

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH



Behavioral health is a state of mental/emotional being and/or choices and actions that affect wellness. Behavioral health conditions affect people from all walks of life and all age groups. These illnesses are common, recurrent, and often serious, but they are treatable and people recover (SAMHSA). Such conditions are far-reaching and exact an enormous toll on individuals, their families and communities, and the broader society.

Behavioral health is an essential part of health service systems and effective community-wide strategies. Behavioral health and physical health are also connected. Good behavioral health often contributes to good physical health. Likewise, the presence of behavioral health disorders is frequently associated with physical health disorders.

Vision for an Effective Behavioral Health System

Behavioral health is an essential part of overall health in which prevention works, treatment is effective and people recover. The North Dakota behavioral health system is built to support people – at both the individual and community levels.

The proposed vision for the North Dakota Behavioral Health System is grounded on the Institute of Medicine's Continuum of Care model. The goal of this model is to ensure there is **access to a full range of high quality services** to meet the various needs of North Dakotans. The services available throughout this continuum should **reflect current knowledge and technology** and be **grounded in evidence-based practice**. Throughout all levels of the continuum, there should be a **continuous promotion of healthy behaviors and lifestyles**, a primary driver of health outcomes.

In summary, the goal of the state's behavioral health system is to ensure there is access to quality services across the continuum of care supporting the behavioral health of North Dakotans across the lifespan.

