



Mass General Brigham

# Addressing the Mental Health Crisis





# Who We Are



Created from some of the first and most prestigious hospitals in the world, Mass General Brigham today includes 16 member institutions that encompass a range of healthcare organizations. With two of the world’s best known academic medical centers—Massachusetts General Hospital and Brigham and Women’s Hospital—our system also features top-tier specialty hospitals, community hospitals, a respected rehabilitation network, a health insurance plan and physician network, a teaching organization, and numerous locations for urgent and community care and care at home.

As a world-recognized leader in research, we are home to one of the largest hospital system-based research medical centers in the U.S., with an annual research budget of nearly \$2 billion. Our patient-centered mentality and systemwide collaborative approach are the keys to research breakthroughs that drive medical innovation, gain new knowledge, and improve patient outcomes.



McLean Hospital was ranked #1 and Mass General Hospital was ranked #2 in the country for psychiatric care by U.S. News and World Report in 2023.

## Founding members

- Brigham and Women’s Hospital
- Massachusetts General Hospital

## Members

- Brigham and Women’s Faulkner Hospital
- Community Physicians
- Cooley Dickinson Hospital
- Health Plan
- Healthcare at Home
- Martha’s Vineyard Hospital
- Mass Eye and Ear
- McLean Hospital
- MGH Institute of Health Professions
- Nantucket Cottage Hospital
- Newton-Wellesley Hospital
- Salem Hospital
- Spaulding Rehabilitation
- Urgent Care
- Wentworth-Douglass Hospital

# A Commitment to World-Class Care



## Psychiatric services across the system

Mass General Brigham offers an extensive array of behavioral and mental health services across sites and levels of care.

- Emergency psychiatry
- Day programs
- Adult, child & geriatric inpatient care
- Adult, child & geriatric outpatient care
- Consultations to other departments (such as surgery or medically admitted patients)
- Adolescent and adult residential programs
- Neurotherapeutics (ECT, TMS and ketamine)
- Therapeutic schools for children and teens
- Full spectrum of substance use disorder care: cross-collaborative inpatient, residential, day and outpatient

**\$168M**  
Annual budget for psychiatric research

The complex block features a light blue background. At the top is a white line-art icon of a human head profile facing right, with two puzzle pieces inside the brain area. Below the icon, the text "\$168M" is displayed in a large, bold, blue font. Underneath that, the text "Annual budget for psychiatric research" is written in a smaller, black font.

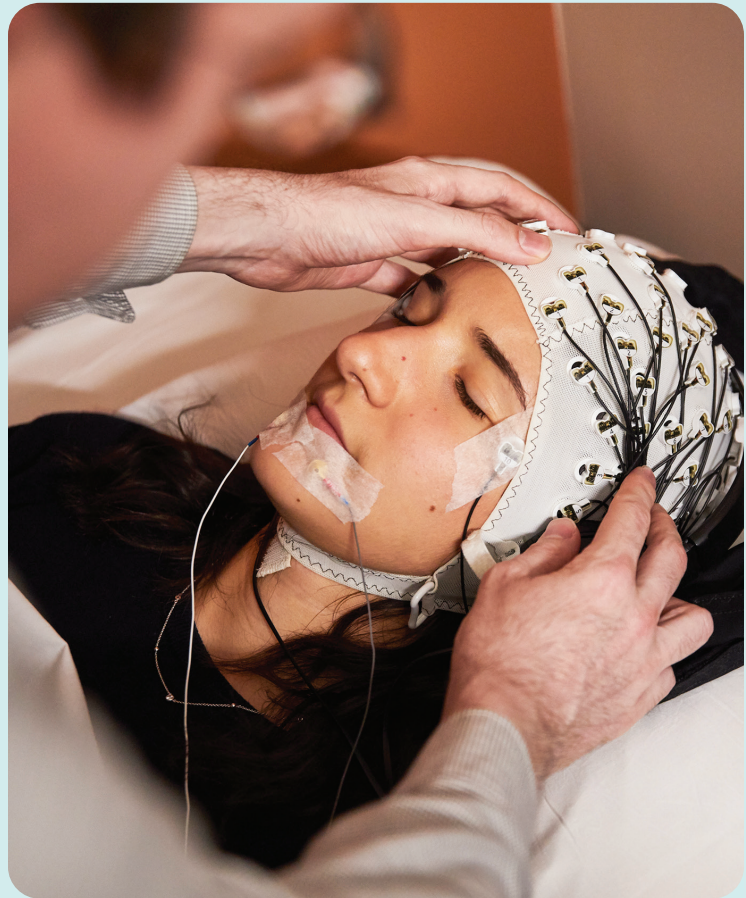


## Innovative Research and Development

With the most Harvard-trained doctors in the world, and as the United States' top healthcare system for National Institutes of Health (NIH) funding, we offer millions of patients access to large numbers of clinical trials and an unmatched network of specialists, who diagnose, treat, and cure diseases other clinicians may have never seen.

Investigators are gaining insight into the causes of mental illness and neuropsychiatric and neurodevelopmental disorders by using novel approaches and technology to maximize discovery and accelerate the translation of findings into improved care.

As an integrated academic healthcare system, Mass General Brigham brings together outstanding psychiatric clinical services, research and training to deliver advances in the field to achieve better outcomes.



## Advancing Cutting-Edge Science

Out of the hundreds of active scientific and clinical studies, here is a sampling of some of the work happening across the system:

- The development of advanced neuroimaging of the human brain to identify new clinical targets for anxiety, depression and bipolar disorder.
- Investigation of the potential benefits and risks of generative AI in guiding antidepressant prescribing.
- The creation of devices that use new forms of energy, such as infrared light, to noninvasively treat brain disorders such as depression, bipolar disorder, Alzheimer's disease, and Down syndrome.
- A real-world trial of ketamine vs. ECT for severe treatment-resistant depression.

# A Prevalent Problem Exacerbated by the Pandemic

## National and Worldwide Landscape

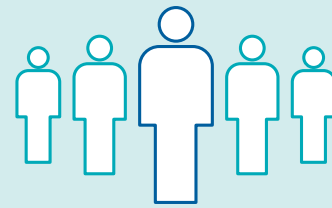
- WHO reports a 25 percent increase in anxiety during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 33 percent of U.S. adults indicated high and persistent rates of depression in 2021.
- A 31 percent increase in mental health-related ED visits among U.S. adolescents (aged 12–17) in 2020.
- 107,000 overdose deaths last year nationwide, with the largest increases among Black and American Indian/Alaskan Native individuals.
- World Economic Forum estimates cost of mental health at \$2.5T in 2010 and projected \$6T by 2030.



## Mental Health by the Numbers



- 30 percent of people will have a mental illness at some point in their lifetime



- 1 in 5 people experience a mental illness each year

## National Trends, Local Problems

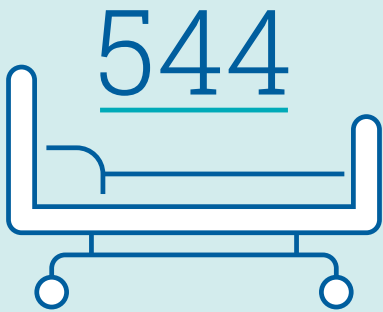
- BCBSMA Foundation reports that outpatient virtual and in-person mental health services doubled between 2019 and 2022.
- Teens, especially girls and LGBTQ+ individuals, are experiencing record high levels of violence, sadness and suicide. In 2022, 48 percent of Massachusetts youth reported feeling sad or hopeless, a 21 percent increase over 2017 levels.
- Massachusetts opioid-related overdose deaths rose 2.5 percent in 2022, which translates to 2,357 total deaths. Black residents accounted for the largest increase in opioid-related overdose death rates.

# Our Response to the Capacity Crisis

## Addressing the Boarding Issue

“Boarding” is the practice of holding patients in the Emergency Department (ED) after they have been admitted to the hospital because no inpatient beds are available. Boarding while waiting for a behavioral health care placement is an ongoing issue that impacts our most vulnerable patients. Boarding existed before the pandemic, but the effects of COVID-19 worsened the situation, creating a sustained behavioral health crisis.

- In Massachusetts, there is a daily average of 559 behavioral health patients in EDs across the state awaiting care (June 2023).
- Mass General Brigham has a daily average of 91 behavioral health patients in our EDs awaiting care (June 2023).



Mass General Brigham’s 544 psychiatric inpatient beds represent 18 percent of all psychiatric beds and 36 percent of non-profit psychiatric beds in Massachusetts.



## Increasing Inpatient Beds

Mental health systems optimally include a spectrum of care to meet people’s needs in the most accessible, least restrictive environment. Inpatient psychiatric beds provide essential services to help treat adults or young people who are experiencing moderate to severe mental illness—just like inpatient medical hospitalization serves the most acutely ill.

Since 2019, we have increased the number of inpatient psychiatric beds available to our patients by 146.

## Right Care, Right Place, Right Time

- The creation of a central access team has streamlined the way in which patients are referred into care from the ED. Since its launch in October 2022, this program has decreased the number of patients waiting in the ED by 3 percent, decreased patients waiting more than 100 hours in the ED by 16 percent, and increased placement to an inpatient behavioral health unit by 8 percent.
- The creation of virtual partial hospitalization programs created some diversion from hospitalizations for pediatric patients. Patients can start these programs while still in the ED, accelerating treatment plans. These programs include wraparound services that can be provided at home, including intensive therapy, 24/7 crisis team stabilization and navigators.
- Through the use of telehealth, we have expanded access to outpatient care and increased our urgent care services.
- Telehealth has also helped expand our Bridge Clinic services for our patients with substance use disorders.



# Working with Local Communities



## Meeting Patients Where They Are

Mass General Brigham has established pediatric behavioral health urgent care access in collaboration with the Massachusetts Association for Mental Health. Five community-based behavioral health centers are working with public school systems in the communities of Lynn, Weymouth, Randolph, Framingham, Milford and Springfield.

## Bolstering the Pipeline of Mental Health Professionals

Mass General Brigham has invested in community partners and educational institutions to grow the behavioral health workforce across the Commonwealth. An investment of \$25M has been established for community health initiatives and programs.

- Funding focuses on increasing the diversity of the mental health workforce and providing care in under-resourced communities and settings.
- Agreements have been executed with educational institutions across the state and with the Massachusetts League of

Community Health Centers to increase the number of nurses, social workers and mental health specialists educated and trained in Massachusetts. At the conclusion of this program, 835 graduates will enter the behavioral health workforce as either nurses, social workers or paraprofessionals.

- These initiatives include loan repayment, scholarships, living expenses, mentoring and supervision expenses, as well as stipends for MDs and PhDs to work in community-based settings in under-resourced communities and psychiatric inpatient settings.





# Impact on Access to Research-Infused Patient Care

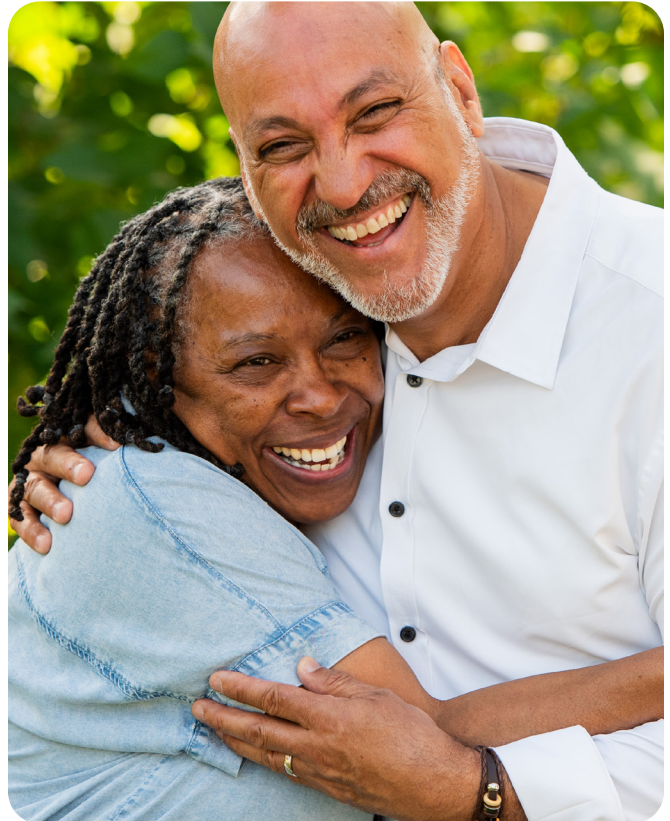
## A Wraparound Continuum of Care

Our goal is to improve the quality, equity, accessibility, clinical outcomes and value of treatment for patients with substance use disorder (SUD).

The Mass General Brigham SUD program provides wraparound care for the whole patient through a framework of strong connections between inpatient, outpatient and community-based services.

## Innovative Treatment Models

The Bridge Clinic model, developed at Massachusetts General Hospital and expanded to four locations across the Mass General Brigham system (and to other health systems both locally and nationally), is integral to the success of this initiative. Our Bridge Clinics provide on-demand, compassionate care to patients at all stages of addiction. These transitional clinics work to engage and stabilize high-risk patients before connecting them to long-term, community-based care.





### Meeting People Where They Are

Our inpatient consult teams, Bridge Clinics, mobile Community Care Vans, integrated SUD treatment in primary care, perinatal SUD program and collaborations with community partners offer access to a wide variety of resources and care plans:

- Walk-in and appointment-based services
- Addiction medications (like buprenorphine)
- Inpatient withdrawal management
- Individual and group therapy
- Recovery coaching
- Treatment/resource coordination
- Mental health care
- Safe use/harm reduction education
- Social risk factor resources (housing, access to nutritious food, transportation)
- Programs specifically designed for teens, young adults, people experiencing incarceration and pregnant- /post-partum people

## |United Against Racism|

Through our United Against Racism initiative, we've increased access to SUD care by 47 percent among Black patients, 111 percent among Hispanic patients and 90 percent among non-English speaking patients.

