Family Education Sheet

Levels of Psychiatric Care: Your Child's Treatment



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We have recommended that your child receive behavioral health treatment at a higher level of care. We will help your family find the facility that best meets your child's needs.

It is very important that your child get behavioral health care right away.

What kinds of higher-level care are available?

- Your child's care team will consider two higher-level treatment options based on your child's needs, health insurance and facilities' availability:
 - Admission to a Psychiatric Hospital–Inpatient Level of Care
 - Admission to a Community Based Acute Treatment program (CBAT)/Residential Treatment program
- If high-level treatment options are not available, your child may need to stay in our Emergency Department or on a medical/surgical unit. These settings cannot provide intensive psychiatric treatment, but your child's care team will keep your child safe and your family supported as we find the right treatment program. Your child's care team (including pediatric and behavioral health clinicians) will meet with your child daily.
 - This process of waiting for a higher level of care is called "boarding."

What if my child needs a lower level of care?

Our recommendations for levels of care may change throughout your child's hospital stay. The lower levels of care that may be recommended are:

- Sending your child home with outpatient and community resources
 - This may include going to a Partial Hospitalization Program (PHP)

What is the behavioral health care ladder?

- The behavioral health care system ranges from the most intensive services (inpatient) to less intensive services (outpatient).
- It is like a ladder that a child can move up and down depending on the changing needs (see Figure 1). The level of care, or position on the ladder, changes with time and support. While your child is at Boston Children's, we will communicate with you each day about these changes. Our goal is to help your child access care in the least intensive and safest environment.
- Definitions of each level of care can be found on page 2

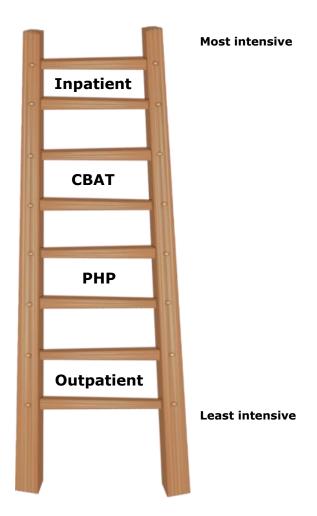


Figure 1

What are the levels of psychiatric care?

Inpatient Level of Care

- A 24-hour, 7-days-a-week locked hospital that keeps your child safe and stable during a mental health emergency
- Staffed with nurses, counselors, social workers and psychiatrists
- Psychiatric assessment and medication management if needed
- Daily structure to engage your child in therapy, school and activities
- Group, individual and family therapy with the goal of supporting a safe transition back home
- Some schoolwork/tutoring may be provided
- Average length of stay is dependent upon your child and the treatment plan/progress

Community Based Acute Treatment (CBAT)/Residential Program

- A 24-hour, 7-days-a-week unlocked treatment setting that provides similar treatment to an inpatient stay but less intensive
- May be used instead of an inpatient stay or to transition from inpatient to home
- Your child may be able to use passes to leave the facility for local trips

Partial Hospitalization Program (PHP)

- Structured day program
- May be used instead of higher levels of care (inpatient/CBAT) or serve as a transition from highlevel care to less intensive outpatient care
- Treatment typically during the day and the child goes home in the evening
- Average treatment is 5 days a week for 1–2 weeks
- Mostly uses group therapy but may also be individual therapy, medication management, psychiatric consultation and family meetings
- Goal is to improve a child's level of functioning while keeping family and community connections

What care is available from home?

- Outpatient therapy/psychiatry
- In-home services (when covered by insurance)
- Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP)
- School intervention (504 plan, Individualized Education Program (IEP), Educational Advocate)

Notes:			

Questions?

You can contact your child's pediatric and psychiatric clinicians to answer any questions or concerns you may have.

This Family Education Sheet is available in Arabic and Spanish