

# Behavioral Health Integration

# About me

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- Born and raised in West Virginia; graduated from WVU undergrad and medical school
- Practicing psychiatrist in Atlanta, GA
- Experience as a public health administrator, patient advocate and medical society lobbyist
- Held leadership positions in the AMA and APA
- First Black woman to serve as AMA president
- Chair, AMA Opioid Task Force since 2014



# COVID-19 and its impact on mental health

- Nearly 1 in 5 COVID-19 patients developed a mental health issue — e.g., depression, anxiety, or dementia — within 3 months of diagnosis.
- A retrospective study of COVID survivors found “substantial neurological and psychiatric morbidity in the 6 months after COVID-19 infection,” with the greatest risk to those with severe illness.

Source: The Lancet Psychiatry



# Integrating mental and behavioral health care

## Policy:

Supports parity of coverage for mental illness, alcoholism, substance use and eating disorders; (H-185.974)

Supports health care policies that ensure access to and payment for integrated medical, surgical, and psychiatric care regardless of the clinical setting; (H-345.983)

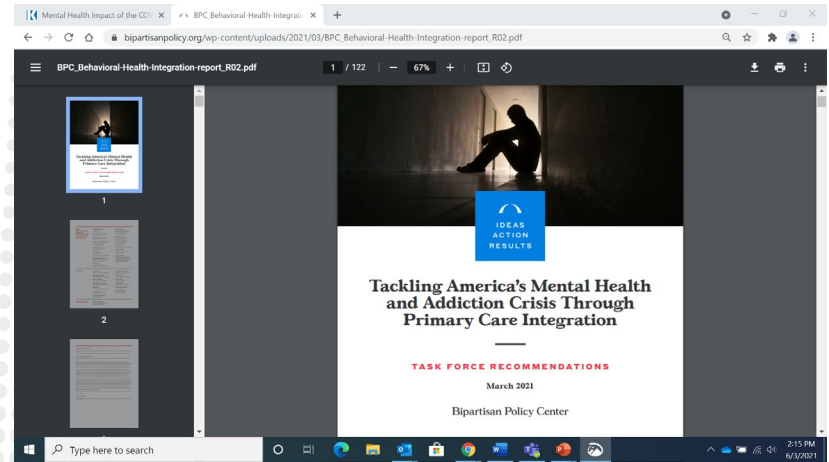
Supports increasing public awareness, reducing stigma and expanding patient access to quality care for depression and other mental illnesses; (H-345.984)

Encourages all physicians to acquire the knowledge and skills to recognize, diagnose and treat depression and other mental illnesses; (H-345.984)

Supports competent mental health care and outreach for at-risk communities; (H-345.984)

# Goals for successful integration

- Drive integration in new and existing value-based payment models.
- Expand, train and diversify the workforce for integrated care teams.
- Promote the use of EHRs, telehealth and other technology to support integrated care.



# Removing burdensome regulations for telemedicine

- Working to **remove burdensome regulations** that prevent health care providers from offering telemedicine.
- CMS removed restrictions – allowing more flexibility for Medicare patients.
- Bipartisan *Telehealth Modernization Act*



# The BHI Collaborative: *Who we are*

Mission: Catalyze effective and sustainable integration of behavioral and mental health care into physician practices (*with an initial focus on primary care*)

Vision: Identification and management of behavioral health conditions (mild/moderate) is a core competency of primary care practices, not an exception

## Member Organizations:

American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry  
American Academy of Family Physicians  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists

American College of Physicians  
**American Medical Association**  
American Osteopathic Association  
American Psychiatric Association

# Empowering practices to implement BHI

- Educational programming
- Resources and Tools
  - Visit: [ama-assn.org](https://ama-assn.org)
  - Search: **BHI Overcoming Obstacles**
- Practice Testing/Piloting
- Sustained Viability

