

Tele-psychiatry in a Residential Treatment Center - Ernie Turner Center

Cook Inlet Tribal Council

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Planning and Implementation of Tele-Psychiatry

- **Approximately Eight Years Ago.....**
- ETC needed psychiatric support to meet the needs of clients with co-occurring disorders.
- CITC already had a partnership with the University of Colorado's Native American Studies Center to provide program evaluation.
- University of Colorado had experience with tele-psychiatry for remotely located Veteran and Native American clients.
- CITC was not able to find a local psychiatrist to work on a part-time on-call basis.

Partnership Overview

- CITC's Recovery Services contracts with University of Colorado for tele-Psych services.
- The same Two Doctor's have been providing psychiatric evaluation and treatment for ETC clients for nearly nine years.
- "The Docs" assess new clients for mental health concerns and continue in a therapeutic capacity as needed.
- Both Doctor's are licensed to practice in the State of Alaska.
- A few years into the project, the Docs were granted prescribing authority at ANMC and SCF for AN/AI clients.

Benefits of Tele-Psych Partnership

- Clients love it. There is a "cache" about skyping with the experts.
- Some clients go deeper with the tele-Docs and reveal more about prior trauma.
- It allows CITC to serve clients with co-occurring disorders as prescribing and medical management barriers are removed.
- It's cost effective. ETC benefits from the University of Colorado's national expertise for a lower cost than other options.
- The University's research emphasis and their interest in establishing best practices makes the partnership sustainable and a true win-win.
- The Docs serve as mentors to ETC staff. They join in case staffings do trainings and are available to work one-on-one with staff.