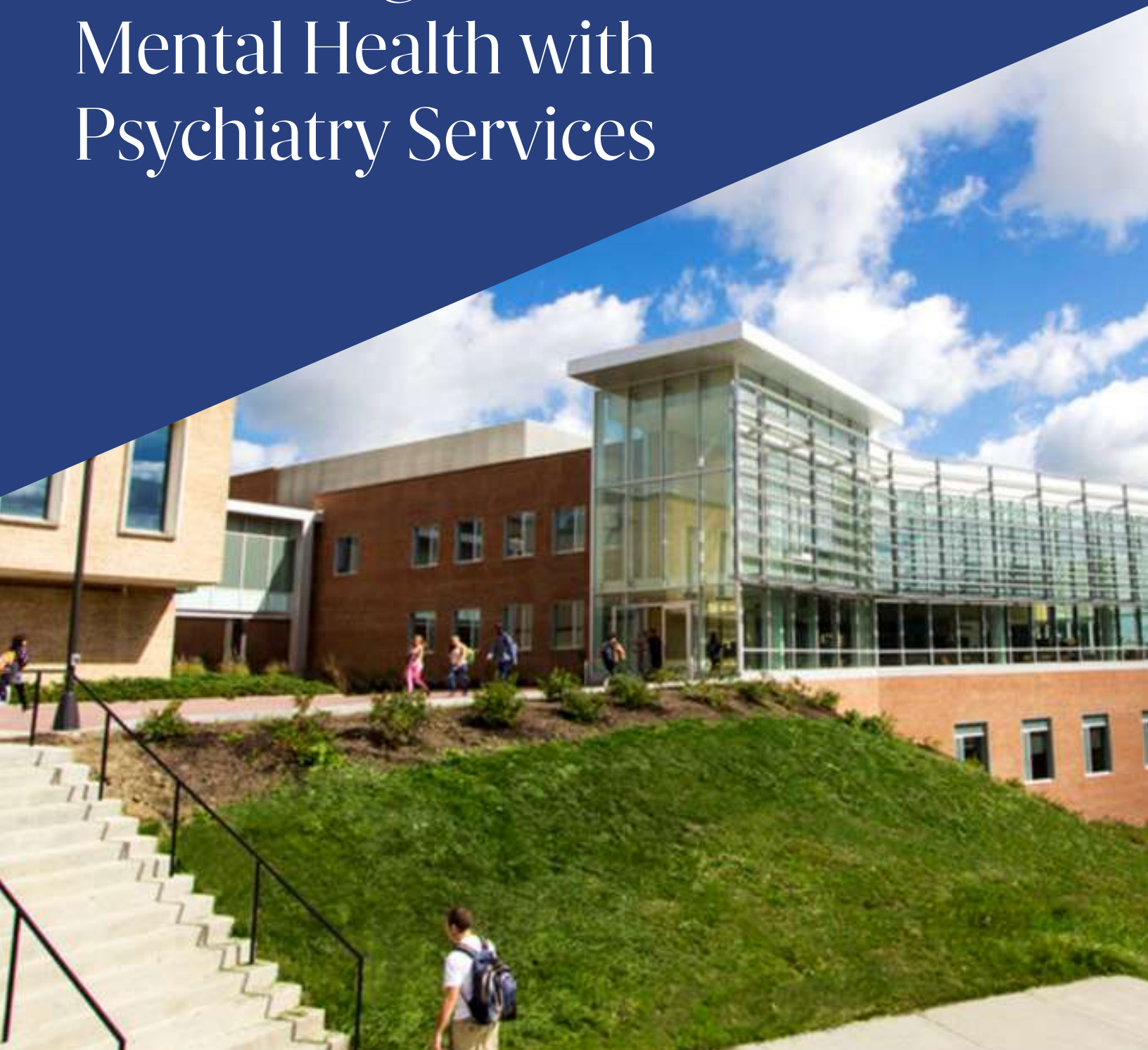


Mantra Health



Case Study

Addressing Student Mental Health with Psychiatry Services



The Challenge

Young adults ages 18 to 25 face the highest prevalence of mental illness¹ compared to all other adult demographics and only 57.6% of young adults with serious mental illness have received treatment. While counseling services have proven benefits for improving mental health, serious mental health conditions require specialized care. As a result, more psychiatric services are needed across the country, especially at the collegiate level, as 34% of college students are experiencing anxiety and 41% are battling depression.²

At Alfred State College, a SUNY regional college located in Alfred, New York, students have needed psychiatric services, but specialized care has been hard to access. "Nationwide we are seeing very long waitlists [to receive services], but especially around here," said Alfred State counselor Libby Tsibulsky, MSED, LMHC. "We don't have access to a lot of specific psychiatric services."

In addition to being located in a rural town, with few local services, Alfred State's counseling center doesn't have an on-staff psychiatric specialist, so they have previously relied on a medical provider to prescribe selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) and other medications to students with mental health disorders. This has made it difficult to treat students with certain conditions like bipolar disorder and severe depression.



"There are a number of illnesses that are not manageable with therapy alone. Medication management and therapy is the standard, but with telepsychiatry, you get better outcomes."

- Nora Feldpausch, MD, Medical Director at Mantra Health

The Solution

In the fall of 2021, Alfred State entered into a partnership with Mantra Health to expand its mental health service offerings to include telepsychiatry. Working cohesively with the college's counseling center, Mantra has significantly reduced time to care, helping students get more efficient and higher quality care.

As a robust partner in high-quality mental health care, Mantra also provided the following services to Alfred State students:

Medication Management

Therapists and prescribing doctors can attest to the importance of working in tandem to find the right mix of therapy and medication that yields desirable results for patients. A partnership with Mantra makes this process more accessible and streamlined. Clinical providers at Alfred States no longer have to rely on medical providers to treat students. This has expedited the process, and has given the counseling center more autonomy and medical providers more time to focus on other pressing medical concerns.

Assessment and Treatment of High Acuity Cases

Mantra Health has the ability to screen and treat cases with a wide range of acuity. While depression and anxiety are among the most common diagnoses for students at Alfred State, Mantra providers have also been able to help treat students with more complex diagnoses such as bipolar and related mood disorders, neurodevelopmental disorders, and stress and adjustment disorders.

Continuity of Care

It takes time and intention to foster a trusting relationship between a student and their provider, which is why Mantra prioritizes continuity of care. Students can continue using psychiatry services through self-pay or personal health insurance during school breaks or after graduation when coverage typically ends. The best way to improve student mental health is to ensure services are covered throughout a patient's entire care journey. Treatment plans should never end because the academic year ends.

Collaborative Platform

In addition to building consistent lines of communication between providers, Mantra has developed a platform that supports real-time communication and patient monitoring. This supports a cohesive workflow and enables multi-stakeholder decision-making. Working together, a patient's care team can develop a personalized, thoughtful treatment plan, which may include a combination of therapy and medication, to produce the most optimal results. Alfred State can also use the reporting feature to track a patient's experience and better understand times of high demand, time to care, and patient attendance rates, among other factors.

Robust Care Navigation System

The Mantra platform is tailored to suit the patient experience. In addition to providing user-friendly technology to support easy utilization, scheduling, and communication with providers, on-campus resources are made accessible to patients through the platform. This is how students prefer to communicate, Tsibulsky said, and rather than having to call or walk into the center, students can simply pull out their phones and schedule a visit.

Diverse Provider Network

Working with Mantra, students of color and students with financial concerns now have the opportunity to work with clinicians who have shared experiences or backgrounds. "The fact that Mantra offers those types of professionals is really powerful. It helps our students connect," said Tsibulsky, who is hopeful that having culturally competent providers will attract more students of color or students with a low socioeconomic status who may not have access to mental healthcare outside of campus.

Access to Supervised, Quality Care in Psychiatry

A psychiatrist or psychiatric nurse is highly trained in diagnosing and treating mental illness and is often needed to address more complex mental health conditions. In remote areas like Alfred, NY, there are few, if any, local or community services that can provide psychiatric care to students. Even when Alfred State brought in providers of psychiatric care, they could only visit campus twice a month, at most, and this meant that students had to wait weeks or months to see a provider. Through Mantra, students now have access to telepsychiatry providers who are highly trained and accessible to students, no matter where they live or what schedule they have.

Telepsychiatry Partnership with Alfred State Improves Student Mental Health

Alfred partnered with Mantra at the beginning of the 2021-2022 academic year to serve as an extension of the college's counseling services and to meet a growing need for psychiatric services. Studies have found that people living in rural areas are more likely to face depression,³ especially in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic – and this is likely the case for many Alfred State students who have moved from New York City and other big cities to the quiet college town in Upstate New York.

“It can be jarring,” said Tsibulsky. “We have one red light in the whole town, and only a handful of restaurants. There could be a lot of homesickness, depression, anxiety, [in addition to the] regular stressors that come with attending college for the first time.”

Before offering telepsychiatry services, some students were waiting weeks or months to see a provider, which meant they were sometimes waiting months or entire semesters to see changes in their mental state. With Mantra, students can now be seen within eight days.

“Most patients are facing anxiety and depression. Some are more severe than others. If they have to go off campus, they need something really convenient. With telehealth, it is easier for them to commit and show up.”

- Briana Freeman, PMHNP-BC, Mantra Health Provider



“In the greater community, we're told that patients have had to wait six, eight, or 12 weeks to see a provider for psychiatric care,” Tsibulsky said. “When you add on top of that, medications typically take four to six weeks to take effect, that can be a whole semester of someone struggling.”

The ability to receive quality care in a timely manner is critical, as studies show mental health is a significant predictor of student success and dropout rates. Untreated anxiety and depression – the most common diagnoses among students – can prevent students from achieving their full potential and exceling on campus and off.

75%

of Alfred State students who were referred to Mantra Health attended an intake appointment.



"Telepsychiatry has a robust evidence base and leads to high patient and provider satisfaction ratings, and outcomes equivalent to in-person care," reports the American Psychiatric Association (APA)⁴ in their Telepsychiatry Toolkit, and Mantra has proven this to be true. As a direct result of their participation in Mantra's telepsychiatry program, Alfred State students saw improvements in their social life, family functioning, and academic performance.

"We've been able to retain several students who may not have been able to be academically successful without the assessments [conducted by Mantra]," said Tsibulsky.

"Mantra has been very helpful in normalizing and making medication management and telepsychiatry more accessible... and that has just been awesome in retaining our students and giving them a sense of power over their health and their success while they're with us. [The service] has really been embraced."

9/10

of Alfred State students said their Mantra provider was a good match for their mental health needs.

During the academic year, an average of two students per week were referred to a Mantra provider and 90% reported that their Mantra provider was a good match for them. Mantra providers have helped fill gaps in care by offering assessments and treatment plans for conditions such as autism spectrum disorder (ASD), attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), generalized anxiety disorder, among others.

"Patients love the services. We have not had one bad or negative review," said Tsibulsky.

"I hope to see the continuation and expansion of telepsychiatry... It's exciting to be able to diversify our staff and provide flexibility in care."

“It continues to amaze us how quickly we’re able to link our students to services.”

- Libby Tsibulsky, MEd, LMHC, Counselor at Alfred State College

More on Mantra Health

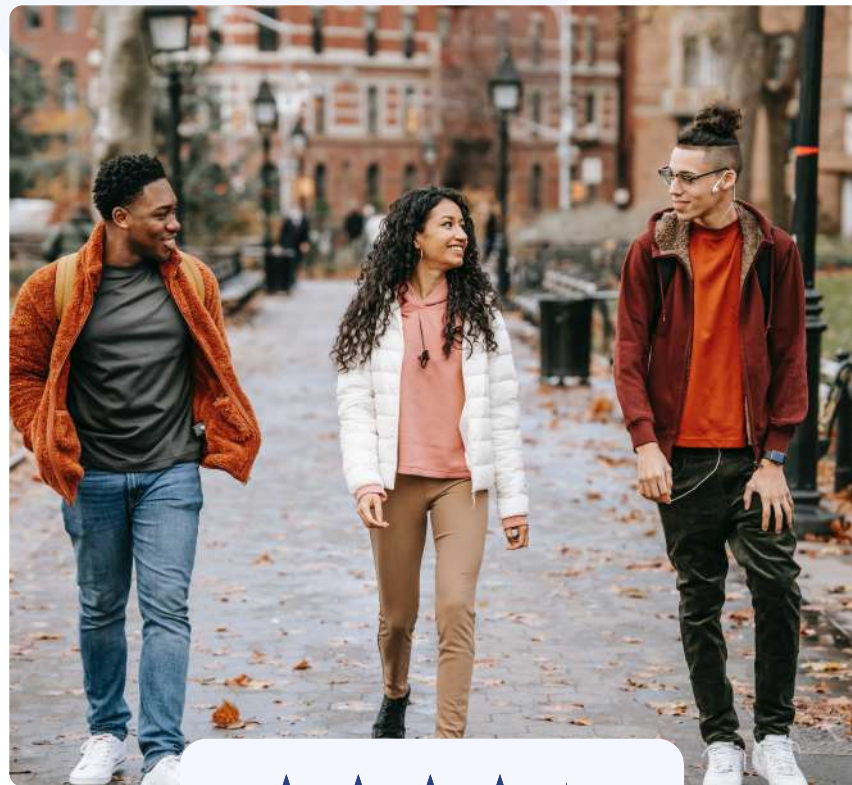
Mantra Health is the leading clinically-informed digital mental health provider that works cohesively with counseling centers at colleges and universities. We serve as an extension service provider to existing counseling services, providing an efficient and effective way to expand access and improve quality care for students. In cases where a college or university doesn’t have a counseling center, our team of mental health care professionals can provide supplemental services to meet the needs of the campus community.

As a Mantra partner, institutions are equipped with dedicated providers who collaborate with existing staff and serve a deeper level of care to students.

To learn more about our partnerships, contact Mantra [here](#).

100%

of Alfred State students felt their Mantra provider helped them accomplish their goals in therapy and psychiatry.



Mantra received a 4.3/5 star rating by students

1 [Mental Illness](#). National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH).

2 The Healthy Minds Network. [The Healthy Minds Study 2021 Winter/Spring Data Report](#).

3 1 Capriotti T, Pearson T, Dufour L. (2020, February 18). [Health Disparities in Rural America: Current Challenges and Future Solutions](#).

4 [Telepsychiatry Toolkit](#). American Psychiatric Association (APA).