

# Clinical Performance Improvement Project (PIP)

## Therapeutic Homework

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY, BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the County of San Diego Behavioral Health Services, Children, Youth and Families System of Care (CYFBHS), caregivers reported small to moderate changes in youth behavioral and emotional problems after receiving mental health services. Most published studies report larger changes after treatment. The goal of this Performance Improvement Project (PIP) was to increase the number of clinicians reporting use of therapeutic homework (THW) thereby improving client mental health outcomes.

#### STUDY QUESTION

Will increased use of therapeutic homework following a supervisor training result in a 10% reduction on the internalizing and externalizing Child and Adolescent Measurement System (CAMS) scales scores and a 10% decrease in length of time in treatment?

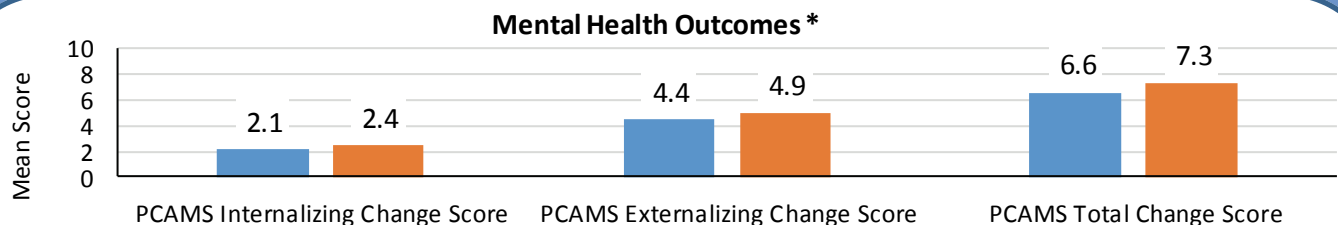
#### POPULATION

Supervisors from a CYFBHS pilot program serving youth clients ages 4 to 18 (average = 11.4). The majority of clients were male (57%), Hispanic (57%), and had a depressive, anxiety, or disruptive behavior disorder diagnosis (86%).

#### STUDY INTERVENTION

Training was provided to supervisors from the pilot program. Topics included teaching the clinicians they supervise to administer homework more effectively (e.g., reviewing, collaborating), provision of app-based THW resources, utilizing THW in documentation, and overcoming client barriers to utilizing THW.

#### STUDY RESULTS



■ Baseline (n=107 clients; October 2016 - January 2017)

■ Follow-up (n=27 clients; February 2017 - June 2017)

\* Higher change scores indicate greater improvement.

- Compared to baseline, the pilot program reported improvements in CAMS outcomes (not statistically significant) and more effective administration of THW.
- At follow-up (June 2017), 18 CYFBHS clinicians in the pilot program completed an online survey about their use of THW. Compared to 188 clinicians who were not in the pilot program:
  - 11% more clinicians in the pilot program reported assigning THW in the majority of sessions.
  - 20% more clinicians reported discussing THW in the majority of supervision sessions.
  - 4% more clinicians reported reviewing THW in the majority of sessions.
  - 20% more clinicians reported that clients completed their assigned THW in the majority of sessions.