

## CASE STUDY

# Collective Medical Helps Providers Coordinate Better Behavioral Health Care

Northwest Physicians Network has seen a **42% reduction in admissions** and a **47% reduction in EMS transport.**

“Some patients have such a long history of mental illness, substance use, or medical issues that it takes multiple systems coming together to get a clear picture of what’s really going on with this patient and coordinate, moving forward, on what the patient needs to improve. The Collective Platform helps us get that clearer picture to better help our patients get the help they really need.”

- **Melissa Haney**

Communication Partnership &  
Behavioral Integration Manager at  
Northwest Physicians Network

## Northwest Physicians Network

The Northwest Physicians Network is dedicated to helping patients get the help they need most—while conserving limited provider resources. This meant addressing over-utilization of emergency medical support (EMS) and 911 services from behavioral patients who felt they had nowhere else to turn.

### The Challenge: A Shortage in Specialized Mental Health Care

Mental health diagnoses are listed as the third most common health concern in Washington, behind diabetes and cardiac diagnoses—creating an unusually high demand for qualified, accessible, and affordable mental health care. In addition, roughly 65 percent of these patients rely on Medicaid as their primary form of insurance—making this scarcity of mental and behavioral health services even more real.

Melissa Haney, Community Partnerships and Behavioral Health Integration Manager at Northwest Physicians Network, sat down with other community organizations to decide the best way to take care of these behavioral health patients without unnecessarily taxing EMS and ED services that were not set up with the appropriate resources to treat these patients.

With many of these patients having more than one chronic disease state and/or mental health problem, fully caring for these patients would require a collaborative effort between the county, community, and healthcare providers. To facilitate this collaboration, Northwest Physicians Network, local fire departments, and other community providers turned to the Collective Platform as a way to ensure consistent care through logged care guidelines, up-to-date notifications on patient status, and follow-up tracking.

## The Solution: Collaborated Rapid-Response Options for Behavioral Health Crises

The county received funding to launch the Mobile Community Intervention Response Team (MCIRT), a rapid response team for behavioral health patients. The team—which consists of two psychiatric advanced registered nurse practitioners, three registered nurses, various licensed mental health providers, and seven care coordinators—is designed to provide professional behavioral health resources and monitor social determinants of health at no cost to the patient.

MCIRT staff work collaboratively with emergency services, local providers, and Comprehensive Life Resources, a major community mental health agency, to coordinate care through the Collective Platform. With the platform, each provider is able to view and contribute care guidelines—creating a more-informed picture of these patients and enabling continuity of care between providers—and refer patients back to their respective providers (primary care, managed care organization, MCIRT, behavioral health, etc). Haney explains:

“A lot of patients with high utilization trends tend to have both medical and behavioral health issues, making these patients very complex to treat. When you have everything listed in one place, like the platform, you can identify all these different needs that aren’t being met and draw different systems and providers together to work to meet them. Over time, this collaboration has shown us that much of this high utilization is preventable and these patients needs can be met...”

In addition to logging care guidelines on the platform, a select group of representatives from these organizations meet once a month to further discuss highest-need patients and coordinate additional care.

### TAKE CONTROL

[collectivemedical.com/behavioral-health](https://collectivemedical.com/behavioral-health)

## Clinic Outcomes

As a result of its collaborative efforts with MCIRT, Pierce County EMS services, and other community providers, Northwest Physicians Network has seen encouraging results. By increasing accessibility of behavioral health care and coordinating that care, Northwest Physicians Network and Pierce County saw:

- 44% drop in 911 calls
- 47% reduction in EMS transport
- 36% reduction in ED visits
- 42% reduction in hospital admissions
- 31% decrease in observation stays

In addition, their results have earned them the “Spotlight on Innovation” award at the 2019 North Western Patient Safety Conference.

Northwest Physicians Network is continuing their collaborative efforts to get patients the care they need while managing costs, and piloting new care collaboration cohorts through the Collective Platform and in-person provider meetings.

## About Collective Medical

Collective Medical provides the nation’s largest and most effective network for care collaboration. Our risk-adjusted event notification and care collaboration platform spans across all points of care—including hospitals, payers, behavioral and physical ambulatory, and post-acute settings. The Collective Platform uses the network to identify at-risk, complex patients and share actionable, real-time information with diverse care teams, leading to better care decisions.