

## First Episode Psychosis (FEP) Clinical Guideline

MVP Health Care® (MVP), as part of its continuing Quality Improvement Program, has adopted the National Institute of Mental Health's (NIMH) Evidence-Based Treatments for First Episode Psychosis: Components of Coordinated Specialty Care<sup>1</sup> guideline for the treatment of individuals with first episode psychosis. The full guideline is available at <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/schizophrenia/raise/state-health-administrators-and-clinics.shtml><sup>1</sup>

### **Impact of the Condition**

Approximately 100,000 adolescents and young adults in the United States experience first episode psychosis each year with a peak onset occurring between 15 to 25 years of age<sup>2</sup>, although symptoms can first present in individuals up to the age of 35. Symptoms can negatively affect a young person's ability to achieve social, academic and vocational goals, and, as a result, contribute to life-long disability.

### **Summary of the NIMH Guideline**

An abundance of data supports the value of early intervention following the first episode of psychosis and demonstrated improvement in symptoms and restoration of adaptive functioning in a manner superior to standard of care. Additionally, studies have shown that it is common for a person to have psychotic symptoms for more than a year before receiving treatment and reducing this duration of untreated psychosis is important<sup>2</sup>. As such, in 2014 legislative funds were provided to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to support the development of early psychosis treatment programs. The purpose of these treatment models is to improve symptoms, reduce relapse episodes and prevent deterioration and disability among individuals suffering from psychotic illness. Coordinated Specialty Care (CSC) was developed as a team-based, collaborative, recovery-oriented approach involving clients, their family members and team members. CSC emphasizes establishing a positive therapeutic alliance and shared decision making with clients, as well as coordinating with primary medical care providers. The core components of services include individual/group psychotherapy; family support and education; psychopharmacology treatment; supported employment/education; and case management. Treatment goals are best retained when individuals are engaged for up to five years post-psychosis onset.

Additional tools to assist providers with educating their patients on behavioral health conditions are included in the Provider Quality Improvement Manual under Behavioral Health. [Quality Programs and Initiatives | MVP Health Care](#)

In conjunction with these guidelines, MVP Health Care offers Case Management for members with behavioral health conditions. If you would like to refer your patients to the Case Management program, please call the MVP Case Management Department at **1-800-852-7826**.

This guideline is not intended to replace the role of clinical judgment by the physician in the management of this, or any other disease entity. It is an educational guideline to assist in the delivery of good medical care. All treatment decisions are ultimately up to the physician. Where medication recommendations are made, please refer to each health plan's formulary for coverage considerations.

MVP Health Care updates its clinical guidelines at least every two years. The review process is also initiated when new scientific evidence or national standards are published. Practitioners are alerted via the website and by written notices from the plan via fax or newsletter. A hard copy of the clinical guideline can be requested by calling the MVP Quality Improvement Department at **(800) 777-4793 extension 1-2247**.

### **References**

1. National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) Evidence-Based Treatments for First Episode Psychosis: Components of Coordinated Specialty Care.  
<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/schizophrenia/raise/state-health-administrators-and-clinics.shtml>
2. <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/schizophrenia/raise/fact-sheet-first-episode-psychosis.shtml#:~:text=Psychosis%20can%20be%20a%20symptom,first%20episode%20psychosis%20each%20year>