceived lower need for care*: A lower perceived need may lead to delayed treatment.
- *Lack of culturally competent providers*: Scarcity of providers who understand and can meet cultural needs.

In response to these staggering statistics and needs, Chinese Hospital has focused efforts on expansion of mental and behavioral health services, including joining the California Bridge program to address Opioid Use Disorder as well as their integration work in CalHIVE BHI.

Chinese Hospital's behavioral health integration work is designed with cultural sensitivity at its core, including:

- Developing intentional hiring process aimed at assembling a team adept in cultural nuances, creating a welcoming and judgment-free environment, ensuring that patients from varied backgrounds feel comfortable seeking the necessary care.
- Deploying patient surveys, in multiple languages, to ensure care provided is what patients need and are looking for.
- Providing care and resources in the patients' native language to support inclusivity and patient activation.

Chinese Hospital has invested in improving health outcomes for its diverse patient base, showcasing the how health care providers can align resources and actively further equitable care for their patients.

References:

1. [Chinese Hospital, 2023 Annual Report](#)
2. [SAMHSA, 2021 NSDUH Annual National Report](#)



Rain Zhang, Daniela Vela Hernandez and Jiami Wu during CalHIVE BHI site visit at Chinese Hospital (January 2024)