
Psychiatric Care & Behavioral Health Referral Guide

Understanding Mental Health Needs, Levels of Care, and Psychiatric Resources

PSYCHIATRIC CARE & BEHAVIORAL HEALTH REFERRAL GUIDE



Developed for:

Cook Ministries

Mental Health Support & Resource Navigation

Presented By:

Kailyn Broughton

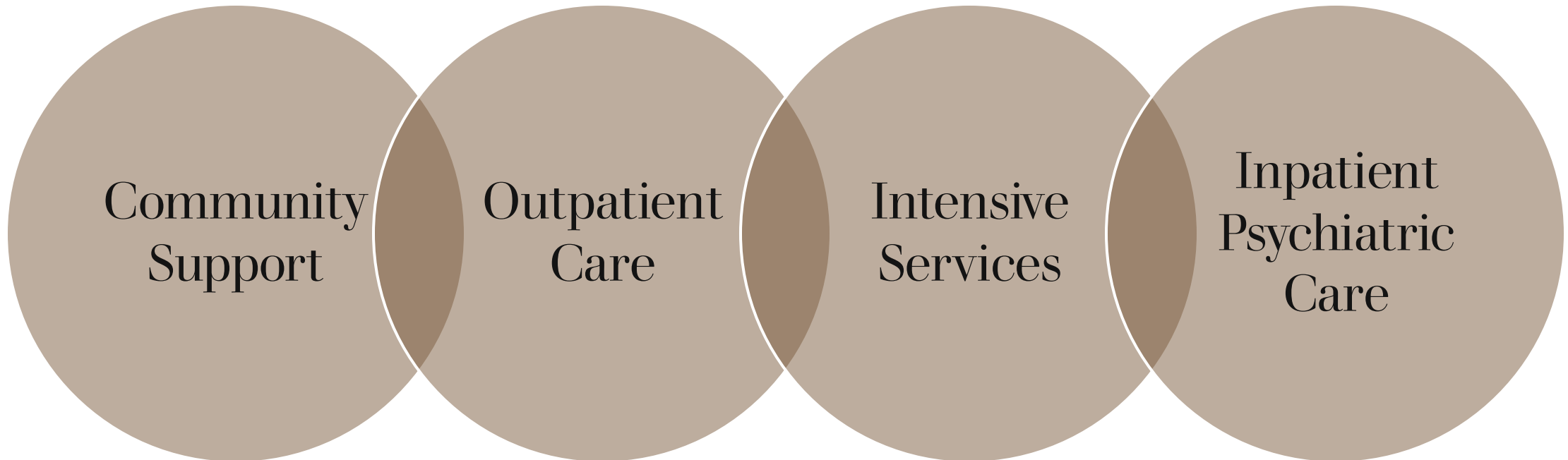
UAB MPH Internship Experience | Summer 2026

PURPOSE



- Provide education on psychiatric services and behavioral levels of care.
- Help to identify when individuals may benefit from additional/intense mental health support
- Increase awareness on psychiatric placement
- Increase awareness on referral processes
- Support Cook Ministries in connecting individuals within the community with reliable resources

Understanding Mental Health & Psychiatric Care



Understanding Mental Health & Psychiatric Care Cont....

- Different types of mental health and psychiatric care:
 - Faith-based/community support
 - Counseling/therapy (Offered mostly in outpatient settings; inpatient)
 - Psychiatric Services (Offered outpatient and inpatient)
 - Intensive Outpatient Programs (IOP)
 - Partial Hospitalization Programs (PHP)
 - Usually, a 24 hour or 72 hour hold and then released
 - Inpatient Psychiatric Hospitalization
 - Usually keeps an individual up to 2 weeks
 - Sometimes longer, depending on how long before client reaches baseline

What is Pyschiatric Care & What does it commonly treat?

PSYCHIATRIC SERVICES

- Mental health evaluations
- Diagnosis
- Medication management
- Crisis stabilization
- Crisis services
- Treatment planning
- Intake planning
- Care with healthcare providers

MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS COMMONLY TREATED

- Depression
- Anxiety
- PTSD/Trauma
- Bipolar Disorder
- Psychosis
- Hallucinations (VA, AH, TH, and OH)
- Substance Use Disorders
 - Usually referred to SA treatment/drug rehab

Recognizing When Someone Needs Help/Additional Support

Potential Warning Signs

Emotional

- Hopelessness
- Mood changes
- Difficulty managing emotions

Behavioral

- Withdrawal from others
- Increase use of substances

Safety Concerns

- Thoughts of self-harm
- Suicidal thoughts/behaviors
- Thoughts of harming others
- Hallucinations

Levels of Psychiatric Care

- Outpatient Services
 - Appropriate for individuals who can safely remain in their home environment
 - Examples: Therapy, Psych appointments, Medication monitoring/management
- Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP)
 - Appropriate for individuals that need more support than weekly sessions
 - Examples: Multiple sessions per week, group therapy
- Partial Hospitalization Program (PHP)
 - Appropriate for day treatment programs
 - Examples: Several hours of treatment per day, may return home afterwards
- Inpatient Psychiatric Hospitalization
 - 24-hour care in a psych facility
 - Crisis stabilization, can't return home until cleared by psychiatrist and has met baseline

Psychiatric Hospital Referral Process

- General Process
 - Step 1: An individual must have a pre-hospital screening/assessment/evaluation done beforehand. (Normally done at an outpatient mental health/behavioral health facility)
 - Step 2: If hospitalization is recommended, the organization/facility will find client a bed and he/she will wait for a bed to open at a psych hospital.
 - Step 3: the Individual is contacted on bed availability and provided with directions and instructions.

An Individual may walk in as a "walk-in crisis" to a hospital, be evaluated, and placed inpatient if a bed is available.

An individual may also be petition/court ordered through the probate court for inpatient placement and will have to be transported by a deputy.

Recommended Screening & Assessment Resources

- Columbia Suicide Severity rating Scaled (C-SSRS)
 - Suicide Risk Screenings
- PHQ-9
 - Depression Screening
- GAD-7
 - Anxiety Screening
- Substance Use Screening Tools

Why does this matter?

- Early identification and treatment can help to:
 - Reduce barriers
 - Decrease suicide rates
 - Improve mental health outcomes
 - Prevent crisis
 - Help support recovery.

*Healing takes time, and asking for
help is a courageous step*

--MARISKA HARGITAY

Thank You...

KAILYN BROUGHTON | MPH INTERNSHIP 2026 | COOK MINISTRIES