



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Hope Clinic of McKinney wins TAFP behavioral health integration prize

Hope Clinic of McKinney, Texas, has won the Texas Academy of Family Physicians' Behavioral Health Integration Innovators Competition. The prize was awarded to three primary care clinics in Texas that have shown extraordinary innovation in integrating behavioral health services into their practices.

"Given the high prevalence of mental disease in Texas and the growing shortage of resources dedicated to addressing it, sustained and systemic efforts in this area are critical," said Stephen Twyman, MD, MPH. "We at Hope Clinic of McKinney are honored to be recognized by the Texas Academy of Family Physicians for the small part we play in addressing this need through integrating behavioral health into our medical home for the uninsured of North Texas."

Integrating behavioral health services like psychiatry and addiction treatment into primary care clinics improves health outcomes for patients, yet many primary care physicians find it difficult to provide access to these services.

Hope Clinic partnered with UT Southwestern Center for Depression Research and Clinical Care in 2017 so they could consistently assess and treat patients' mental health needs. Their program is based on the premise that evaluating patients for mental health disorders should be the "sixth vital sign," so they have integrated a software application called VitalSign 6 into their electronic health record to ensure proper screening and treatment.

The clinic also works with licensed professional counselors and care coordinators to closely monitor high-risk patients, and they provide convenient ways for those patients to communicate with their physicians and other health care providers. Implementing these services has led to much higher remission rates among patients diagnosed with major depressive disorder than the national average.

TAFP developed the Behavioral Health Integration Innovators Competition to highlight best practices around the state for providing these services in primary care settings. The prize comes with a \$10,000 award and the opportunity to share details of the integration model with other practices in hopes that more primary care clinics will invest in providing integrated behavioral health services to their patients.

*The Texas Academy of Family Physicians is the premier membership organization dedicated to uniting the family doctors of Texas through advocacy, education and member services, and empowering them to provide a medical home for patients of all ages. It has 32 local chapters and is a chapter of the American Academy of Family Physicians. Visit [www.tafp.org](http://www.tafp.org) for more information.*