

Help improve patients' access to mental health treatment

Mental health is an essential component of overall health. It affects our ability to manage stress, form relationships, pursue fulfilling endeavors, and make healthy choices. Yet the reality is that 1 in 5 adults live with a mental illness. Over half don't receive treatment. How can we help patients access the help they need? By removing barriers to care.

- **Stigma.** Despite increased awareness around mental health, too many people are still embarrassed to admit they need help. It's important to communicate that mental health challenges are not a sign of weakness and more importantly are often linked/ caused by chronic health conditions.
- **Provider shortages.** As many as 160 million Americans live in areas where there are too few mental health providers to meet the demand. ^{1,2}Even outside these places there are often waiting lists or limited provider availability which deter individuals from seeking out care.
- **Difficulty making appointments.** For some patients, work or childcare obligations make it hard to meet with a provider for treatment during business hours. Transportation to appointments can also be a challenge.
- **Affordability of mental health care.** Healthcare is expensive and many behavioral healthcare providers don't take insurance. So, patients use out of network services at a higher rate. Patients struggle through symptoms when care is unaffordable.
- **Ineffective treatments.** Even when patients manage to access treatment, for many individuals, the outcomes aren't optimal. With medications, often patients experience unwanted side effects, and for psychotherapy (especially for PTSD) there is a high rate of drop-outs due to the challenging nature of exposure therapies.

Freespira offers treatment that cuts through barriers.

Freespira is a treatment for panic attacks and PTSD symptoms that overcomes many barriers to mental healthcare. Freespira offers:

- **Time-bound treatment.** Freespira doesn't require a long-term commitment. The treatment protocol lasts just 28 days, and most patients notice results sooner.
- **Medication-free symptom relief.** This makes it ideal for patients who are already on different medications, as well as those who prefer to avoid medication altogether.
- **Flexible at-home treatment schedule.** Freespira involves two 17-minute sessions a day on the patients' preferred schedule. This makes it easier to fit around busy lifestyles.
- **Individual support.** Patients meet with a coach weekly via secure video to set goals, track progress and troubleshoot any challenges.

- **Full health plan coverage.** Freespira is available for eligible Security Health Plan members without copays or cost-sharing.

If you have patients who can benefit from Freespira, please visit freespira.com/provider to learn more about the treatment and the referral process.

¹<https://www.cdc.gov/mentalhealth/learn/index.htm#:~:text=Mental%20illnesses%20are%20among%20the,a%20serious!y%20debilitating%20mental%20illness.>

² <https://www.commonwealthfund.org/publications/explainer/2023/may/understanding-us-behavioral-health-workforce-shortage>