

## **Change in Scope Request Narrative**

### **Description of service being added**

XX Health Center recently began providing behavioral health services. Our health center provides both traditional and integrated behavioral health services; traditional appointments are standard 50-minute appointments while integrated behavioral health appointments are conducted by a behaviorist in conjunction with a medical appointment.

### **Location**

Behavioral health services are being provided at XX practice site(s).

### **Date Health Center began providing the service**

5/1/2015

### **How service will benefit patient population**

There is mounting evidence that individuals with a variety of common and costly health conditions, such as diabetes and heart disease, are prone to behavioral health disorders that can worsen the course of the underlying disease. Recent studies have also highlighted enormously disparate health outcomes for people with mental illness, many of whom are dying 25 years earlier than average due to non-mental illness-related health problems. Common behavioral health disorders seen at XX Health Center include alcohol and drug abuse, and mental disorders associated with the frail and elderly. All of these negatively impact the chronic disease processes prevalent in the patient population of CCHS. This includes hypertension, diabetes, HIV+ and Sickle Cell, as well as the high risk obstetrical patient population.

Adding behavioral health to the scope of services provided by XX Health Centers will:

- Place emphasis on early identification of mental health and chemical dependency disorders
- Improve the primary care providers' skills in medication prescription practices
- Increase the primary care providers' use of behavioral interventions
- Increase the primary care providers' confidence in managing behavioral health conditions
- Provide triage and clinical services in stepped care fashion
- Maximize initial response to behavioral health issues, reduce acuity and prevent relapse.

In anticipation of adding behavioral health services and integrating them into primary care services, XX Health Center has consulted with other FQHC's which have been successful in similar efforts. These FQHCs report positive outcomes such as improved patient compliance, reduction in unnecessary visits, and more appropriate referrals to substance abuse providers. XX Health Center expects similar outcomes by adding this service.