

PRESS

Lyra Health launches comprehensive care for youth and young adults facing severe mental health crises

New Behavioral Health Urgent Care and Virtual Intensive Outpatient Programs Expand the Center of Excellence with Industry-first Integrated Model

BURLINGAME, Calif. — May 6, 2026 — Lyra Health today announced the next evolution of its Center of Excellence (COE) for Pediatric and Young Adult Mental Health. Through new specialized programs — Behavioral Health Urgent Care, High-Risk Behavioral Skills Therapy, and Virtual Intensive Outpatient (vIOP) — Lyra now offers the industry's most comprehensive support system for families navigating severe mental health crises.

Industry-wide, the average wait time for an initial pediatric mental health appointment is 7.5 weeks. This delay often forces young people into emergency departments as caregivers struggle to navigate fragmented care systems. [One in three caregivers](#) of children with significant mental health challenges ends up changing jobs or quitting entirely. Lyra's COE is designed to provide immediate clinical intervention, preventing escalation and emergency care.

A New Standard for Pediatric Intensive Care

With a specialized network of over 15,500 pediatric providers globally, Lyra offers unparalleled expertise, access to an appointment in one day, and family support



- **Behavioral Health Urgent Care:** Readily accessible pediatric clinicians provide in-the-moment guidance and triage to the appropriate level of care, along with specialized age-appropriate assessment and comprehensive care planning.
- **Virtual Intensive Outpatient (vIOP):** Designed for rapid stabilization, this structured, high-frequency program is delivered at home (9-12 hours/week) and can serve as a direct alternative to costly inpatient care. To support the entire household, this program also includes dedicated Behavioral Care Managers (BCMs) who coordinate clinical handoffs and manage school IEP/504 advocacy.
- **High-Acuity Behavioral Skills Therapy:** This program supports young people struggling with chronic suicidal thoughts and self-harming behaviors, and those experiencing severe emotion dysregulation with evidence-based skills. Caregivers are integrated into the clinical model, learning the same skills to actively support the member's recovery and home environment.

"When a young person is in crisis, immediate and specialized intervention is vital, not just for the child, but for the caregiver and the entire family," said Alethea Varra, Chief Clinical Officer, Lyra Health. "By providing integrated care across all levels of need, we get families the care they need quickly with seamless handoffs that mean no one falls through the cracks. Our goal is to turn unpredictable crisis events into a clear path to recovery, providing families with lasting support and stability."

Lyra is transforming both the lives of families in need and the economics of youth mental health care. Lyra's focus on early intervention has yielded a 54% reduction in pediatric health care spend, an average savings of \$3,307 per child. The expansion of Lyra's Center of Excellence for Pediatric & Young Adult Mental Health further accelerates these savings while providing the clinical and administrative support families need to achieve sustainable, long-term recovery.

For more information about Lyra Health and the Center of Excellence for Pediatric and Young Adult Mental Health, please [visit](#).

About Lyra Health

Lyra Health is the leading provider of workforce mental health benefits, serving more than 20 million people globally in partnership with leading employers and





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the only fully integrated, AI-powered platform combining the highest-quality care and technology solutions for members, providers and HR leaders. Empower works in the background to quickly connect members to the largest global network of evidence-based mental health providers, deliver actionable insights to benefit leaders, and free up providers to focus on client care—driving outstanding positive outcomes that are equitable across diverse racial and ethnic groups. Extensive peer-reviewed research confirms Lyra's transformative care model helps people recover twice as fast and results in a 26% annual reduction in overall health care claims costs. For more information, visit lyrahealth.com.

For press inquiries

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