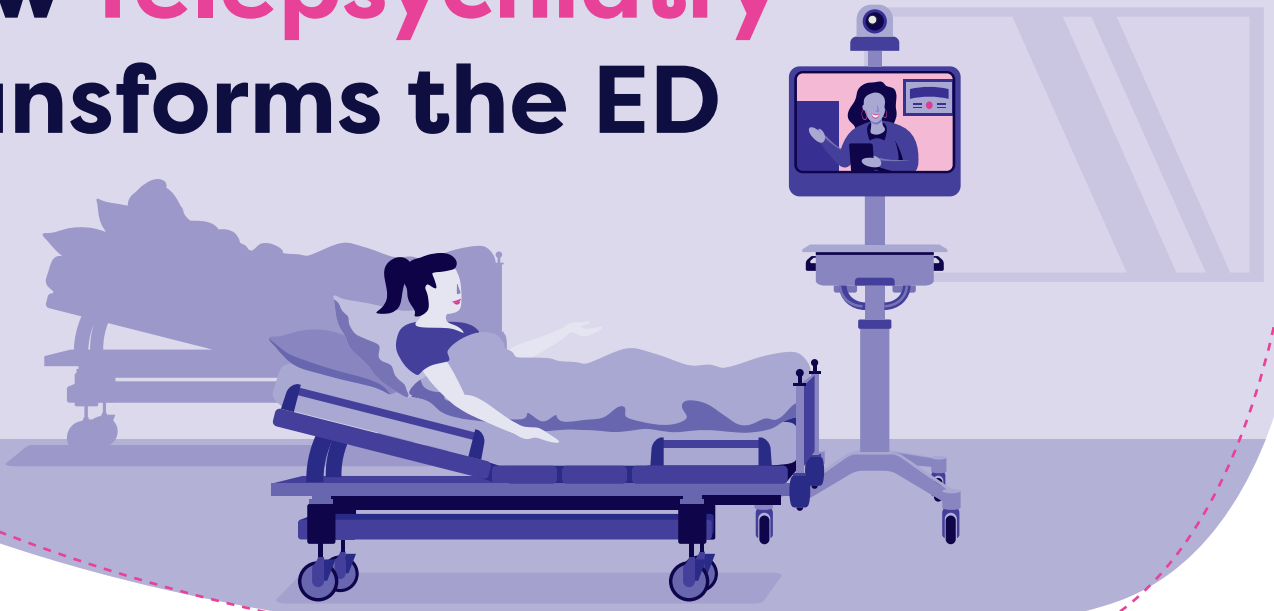




# How Telepsychiatry Transforms the ED



## Helping behavioral health patients in the ED

Access to prompt, high-quality care is critical for psychiatric patients seeking treatment in the emergency department (ED).

Especially given that every year, **4.9 million people** seeking care in the ED have a primary diagnosis related to a mental or behavioral health condition<sup>1</sup>.



Despite this influx, hospitals and health systems aren't always equipped with enough staff or resources to help these patients get the care they need, which can lead to psychiatric boarding, unnecessary admissions, and frequent revisits.

Organizations face challenges of their own. According to the Healthcare Cost and Utilization Project, mental and substance use disorder ED visits had service delivery costs of more than **\$5.6 billion, representing more than 7% of the \$76.3 billion total in ED visit costs<sup>2</sup>.**

Fortunately, telepsychiatry can help provide benefits to both organizations and patients.

# What is telepsychiatry?

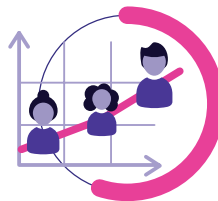
Telepsychiatry is a virtual behavioral health solution that helps health systems provide timely care to psychiatric patients while increasing throughput for their EDs. When a health system implements telepsychiatry in their ED, they receive a 24/7/365 dedicated team, so they never have to worry about managing inpatient psychiatric care alone. That translates to increased ED and inpatient throughput, lower length of stay, and timely psychiatric evaluations that improve provider and patient satisfaction.

## The benefits of telepsychiatry in the ED

### Improved ED throughput for behavioral health patients



**62%** reduction in time spent in ED, improving throughput by 150 minutes per patient<sup>3</sup>



**55%** shorter ED wait times increases the total number of patients seen in the ED<sup>4</sup>

### Lower hospital admission rates for patients who receive ED telepsychiatry

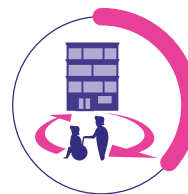


**82.6%** ED discharge rate, year-to-date for Iris Telehealth partner<sup>5</sup>

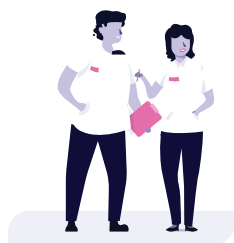


**5%** reduction of inpatient admission<sup>6</sup>

### Greater access to specialized behavioral health care improves discharge planning and lowers revisit rates



**36%** lower all cause revisit rate within 90 days<sup>7</sup>



Leveraging telepsychiatry for ED coverage reduces stress of your on-site ED providers and enables them to focus on the patients they can help the most.

### Increased ED staff and physician satisfaction

# How it works

Initiating a telepsychiatry consult is similar to calling any other consult in the ED. With five simple steps, telepsychiatry can facilitate a seamless process for providers, patients, and your organization.

## Here's how it works:



**Step one:**  
A clinician evaluates the patient and determines whether or not they need a psychiatric consultation.



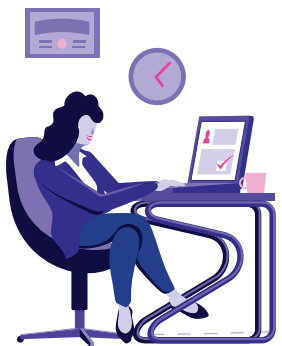
**Step two:**  
If they do, the clinician enters the essential information into a paging system, and an assistant in the ED takes a telehealth cart into the patient's room.



**Step three:**  
From this point, the consult is nearly identical to a standard face-to-face consult. After the evaluation, the telepsychiatrist promptly calls a designated individual (such as a social worker) to discuss the basics of the patient's presentation.



**Step four:**  
Next, the telepsychiatrist connects to the telehealth cart and speaks with the patient in real-time. The psychiatrist develops a treatment plan that typically includes a disposition and communicates this plan with the attending ED doctor.



**Step five:**  
Finally, the psychiatrist documents directly into an organization's EMR, and the consultation is complete.

## Improved patient experience by the numbers

Telepsychiatry enables hospitals to give patients fast access to psychiatric care through a virtual visit. For the patient, this access means less hours waiting for treatment from an ED physician, and a shorter length of stay overall.



In a study by Roseman University, researchers found that **a virtual visit conducted in the ED lasted 30-45 minutes** — in stark contrast to traditional in-person ED visits, which can take 2 to 2.5 hours<sup>8</sup>.



Another study found that **82% of respondents considered a virtual visit as good as an in-person visit by a clinician**<sup>9</sup>.



And, in a 2022 Health Care Insights Study by CVS, **59% of patients surveyed said accessing virtual telehealth services was essential to their health**<sup>10</sup>.

With virtual access to a psychiatric consult, providers can offer a more comfortable, high-quality, and efficient ED experience for patients experiencing critical mental health conditions.

## Telepsychiatry in action

In 2021, Iris Telehealth and Geisinger Health partnered to efficiently increase access at scale for their behavioral health patients across the care continuum. Effective care requires longitudinal care for patients, and this partnership ensured patients received timely access to quality care – whether they were in the emergency department, discharged from the emergency department, or referred from primary care.



Over the past year, Iris supported a **reduction in Geisinger's referral queue from 18,000 patients to 3,000 patients** utilizing a navigation assessment and a multi-disciplinary care team of providers to ensure every patient received the right care at the right time.

# About Iris Telehealth

Iris Telehealth is dedicated to improving patient outcomes with exceptional behavioral health care, while decreasing the burden on your care team. We provide 24/7 ED support with a cross-functional pod of behavioral health providers to help reduce wait times, avoid costly and inefficient psychiatric boarding, and improve throughput for your hospital.

If you'd like to learn more about our 24/7 on-demand services for your ED, [contact us](#) today.

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