

How are OABHI Specialists Making a Difference in their Communities?

IMPROVING ACCESS TO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE

Identifying older adults with behavioral health needs and getting them connected to care

Building and participating in multidisciplinary teams

Increasing access to providers & overcoming barriers

Adapting services to meet the needs of older adults

Ensuring access to guardianship resources

INCREASING WORKFORCE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

Ensuring older adults with behavioral health needs are served by well-trained staff

Training the long-term care workforce

First responder training and Mental Health First Aid

Educating clinicians and service providers

Organizing conferences to support optimal care

ENGAGING COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Encouraging community partners to work together to improve services

Eliminating barriers between agencies

Building stakeholder alliances

Combining forces to target specific issues

Merging education and socialization

WORKING UPSTREAM ON PRIMARY PREVENTION

Focusing on the social determinants of health to promote mental health and wellbeing

Addressing loneliness and isolation in older adults

Extending services to rural communities

Increasing support systems and awareness

Creating communities of support



For more information about these projects and the Older Adult Behavioral Health Initiative, please visit:

OregonBHI.org



How are OABHI Specialists Making a Difference in their Communities?

IMPROVING ACCESS TO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE

Identifying older adults with behavioral health needs and getting them connected to care

Building and participating in multidisciplinary teams

Collaboration and coordination are core job functions for Older Adult Behavioral Health Initiative (OABHI) Specialists. The vast majority have created or participate in multidisciplinary teams that bring together a range of providers and community partners to staff cases and work together to **serve older adults and people with disabilities who have cross-system needs**. Specialists in Washington, Multnomah, and Lincoln Counties have established and maintained Collaborative Older Adult Solutions Teams (COAST), which have representatives from a wide range of partners.

Increasing access to providers and overcoming billing barriers

Medicare billing and provider availability remains a consistent barrier in access to behavioral health services for older adults. In Josephine County, the Specialist has taken the lead in coordinating efforts for the County Mental Health Program to be able to bill under Medicare "incident to." Under this billing code, other licenses such as an LPC can work under a licensed medical provider to provide services to Medicare consumers. **This effort will increase access to older adults who might otherwise go unserved**, and allow providers to receive reimbursement for services that they currently charge off.

Adapting services to meet the needs of older adults

Behavioral health services need to meet older adults where they're at. Specialists have developed innovative programs to **adapt services to assess and serve people in their homes**. In Lane County, the Resident Services Navigator Pilot provides direct health navigation services to residents of two HUD housing communities. In Jackson County, the Reach Out program provides in-home assessments to connect people to resources. There are similar efforts in both Yamhill and Klamath Counties with programs to serve those who have difficulty coming to outpatient settings whether it's due to lack of transportation, stigma, or any other barrier.

Ensuring access to guardianship resources

Specialists are working to meet the demand for more public and family guardians and conservators for older adults. In Central Oregon, the Public Guardianship and Conservator Development Project aims **to increase the number of public guardians and conservators**. The project brings together several agencies and community partners and continues to work to establish its own nonprofit organization. A Specialist in Multnomah County also championed a project to provide one-time grants to pay legal fees for family members willing and able to seek guardianship.



For more information about these projects and the Older Adult Behavioral Health Initiative, please visit:

OregonBHI.org



How are OABHI Specialists Making a Difference in their Communities?

INCREASING WORKFORCE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

Ensuring older adults with behavioral health needs are served by well-trained staff

Training the long-term care workforce

Older Adult Behavioral Health Initiative (OABHI) Specialists have designed trainings to inform best care strategies for providers in long-term settings. Across multiple counties, Specialists deliver Positive Approach® to Care, **training assisted living staff to better serve residents who demonstrate complex behaviors associated with dementia.** Specialists in the tri-county area are addressing caregiver-training on mental health conditions in adult foster homes and APD care homes, with content focused on **mental health and behavioral intervention strategies.** Specialists also provide trainings specific to trauma, suicide, and life enrichment to staff in long-term care.

First responder training & Mental Health First Aid

First responders provide essential services for older adults with BH needs. Specialists in across the state provide Mental Health First Aid training, **which teaches community members the skills they need to respond to a mental health crisis,** as well as the signs of developing mental illness and substance use disorders. A Specialist in Washington County provides law enforcement and first responders Alzheimer's training, focused on **addressing dementia in crisis situations.** In Multnomah County, Specialists provide front-line staff with **de-escalation training and content specific to older adults at high risk for an opioid overdose.**

Educating clinicians and service providers

Specialists provide trainings to target audiences including older adults and community partners and organizations that serve them. A Specialist in Union County coordinated a project **to improve access to care for older adults with SUD and to raise awareness of SUD issues among clinicians.** Similar efforts have been made in Douglas County, with trainings provided for older adults specific to increasing engagement in SUD treatment. With a focus on access to care, a Specialist created a webinar program, Dr. Nash Gerontology Education Hour, that provides training **to increase individuals' and organizations' capacity to provide BH services to older adults.** Similarly, Clatsop and Tillamook counties offer a training series targeted towards clinicians and service providers.

Organizing conferences to support optimal care

Several specialists have collaborated to organize conferences, **providing interprofessional education on older adult behavioral health.** A Multnomah County Specialist oversees the annual Moving from Chaos to Coordination Conference, provided for staff involved in **care coordination or case management.** Conferences in Lane, Coos, Polk, and Yamhill counties centered on **healthy aging and behavioral health** are provided for a variety of professionals. Yamhill and Polk counties also collaborate on a conference that provides **brain injury training to direct care staff.**



For more information about these projects and the Older Adult Behavioral Health Initiative, please visit:

OregonBHI.org



How are OABHI Specialists Making a Difference in their Communities?

ENGAGING COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Encouraging community partners to work together to improve services

Eliminating barriers between agencies

Communication between agencies that serve older adults with BH needs is an ongoing concern that Specialists are working to address. A Specialist in Douglas County launched “APD and Compass Bridge Building” for the purpose of improving the relationship and collaboration between Aging and People with Disabilities and Compass Behavioral Health. Following the program’s initiation, the two agencies **communicate on complex cases and participate in shared trainings together**. A Polk County project centers on regular discussions with county mental health agency and **AAA on barriers, what can be done to better serve clients, and discussions on any frustrations with the mental health system**.

Building stakeholder alliances

The Mid-Willamette Valley Stakeholder Work Group was organized as a collaboration between Marion and Polk Counties. This group focuses on **connecting stakeholders to discuss what is happening in the community and provide insight into the gaps and services available in the region**. A Lane County Specialist brought together a group of stakeholders to garner interest in older adult behavioral health, identify best practices to address the needs of the population, and to educate providers in the area.

Combining forces to target specific issues

The Klamath Hoarding Resource Network is a hoarding task force that increases collaboration between aging services and behavioral health services. It provides workforce development, community education, and support groups. The Specialist led trainings **to increase the capacity of local behavioral health agencies, and created referral streams with local agencies to improve coordination of services** for hoarding behaviors. Aging in the Gorge Alliance is a projected implemented to dementia-friendly training for Hood River and The Dalles communities. This program garners support and collaboration from multiple alliance members.

Merging education and socialization

The Multnomah County OABHI Training Series provides **free training to direct service staff** to increase their ability to serve older adults and people with disabilities. Each session allows time for networking across agencies. Afternoon Teas in Jackson County is focused **on providing community partners with education about older adults and people with disabilities who have a BH need**. The education series also served as an opportunity for networking. Partners included mental health, physical health, CCOs, public health, and veteran’s services.



For more information about these projects and the Older Adult Behavioral Health Initiative, please visit:

OregonBHI.org



How are OABHI Specialists Making a Difference in their Communities?

WORKING UPSTREAM ON PRIMARY PREVENTION

Focusing on the social determinants of health to promote mental health and wellbeing

Addressing loneliness and isolation in older adults

Specialists in Columbia and Clatsop counties created groups for older adult men—a population at high risk for isolation and suicide completion. The purpose of these meetings is to **provide a space to discuss feelings, mental health, and changes related to aging**. Specialists worked to expand a California-based hotline, The Friendship Line, to central Oregon. This hotline helps **address loneliness, information needs, and crises** experienced by older adults and people with physical disabilities who are socially isolated. Similarly, Clackamas County provides the Senior Loneliness Line, allowing older adults to connect to trained staff and volunteers.

Extending services to rural communities

The Oregon Senior Peer Outreach Program serves rural, isolated older adults by **connecting them with Peer Outreach Specialists, who are older adults with lived experiences with mental illness**. A Specialist in Josephine County helped expand transportation for rural areas by **recruiting trained volunteers to drive people to the main bus line**. In Douglas County, a behavioral health project focused on older adults helped **provide trainings to outlying communities that are typically underserved**, with lecture topics including depression, anxiety, suicide prevention, problem gambling, fall prevention, and healthy aging.

Increasing support systems and awareness

A Lincoln County Specialist provides residents in Assisted Living Facilities or older adults at Senior Centers with **behavioral health education and information on how to seek services**. Similar projects are provided in Linn and Benton counties, with a focus on **education at senior centers**. A Marion County Specialist coordinates aging workshops to **share health promotion information with community-dwelling seniors** at local senior centers and faith communities in urban and rural areas. Multnomah County is developing a **public awareness campaign** focused on reducing depression stigma among older adults.

Creating communities of support

Specialists are providing opportunities **for older adults to connect more with other community members**. A Washington County specialist promotes social engagement programs focused on the topics of memory and death, which **creates connections and discussion between student interns/volunteers and older adults**. The Villages project in Lake and Klamath counties helps older adults by **connecting them to neighbors and volunteers who can assist with a variety of needs**. These virtual villages help older adults and people with disabilities in making appointments, accessing transportation services, home maintenance, and more.



For more information about these projects and the Older Adult Behavioral Health Initiative, please visit:

OregonBHI.org

