

## Objective

Reduce unnecessary utilization of the Emergency Department resources by consumers with Severe and Persistent Mental Illness (SPMI) for physical and behavioral health symptoms by establishing standing appointments with appropriate healthcare providers

## Background

Primary Care at Valeo is a nurse practitioner led clinic that was established to meet the primary care needs of SPMI consumers in the community mental health center. With extended appointment times to establish rapport, less rigid policies about missed appointments, and warm hand-offs between departments to assist in managing care, the clinic has been very successful. Despite this resource, consumers often still access the Emergency Department for non-emergent needs for physical and behavioral health symptoms. Targeting better symptom management could reduce the inappropriate use of the ED and improve quality of life. Accurate information about ED encounters is poor due to lack of consistent exchange of information. Participation in the Kansas Health Information Network (KHIN) would allow access to information for follow-up appointments.

## Actions Taken

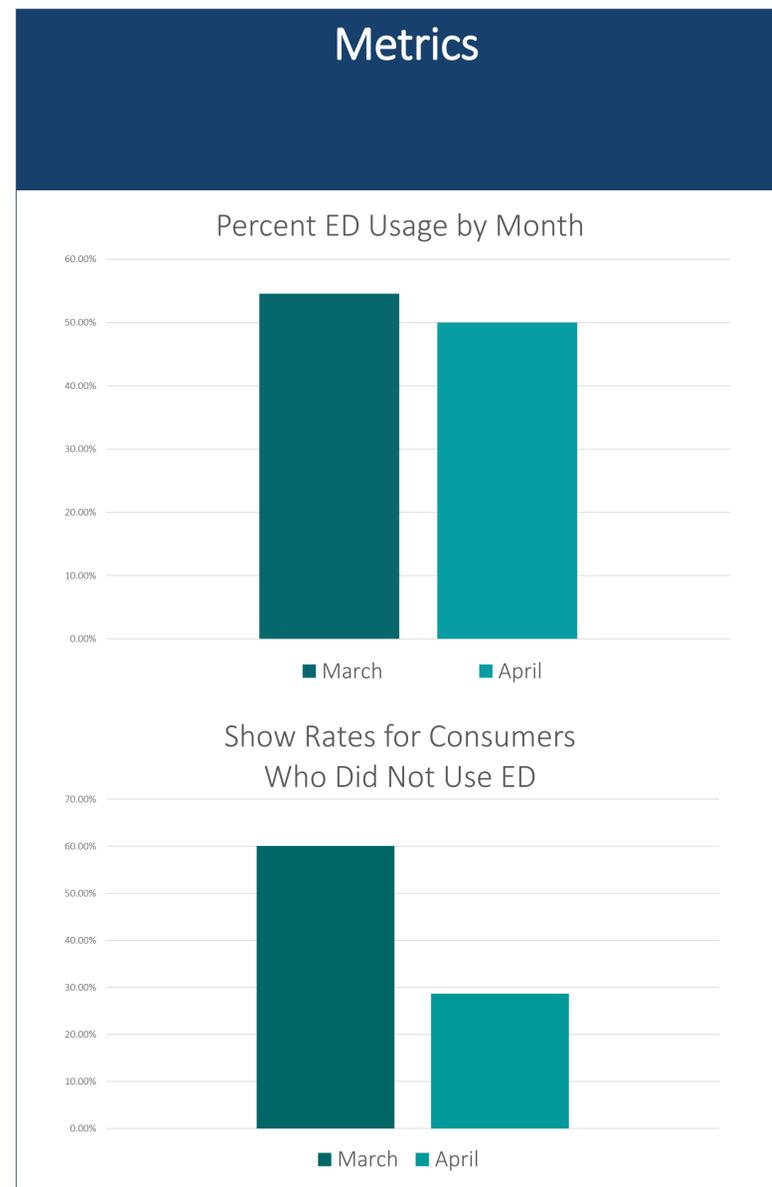
After identifying high Valeo ED utilizers, consumers were recruited to participate in the program. During enrollment, consumers were asked about their greatest needs and preferred frequency of standing appointments with primary care and/or mental health providers. Appointments were then scheduled with the appropriate provider at the requested interval. Educational magnets are being distributed about appropriate use of resources.

Initial implementation of this project was delayed as the PI was out for medical leave. The consumer recruiter was reassigned to another department due to staffing shortage. The database through which ED data was obtained was defunded resulting in difficulty collecting accurate ED utilization data. Acquiring access to KHIN is in process.

# Decreasing Emergency Department Utilization among Community Mental Health Center Consumers

Dr. Laura Sidlinger, Director of Medical Services  
Valeo Behavioral Health Care  
Topeka, Kansas

## Metrics



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## Analysis

Although fewer consumers were served, this pilot project increased awareness of inappropriate use of resources and informed our practice on methods of intervention to decrease ED utilization. As a result, a more upstream approach is being implemented with providers engaging high-risk consumers more often with targeted interventions.

Additionally, all SPMI consumers are being educated about use of EDs, urgent care clinics and primary care to insure needs are being met more efficiently. This reduces the burden on the health care system. The connection with KHIN will provide accurate and relevant clinical information to assist providers with decision making and improving health outcomes.

## Next Steps

Continue to engage SPMI consumers about the appropriate use of health care resources.

Monitor high ED utilizers and engage these consumers more often to avoid inappropriate ED use.

Educate staff about the KHIN resource and access to recent and historical health care information which may inform care interventions and practice.

Continue to collect data regarding consumers who were engaged by providers with increased frequency to evaluate the magnitude of the impact on ED utilization.

