Your suggestions...

We appreciate your suggestions and input regarding our services. Suggestion boxes are placed in the front lobby of each Four County office. We take these into consideration when making improvements.

Comments about our services are addressed and then forwarded to the appropriate supervisor of the program. The majority of the comments are very positive.

Please feel free to make comments or suggestions regarding our agency.

What is Quality Improvement?

Most people understand the concept of striving to ensure the quality of a product. In behavioral health, quality is measured by many things. Getting a new patient into services within a specified timeframe is a measure, as well as providing services that help our patient achieve their goals.

Surveys are a way to measure how people rate our services and provide us with feedback on how we can make improvements.

Four County collects data about our patients for the State AIMS system. Numerous measurements are tracked from that data. We track access standards, the number of patients who live independently, or are seeking employment.

For patients in the SPMI (severe and persistent mentally ill) population, employment rates are tracked over time—do our services help them become employed? For the SED (severely emotionally disturbed) child we track how well they do in schools—are they improving? These are just a couple of examples.

Quality also involves compliance to licensing regulations, State and Federal regulations, as well as requirements outlined by various payer sources.

Documentation requirements are outlined for us and the quality of that is also reviewed on a continual basis. The medical necessity of our services is reviewed by Utilization reviewers who also confirm that a patient gets the services they need. Most of the required paperwork and information gathering that we do is to be compliant with requirements from an external source.

One of the most important things that we track for improvement is how many of our patients go to a psychiatric hospital, especially when a patient is admitted more than once.

Quality involves reviewing the clinical elements of our services: are we providing the most appropriate service to the patient, given their level of need and the goals they have? Are we following best practice standards and practicing within our scope of licensure? Are we following the regulations of the Kansas Behavioral Sciences Regulatory Board which license our clinicians?

And then there are the quality indicators that are more difficult to measure, such as the feelings our patients have when we have helped make their life better.

In this Issue

- Mental Health & Physical Health Go Hand-in-Hand...
- Suicide Prevention
- Farm and Rural Stress
- Domestic Violence Awareness
- Text4baby
- Project Re:START
- Educational Opportunities and Events
- Observances
- Your Suggestions...
- What is Quality Improvement?...

Suicide Prevention

Four County Mental Health Center recognized Suicide Prevention Week September 9 through September 15. By learning about the risk factors for suicide and knowing how to respond we can reduce the number of lives claimed by a needless and tragic death.

In the United States, one person completes suicide every 14.2 minutes. Suicide is a major, preventable public health problem and is the 10th leading cause of death in the United States. Kansas ranks 24th in the nation in suicide deaths.

Statistics for Montgomery County indicate a per population suicide rate above the national average. More people in our county die from suicide each year than homicide. Suicide has no regard for age, income, education, social status or gender, and the aftermath of suicide continues long after the death, affecting loved ones and communities. Suicide is the 3rd leading cause of death among young people 15 to 24 years old. The suicide rate remains highest for adults 75 years of age and older.

The stigma associated with mental illness and suicidality works against suicide prevention by discouraging persons at-risk for suicide from seeking life-saving help. If you think someone is suicidal, do not leave them alone, eliminate access to methods of suicide, such as firearms and medication, and call for immediate help.

Mental Health & Physical Health Go Hand-in-Hand...

The link between mental and physical health is often called a mind-body connection. Caring for one’s mind, as well as one’s body, is good for overall health, and a key to success at home, work, at school or at play. A useful way to think about mental health is a definition used by the World Health Organization: “Mental health is a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.” Individuals who have good mental health are well-adjusted to society, are able to relate well to others, and basically feel satisfied with themselves and their role in society.

Although there is no clear cause and effect relationship between exercise and mental health, exercise can improve self esteem, lessen anxiety, and relieve depression. Exercise can act as a form of meditation, changing the state of mind and providing a distraction from stressful situations. Many doctors believe that exercise improves mental health and prescribes exercise to relieve depression and anxiety.

Recognize when it needs some attention. When we have good mental health, we’re in a place of peace and balance with our social, emotional and psychological states. We have found a life that fits our needs for social connections with others. We deal with tragedy and happiness in our lives, and authentically experience all the emotions open to us.

According to the National Institute of Mental Health people who die by suicide have one or more risk factors such as depression or other mental health issues including substance abuse problems or prior suicide attempts. Other risk factors include a family history of suicide or exposure to suicidal behavior of others, family violence, including physical or sexual abuse, firearms in the home (which is the method used for more than half of suicides).

Never discount an individual’s talk of suicide, questions about whether life is worth living or planning behavior such as giving away possessions. Most suicidal individuals do not want to die, they just want to end the pain they are experiencing.

If you or someone you know is experiencing thoughts of suicide, seek help. Four County Mental Health Center maintains a 24-hour crisis line at (620) 331-1748. Assistance is also available by calling the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at (800)-273-TALK (8255).
Farm and Rural Stress

Farming is rated as one of the top ten most stressful occupations in the United States. Farmers in dairy or mixed (grain and livestock) operations show higher stress levels than farmers in straight grain operations. Young farmers, under 50, report having higher overall stress levels. The necessity of holding an off-farm job in addition to the regular demands of running the farm seems to be an increasingly frequent occurrence among farm families and creates more stress.

Farm women often experience higher levels of stress than men. Besides working as a full partner in the business, many women are traditionally expected to have full responsibility for home and family matters. Some also have an off-farm job which results in juggling a multitude of different roles and trying to cope with a wide variety of different stressors.

Farm stressors often fall into financial, weather, workload, social, hassle, worry categories. Many are events which everyone can experience, while others are stressors unique to farming and rural life.

Farm hassles include the dozens of little demands and pressures that are part of farming and rural life such as equipment breakdown, travel time and distance, sickness in livestock, loss of farm help when most needed, and many more. These little hassles can be as stressful as a major event.

There are wide differences among farmers in the amount of stress they experience. For some, stress is low even though they experience the same economic hardships as the rest of the farming community. Other farmers experience many negative stressors but show only moderate levels of stress because they have developed effective coping mechanisms.

On the farm, stress can contribute to distractions and errors that lead to serious or fatal incidents such as tractor rollover or entanglement in fast-moving equipment.

Farming and rural living have undergone many changes over the past decade. Crop diseases, weather conditions, volatile markets, decrease in rural populations, and even world-wide influences are some of the unique challenges facing farm and rural families today. Rural stress is a community problem that touches everyone whose life, livelihood and identity is linked to the land and agriculture.

To reduce stress, the farmer should learn more about the latest and most effective farming practices, plan for the future, keep good records, and set goals. When problems develop they need to stop and assess the situation and find alternatives.

When stress does creep in on the farmer, like everyone, they should make sure they are eating right; getting enough rest; exercising; keeping a sense of humor; take time for family; and avoiding alcohol, drugs and tobacco.

Domestic Violence Awareness

According to Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence, at least one in three women has been beaten, coerced into sex or otherwise abused during her lifetime. On average, more than three women are murdered by their husbands or boyfriends in this country every day. These statistics are alarming and deserve our attention.

Domestic violence is the leading cause of injury to women between the ages of 15 and 44 and it is important for us to not only acknowledge this physical abuse but also the emotional and psychological abuse that goes along with it. What can you do? Be aware. Observe, and act.

Be a good role model to your children and those around you about healthy relationships. Healthy relationships do not require physical coercion such as hitting, restraining, pushing, or making displaying aggressive (punching walls, breaking things).

Be aware that victims say that the worst abuse isn’t even the physical injuries they sustain but the longstanding verbal and emotional abuse from put downs, controlling behavior and assaults on their ability to take care for themselves, their children, or anyone else that would love them.

Our children need education about abusive relationships. Teach them that controlling behavior from a boyfriend or girlfriend, such as limiting who they can talk to, what they wear, or needing to know where they are at all times, is wrong and unhealthy.

Be on the alert for people in your life (loved ones, friends, co-workers, church members) who might be in an abusive relationship and offer them your support as someone to talk to.

Be aware of services in our community such as Safehouse and Four County Mental Health Center who can provide shelter, group support or individual therapy for those trying to leave an abusive relationship.

Standing by and watching or listening to someone being abused makes the observer part of the problem. A lack of involvement in some way is endorsing to the abuser that their behavior is tolerated or will go unpunished. It sends the message to the victim that there is no way out and no one that cares.

There are new laws in Kansas which require persons charged with domestic violence related crimes to attend a program for this behavior. The Kansas Attorney General’s Office has been working diligently for the past several years to identify programs, assist with training facilitators, and to certify Batterer Intervention Programs. Four County Mental Health Center has one of those programs locally which addresses the controlling and abusive behavior.

Please help by being part of the solution for our community and making this a safe place to live.

Text4baby

Text4baby is a free mobile health education service that provides pregnant women and mothers with an infant under one year of age with free, evidence-based, brief health messages. An educational program led by the National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies coalition (NMHBC), text4baby provides pregnant women and new moms with an infant under age one with information they need to take care of their health and give their babies the best possible start in life. Women who sign up for the service by texting BABY for English (or BEBE for Spanish) to 51141 receive three, free SMS text messages each week, timed to their due date or baby's day of birth. For more information, go to www.text4baby.org.

Project Before...
Farm and Rural Stress

Farming is rated as one of the top ten most stressful occupations in the United States. Farmers in dairy or mixed (grain and livestock) operations show higher stress levels than farmers in straight grain operations. Young farmers, under 50, report having higher overall stress levels. The necessity of holding an off-farm job in addition to the regular demands of running the farm seems to be an increasingly frequent occurrence among farm families and creates more stress.

Farm women often experience higher levels of stress than men. Besides working as a full partner in the business, many women are traditionally expected to have full responsibility for home and family matters. Some also have an off-farm job which results in juggling a multitude of different roles and trying to cope with a wide variety of different stressors.

Farm stressors often fall into financial, weather, workload, job which results in juggling a multitude of different roles and trying to cope with a wide variety of different stressors.

Farm and rural living have undergone many changes over the past decade. Crop diseases, weather conditions, volatile markets, decrease in rural populations, and even world-wide influences are some of the unique challenges facing farm and rural families today. Rural stress is a community problem that touches everyone whose life, livelihood and identity is linked to the land and agriculture.

To reduce stress, the farmer should learn more about the most effective farming practices, plan for the future, keep good records, and set goals. When problems develop they need to stop and assess the situation and find alternatives.

When stress does creep in on the farmer, like everyone, they should make sure they are eating right; getting enough rest; exercising; keeping a sense of humor; take time for family; and avoiding alcohol, drugs and tobacco.

Domestic Violence Awareness

According to Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence, at least one in three women has been beaten, coerced into sex or otherwise abused during her lifetime. On average, more than three women are murdered by their husbands or boyfriends in this country every day.

These statistics are alarming and deserve our attention. Domestic violence is the leading cause of injury to women between the ages of 15 and 44 and it is important for us to not only acknowledge this physical injury but to also learn something about it. What can we do to be aware? Observe, and act.

Be a good role model to your children and those around you about healthy relationships. Healthy relationships do not require physical coercion such as hitting, restraining, pushing, or making displaying aggressive (punching walls, beating things).

Be aware that victims say that the worst abuse isn’t even the physical injuries they sustain but the longstanding verbal and emotional abuse from put downs, controlling behavior and assaults on their abilities to care for themselves, their children, or anyone else that would love them.

Our children need education about abusive relationships. Teach them that controlling behavior from a boyfriend or girlfriend, such as limiting who they can talk to, what they wear, or needing to know where they are at all times, is wrong and unhealthy.

Be on the alert for people in your life (loved ones, friends, co-workers, church members) who might be in an abusive relationship and offer them your support as someone to talk to.

Be aware of services in our community such as Safehouse and Four County Mental Health Center who can provide shelter, group support or individual therapy for those trying to leave an abusive relationship.

Standing by and watching or listening to someone being abused makes the observer part of the problem. A lack of involvement in some way is endorsing to the abuser that the behavior is tolerated or will go unpunished. It sends the message to the victim that there is no way out and no one that cares.

There are new laws in Kansas which require persons charged with domestic violence related crimes to attend a program for this behavior. The Kansas Attorney General’s Office has been working diligently for the past several years to identify programs, assist with training facilitators, and to certify Batterer Intervention Programs. Four County Mental Health Center is one of those programs locally which addresses the controlling and abusive behavior.

Please help by being part of the solution for our community and making this a safe place to live.

Text4baby...

Text4baby is a free mobile health education service that provides pregnant women and mothers with an infant under one year of age with free, evidence-based, brief health messages. An educational program led by the National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies coalition (NMHB), text4baby provides pregnant women and new moms with an infant under one year of age with information they need to take care of their health and give their babies the best possible start in life. Women who sign up for the service by texting BABY for English (or BEBE for Spanish) to 511411 receive three, free SMS text messages each week, timed to their due date or baby’s date of birth. For more information, go to www.text4baby.org.

Project Before...

Families today face many challenges. Mental health issues, substance abuse, unemployment and limited access to healthcare are only a few of the things that can affect a family’s ability to grow and prosper. Outside support and assistance can be needed to get through trying times.

Other challenges for the family indicating a need for services may include: a child or children ages birth to five years residing in the home; or one or more parent is experiencing or has recently experienced either significant mental health issues or problems with substance abuse or dependence or at-risk factors.

Project Before provides a Family Case Manager to help families meet their needs. The Case Manager is an advocate for the family who connects the family with community resources.

In order to receive services, families must have one or more children in the home ages birth to five. In addition, there must be a mental health or substance abuse issue in the home or at-risk factors.

Project Before is funded through an Early Childhood Block Grant provided by the Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Service, Kansas Children’s Cabinet & Trust Fund. This makes it possible to provide Project Before services to families at no cost.

The Project Before Family Case Manager can meet with parents in the home, community or other locations depending on the family’s preference.

Educational Opportunities and Events

- Oct. 27 • Cops and Rodders Independence - Following Grand Parade. Call Jan Congrove (620) 331-1748 or email jcongrove@fourcounty.com.
- Oct. 31 • Coffeyville Health Fair Coffeyville. Senior Center.

Support Groups

- Grief Support Group • every 2nd Tues. • 7:30pm independence. 316 W. Sycamore.

Therapy Groups

- Anger Mgmt. for Youth • Mon. • 6:00pm
- Agression Replacement Therapy • Tues. & Thurs. • 4:00pm
- Managing Your Mind • Mon. • 2:00pm
- Dialectical Behavior Therapy • Tues. • 2:00pm
- Relationships 101 • Wed. • 2:00pm
- Project CORE • Wed. & Thurs. • 11:00am & 5:00pm
- Life Skills • Thurs. • 2:00pm
- Survivors in Transition • Thurs. • 4:30pm
- Anger Management • Thurs. • 6:00pm
- Illness Management and Recovery • Fri. • 2:00pm

For more information - 620 331-1748

Parenting Classes

Please go to our website: www.fourcounty.com to view a list of upcoming Parenting Classes.

Observances

- October
  - Domestic Violence Awareness Month
  - Emotional Wellness Month
  - October 2-8 • Mental Illness Awareness
  - October 6-12 • Physicians Assistant Week
  - October 24-28 • Red Ribbon Week - Drug/Alcohol Prevention
- November
  - Alzheimer’s Disease Month
  - Military Family Appreciation Month November 6-12 • Nurse Practitioner’s Week
  - November 11 • Veteran’s Day
  - November 22 • Thanksgiving
In this Issue

-Mental Health & Physical Health Go Hand-in-Hand-

-Suicide Prevention -
-Farm and Rural Stress -
-Domestic Violence Awareness -
-Text4baby -
-Project Reconnect -
-Educational Opportunities and Events -
-ObserveSes -
-Your Suggestions... -
-What is Quality Improvement? -

Suicide Prevention

Four County Mental Health Center recognized Suicide Prevention Week September 9 through September 15. By learning about the risk factors for suicide and knowing how to respond we can reduce the number of lives claimed by a needless and tragic death.

In the United States, one person completes suicide every 14.2 minutes. Suicide is a major, preventable public health problem and is the 10th leading cause of death in the United States. Kansas ranks 24th in the nation in suicide deaths.

Statistics for Montgomery County indicate a per population suicide rate above the national average. More people in our country die from suicide each year than homicide. Suicide has no regard for age, income, education, social status or gender, and the aftermath of suicide continues long after the death, affecting loved ones and communities.

The stigma associated with mental illness and suicidality works against suicide prevention by discouraging persons at-risk for suicide from seeking life-saving help. If you think someone is suicidal, do not leave them alone, eliminate access to methods of suicide, such as firearms and medication, and call for immediate help.

According to the National Institute of Mental Health people who die by suicide have one or more risk factors such as depression or other mental health issues including substance abuse problems or prior suicide attempts. Other risk factors include a family history of suicide or exposure to suicidal behavior of others, family violence, including physical or sexual abuse, firearms in the home (which is the method used for more than half of suicides).

Never discount an individual’s talk of suicide, questions about whether life is worth living or planning behavior for more than half of suicides).

Your Suggestions...

We appreciate your suggestions and input regarding our services. Suggestion boxes are placed in the front lobby of each Four County office. We take these into consideration when making improvements.

Comments about our services are addressed and then forwarded to the appropriate supervisor of the program. The majority of the comments are very positive. Please feel free to make comments or suggestions regarding our agency.

What is Quality Improvement?...

Most people understand the concept of striving to ensure the quality of a product. In behavioral health, quality is measured by many things. Getting a new patient into services within a specified timeframe is a measure, as well as providing services that help our patient achieve their goals.

Surveys are a way to measure how people rate our services and provide us with feedback on how we can make improvements.

Four County collects data about our patients for the State AIMS system. Numerous measurements are tracked from that data. We track access standards, the number of patients who live independently, or are seeking employment.

For patients in the SPMI (severe and persistent mentally ill) population, employment rates are tracked over time – do our services help them become employed? For the SED (severely emotionally disturbed) child we track how well they do in schools – are they improving? These are just a couple of examples.

Quality also involves compliance to licensing regulations, State and Federal regulations, as well as requirements outlined by various payer sources.

Documentation requirements are outlined for us and the quality of that is also reviewed on a continual basis. The medical necessity of our services is reviewed by Utilization reviewers who also confirm that a patient gets the services they need. Most of the required paperwork and information gathering that we do is to be compliant with requirements from an external source.

One of the most important things that we track for improvement is how many of our patients go to a psychiatric hospital, especially when a person is admitted more than once.

Quality involves reviewing the clinical elements of our services: are we providing the most appropriate service to the patient, given their level of need and the goals they have? Are we following best practice standards and practicing within our scope of licensure? Are we following the regulations of the Kansas Behavioral Sciences Regulatory Board which license our clinicians?

And then there are the quality indicators that are more difficult to measure, such as the feelings our patients have when we have helped make their life better.

HAPPY FALL!!

Suicide Prevention

Four County Mental Health Center maintains a 24-hour crisis line at (620) 331-1748. Assistance is also available by calling the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at (800) 273-TALK (8255).

Four County Mental Health Center is dedicated to providing accessible, innovative services in partnership with individuals, families and our communities.

We envision healthier communities as we help individuals and families improve their lives. Collaborating with community partners, we sustain a broad range of services that are accessible because we help people where they live and work.

We continue to be innovative as we identify new and special needs, develop programs to train our staff, and deliver services. We will expand our use of state-of-the-art technology to connect our clients and enhance the quality of our service. We will continue to develop well-trained, dedicated staff within a safe, positive, challenging and personally rewarding work environment.