

Expanding Medical and Mental Healthcare during the COVID-19 Pandemic: The New Mexico School-Based Health Center “Hub and Spoke” Model

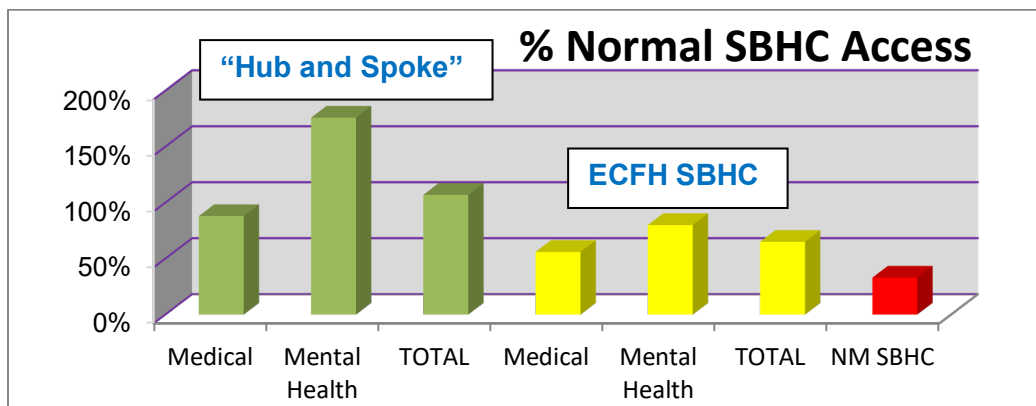
Preliminary Report January 5, 2020 by Matt Probst, PA-C, Medical Director and Chief Quality Improvement Officer, El Centro Family Health, Northern New Mexico

Overview: Access to quality health care in the COVID-19 pandemic is of paramount importance. Based on preliminary El Centro Family Health (ECFH) data, the NM School-Based Health Center (SBHC) “Hub and Spoke” model is highly successful in providing both increased access to health care and improved quality outcomes during the pandemic.

Background: “Hub and Spoke” is a pilot model activated in June 2020 for San Miguel County in response to access barriers for medical and mental health School-Based Health services. The model increases care via telehealth, cross agency and cross sector collaboration, proactive health screening, workforce development and peer health education. In addition to **expanding access to care** as measured by patient visits, clinical quality measures were superior compared to the non-Hub and Spoke El Centro Family Health (ECFH) control group and overall NM SBHC data.

Recommendations: Investments in the “Hub and Spoke” model will improve health and education for NM students and families during and beyond the pandemic. ECFH is now implementing “Hub and Spoke” SBHC healthcare delivery across our NE Region 7 county service area of San Miguel, Colfax, Guadalupe, Harding, Mora, Taos, and Rio Arriba counties. There is an opportunity to reshape and strengthen SBHC care delivery across New Mexico, in a time when timely access to quality medical and mental health care is vital.

DATA: The data presented below illustrates how the “Hub and Spoke” model increase access to care. While the average SBHC in NM provided 1/3 of normal access to care in the first quarter, the “Hub and Spoke” model provided 107% of normal access in comparison to the same 6 month time period in 2019. Most impressive was access to mental health care in 2020 at 176% of normal access in comparison to the same time period in 2019 demonstrating a best practice solution to the increasing behavioral health demands identified in the New Mexico **Legislative Finance Committee, Program Evaluation Unit’s Action Plan: Suicide Prevention Report, December 8, 2020.**



For more information about “Hub and Spoke” model contact Matt Probst matthew.probst@ecfh.org