Pediatric Psychiatric Collaborative:
Program Overview, Components & Objectives

With the increasing role primary care providers play in the identification of mental health disorders in children and adolescents, NJAAP is helping to implement the Pediatric Psychiatric Collaborative, a partnership among leading pediatric and behavioral health systems of care, to develop and implement an integrated child mental health delivery system. The pilot program started in July 2015 and is funded by the New Jersey Department of Children and Families (DCF).

Administered by Meridian Health, in partnership with Cooper University Health Care, it is the first full-scale initiative in New Jersey and is being piloted in Burlington/Camden/Gloucester counties and Monmouth/Ocean counties during year one, with a goal toward statewide implementation in the next few years. The model was developed in Massachusetts and has been replicated in more than 35 states in the country. It is the first full-scale initiative of its kind in New Jersey. To learn more about the Massachusetts model, called the Massachusetts Child Psychiatry Access Project (MCPAP), click here.

Program Overview:

The Collaborative Mental Health Program institutionalizes the use of prevention strategies, interventions, and office procedures by participating pediatric practices, their physicians, and staff to increase timely use of age appropriate mental and behavioral health screening, anticipatory guidance, referral and care coordination to support the improvement of mental health care and support early detection of mental health issues within the primary care setting.

Program Components:

- Provider implementation of childhood social-emotional and behavioral screening, utilizing validated, standardized mental health screening instruments to promote early detection of mental and behavioral health issues
- Education for participating clinicians and their staff in each hub (implemented by NJAAP, utilizing a Learning Collaborative model with ABP approved Maintenance of Certification Part 4 credits)
- Care coordination between PCPs, the hub mental health staff, and community mental health agencies to manage referrals for mental health care services and follow up once referral is made

Program Objectives:

- Improve screening of children 0 – 6 years of age to identify mental health and behavioral concerns using the Survey of Well-being of Young Children (SWYC)
- Improve screening of children 6-18 years of age to identify mental health and behavioral concerns using the Pediatric Symptom Checklist (PSC-35)
- Improve assessment of children identified via screening
- Improve anticipatory guidance provided by pediatricians and their practice staff with parents and caregivers to address mental health and behavioral concerns
- Improve care management of children with identified mental health and behavioral concerns