

Bowen Center Delivers Comprehensive, Whole-Person Care to Indiana

THE CHALLENGE

A catalyst for change

Bowen Center of northern and central Indiana specialized in mental health and addiction recovery services, including inpatient psychiatric care, for more than 60 years. In 2015, a long-term client passed away at age 60; her death certificate read that she died of “natural causes.”

“In the US, a death certificate for a woman should not read ‘died of natural causes’ when she’s 60,” said Robert Ryan, PhD, EdS, LMHC, senior vice president of operations at Bowen Center.

The incident got him thinking about how mental illness should not contribute to early death—how Bowen Center can intervene early with people so they can live a full life, and what the plan to get there might look like.

A second and equally important catalyst for Bowen Center’s transformation to integrated care was to diversify their revenue stream. There are many new entrants into the behavioral health marketplace, and Bowen Center wanted to take the right approach to continue serving its community for another 60+ years. These factors spurred the organization to begin the strategic planning process.

“If we know this is the best way to treat our patients and the people we care for, then we need to figure out a way to do it,” said Dr. Ryan.

One outcome of that planning process was identifying the need to add primary care to Bowen Center’s services. The next step was to determine what viable financial model they would use.



CLIENT PROFILE

Bowen Center

Location: 27 counties across northern and central Indiana

Mission: To strengthen their communities and to improve the health and well-being of those they are privileged to serve

Clients Served: 37,000

Annual Revenue: \$75 million

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HIGHLIGHTS



Collaborates rather than competes with local hospitals and health systems



Staff has access to all of a patient’s health information at their fingertips



Plans to expand services to new regions

In 2017, Bowen Center hired a healthcare integration officer, and in January 2020, they opened their first primary care clinic. They've applied to become a Federally Qualified Health Center and just received their FQHC Look-Alike designation. Dr. Ryan believes that other organizations starting the integration process today will not take as long to achieve whole-person care.

THE SOLUTION

Success factors for integration

The team at Bowen Center developed the following success factors for their integrated care program:

- Strategic planning
- Selecting the right model
- Develop and hire the right people with integration knowledge and skills
- Financial sustainability—with the goal of 50% revenue from primary care in the next 10 years
- Buy-in from the mental health staff and reshaping of the culture, language, and levels of collaboration between mental health and physical health staff
- Pivot to new outcome measures that include the Uniform Data System (UDS)

Dr. Ryan pointed out that while Bowen Center always measured outcomes—both clinical and financial—they need even more discipline to evaluate program success. They also need to be willing to make decisions and changes indicated by their data for a successful total health approach. The UDS measures being monitored at Bowen Center include mental health screening, smoking cessation, cardiac care, diabetes measurement, and prenatal care.

Why a fully integrated EHR matters

Choosing an electronic health record (EHR) system that supports behavioral health and physical care services is critical to transitioning to an integrated care model. Bowen Center leadership recognized that their previous behavioral health EHR software was not able to provide the robust, integrated medical record they now required. Additionally, when they add dental, optometry, and other specialties, they don't want to introduce another EHR.

“Our goal was to pick a vendor who could grow with us and was a leader in each of these areas,” said Shannon Hannon, BA, MBA, CMPE, vice president of healthcare integration at Bowen Center. Such a system means having access to all patient health records in one place for smooth care transitions and positive patient outcomes.

Bowen Center chose NextGen® Behavioral Health Suite because NextGen Healthcare understands integrated, whole-person health. “The staff benefits greatly from a fully integrated EHR. They now have all of the information regarding a patient's total well-being and treatment at their fingertips—and that's just not something we've had the benefit of previously,” said Ms. Hannon. “The benefits are glaringly obvious to patients who now get all of their care at Bowen Center.”

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Shannon Hannon, BA, MBA, CMPE
Vice President of Healthcare Integration
Bowen Center

THE RESULT

Planning for growth

As a result of integration, Bowen Center has found opportunities for collaboration rather than competition with local hospitals and health systems. Local health systems have welcomed Bowen Center's primary care services to serve behavioral health patients, particularly those with complex diagnoses that hospitals do not have the resources to properly serve. One local health system said they are excited for Bowen Center to bring in total healthcare because they can now serve a group of individuals that local healthcare organizations struggle to see, and whose care they struggle to justify financially.

Bowen Center plans to add more primary care clinics, improve their physical spaces, add dental care and optometry to their service line, build a more sophisticated marketing strategy, and expand their services to new regions. In short, to achieve full collaboration in a transformed, integrated practice.

"One of the valuable benefits to having FQHC Look-Alike status is participation in the 340b Drug Pricing program. NextGen Healthcare makes this process easier and takes the complex but tedious administration duties out of the hands of financial or clinical staff," said Dr. Ryan.

With these changes, Bowen Center is on the path to increase not only the life span, but the quality of life for their patients.

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Robert Ryan, PhD, EdS, LMHC
Senior Vice President of Operations
Bowen Center

HOW CAN WE HELP YOU?

Partner with us at **855-510-6398** or **results@nextgen.com**