

# First Episode Psychosis Guideline Checklist

## Health Plan Level 3



## The current state of the issue

Psychosis involves a collection of symptoms that affect the mind, where there has been some loss of contact with reality. During an episode of psychosis, a person's thoughts and perceptions are disrupted and they may have difficulty recognizing what is real and what is not.<sup>[i]</sup> Psychosis affects approximately 3 in every 100 people at some point in their lives, with about 100,000 adults over the age of 21 experiencing it annually nationwide. <sup>[ii]</sup> However, only 10-15% of individuals experiencing their first episode of psychosis (FEP) receive care through an evidence-based, coordinated specialty care model. <sup>[iii]</sup> Early detection and intervention are critical for people living with the broad spectrum of psychotic disorders. The World Health Organization recommends intervention within 90 days of symptom onset. Coordinated Specialty Care (CSC) is the gold standard of early intervention for psychosis.<sup>[iv]</sup> Best practice is to begin treatment within the first three months, which has been shown to reduce the duration of psychosis, lower the probability of recurrence, decrease lifetime costs, and improve overall quality of life.

## Rapid Detection & Early Access

- Create an internal system to flag members** that receive a new diagnosis of schizophrenia spectrum disorder or psychotic disorders.
- Maintain and publish a list of CSC providers within network** easily accessible to members within time and distance standards.

## Treatment

- Move towards alternative payment model structure that supports sustainable multidisciplinary team-based CSC.** (e.g., per member per month (PMPM) + encounter team-based rate, tied to quality metrics like psychiatric hospitalizations and emergency room visits, etc.)
- CSC core components include diagnosis and evaluation of medical and behavioral health conditions, medication management, individual and group psychotherapy,

family psychoeducation, supported employment and education, peer support services, case management and outreach

- Incorporate and use team-based case rate and per encounter rate for CSC**
  - H2040:** Coordinated specialty care, team-based, for first episode psychosis, per month
  - H2041:** Coordinated specialty care, team-based, for first episode psychosis, per encounter.
- Establish an attestation process for agencies outside of the New Journeys network with a CSC team.** Consider reviewing written standards for CSC programs (e.g., EASA, OnTrack).
  - Ensure fidelity monitoring is available to meet basic standards of CSC teams
- Move towards offering incentives for reducing adverse outcomes** (e.g., psychiatric hospitalizations, psychiatric emergency room visits) as part of alternative payment arrangements for CSC providers

## Resources

- The Bree Report on First Episode Psychosis is meant to supplement these resources.
- Full Bree Report on First Episode Psychosis:
- [WA HCA New Journeys and First Episode Psychosis](#)
- [New Journeys Washington](#)
- [Center for Excellence in Early Psychosis](#)
- [Scaling Coordinated Specialty Care for First-Episode Psychosis: Insights From a National Impact Model](#)
- [NAMI Psychosis](#)
- [NAMI Coverage of Coordinated Specialty Care \(CSC\) for Early or First-Episode Psychosis](#)
- [University of Washington Psychiatry Line](#)
- [Washington Partnership Access Line](#)

**Read the full Bree Report First Episode Psychosis online by scanning the QR code:**



**Connect with the Bree Collaborative at [bree@qualityhealth.org](mailto:bree@qualityhealth.org)**

References: [i] National Institute of Mental Health. (2023). Understanding psychosis (NIH Publication No. 23-MH-8110). U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/understanding-psychosis> [ii] National Institute of Mental Health. (2023). Understanding psychosis (NIH Publication No. 23-MH-8110). U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/understanding-psychosis> [iii] National Institute of Mental Health. (2023). Understanding psychosis (NIH Publication No. 23-MH-8110). U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/understanding-psychosis/> [iv] NAMI, McKinsey Health Institute, NASMHPD, National Council of Mental Wellbeing. (2024) Scaling Coordinated Specialty Care for First-Episode Psychosis: Insights From a National Impact Model. <https://www.nami.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Scaling-CSC-for-FEP-Insights-from-a-National-Impact-Model.pdf>