

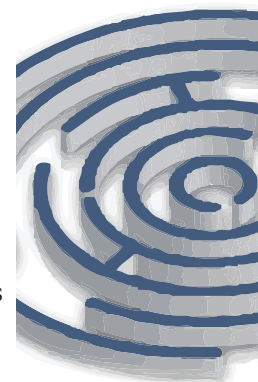


Caring for the Mentally Ill in North Carolina

A local challenge becomes research prototype

A Qualitative and Quantitative Systems Approach to Finding Solutions

Caring for people with serious mental illness, substance abuse, or developmental disabilities is one of our great public health challenges. This research effort seeks to apply system dynamics approaches such as qualitative and quantitative systems analysis methods, stakeholder participation, and computer simulations to identify leverage points and intervention strategies for improving mental health care systems.



Problems Abound

- **Short Supply**

There is a serious shortage of community-based crisis services, and state psychiatric hospitals are often over-booked and under-staffed.

- **Serious Needs**

400,000 North Carolinians with the most severe mental health symptoms do not always receive the most effective treatment.

- **Jail Diversion**

There is a growing number of people with mental illness who are in jails across the state.

The Plan

- **Phase One**

Map clinical, organizational and financial factors driving the use of state psychiatric hospital services and available alternatives in the Central region of North Carolina.

- **Phase Two**

Scale up to statewide implementation by assessing system dynamics of state psychiatric hospital use in selected regions of North Carolina.

Leadership



Joseph Morrissey, PhD, professor of health policy and management, UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health; professor of psychiatry, UNC School of Medicine; and Deputy Director for Research, UNC's Sheps Center—will use a variety of system dynamics modeling tools to address shortcomings in mental health care.



GOAL

To help government officials and concerned citizens improve public mental health services in North Carolina.

PARTNERS

UNC School of Medicine; the UNC Sheps Center for Health Services Research; Duke University Medical School; and a variety of community partners.

IMPACT! Human/Financial

Models will be used to compare both the human and financial impacts of alternative policies for improving mental health care systems in North Carolina. Researchers will study situations in both rural and urban areas in an attempt to compare and contrast optimal mental health systems solutions.

NC State Psychiatric Hospital Simulation

