

Mental, Emotional & Behavioral Health

According to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS), behavioral health includes the emotions and behaviors that affect overall well-being. Behavioral health is sometimes called mental health and often includes substance use. Mental and physical health are remarkably integrated. The state of our physical health impacts our mood and emotions, as well as our thoughts. In turn, our body responds to various mental states, such as anxiety, depression, and stress, all of which can have an impact on overall physical health.

All of FDRHPO's work around mental, emotional, and behavioral health is grounded in one key idea:

The mind is part of the body, and we should treat it as such.



With this in mind, FDRHPO is committed to promoting a comprehensive, fully integrated system of services and resources toward optimal overall health and wellness by supporting a healthcare system that cares for the whole person — mind and body. An integrated healthcare system enhances the care continuum, reduces gaps in care, and supports stakeholder collaboration.

FDRHPO's Behavioral Health Committee works to ensure optimal mental health and wellness for residents of Jefferson, Lewis, and St. Lawrence counties by maintaining a robust workforce, improving access to necessary treatment and support, and empowering the community through education in prevention and wellness.

Our Behavioral Health Committee has wide representation from...

- Community-Based Organizations
- State Psychiatric Center
- Prevention Councils & Coalitions
- County Community Service Departments
- Veteran Service Centers
- Fort Drum's Behavioral Health Department
- Local Hospitals & Health Centers
- Primary Care Practices
- Federally Qualified Health Centers
- Behavioral Health Clinics
- Substance Abuse Providers
- State Department of Health Offices
- TRICARE

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Mental Health & Substance Use Support

FDRHPO continues to work with behavioral health stakeholders to develop and enhance the behavioral health infrastructure, promote existing services and resources, improve access to mental health and substance abuse services, implement prevention initiatives, advance the use of telemedicine, and reduce the stigma associated with mental illness and substance use disorder. This is accomplished through research, data analytic support, community education and outreach, stakeholder trainings, healthcare staff recruitment, and much more.

FDRHPO supports drug-free coalitions across Jefferson, Lewis, and St. Lawrence counties, including the Massena Drug Free Coalition, Lewis County United Prevention Coalition, and the Alliance for Better Communities. Since 2017, we have helped to distribute more than 10,000 biodegradable medication disposal bags and more than 250 prescription lockboxes throughout the region to mitigate medication diversion.

Mental Health Awareness Training (MHAT)

FDRHPO promotes the use of evidence-based mental health and substance use screening tools, such as the Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ) and Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) through education and training. We also offer mental health awareness training to healthcare stakeholders, educators, first-responders, law enforcement, the military, and the community-at-large.

FDRHPO provides trainings at no cost and prepares individuals to respond to persons with mental health challenges and disorders. Trainees receive the knowledge, skills, confidence, and resources to recognize certain signs and symptoms and to safely respond to individuals with mental illness, particularly serious mental illness and/or serious emotional disturbances. Individuals trained might use these skills and resources to help others access needed mental health support from within their own families, their places of employment, their communities, or their places of worship.

Our mental health awareness trainings include:

- **Adult Mental Health First Aid**
- **Youth Mental Health First Aid**
- **Mental Health First Aid Training for Teens**
- **QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer)**
- **Train-the-Trainer: opportunities to become a trainer in each of the above categories**

Visit our website for a complete listing and description of each of these trainings.

fdrhpo.org/mhat

Suicide Prevention

In addition to providing gatekeeper training through the MHAT program, FDRHPO continues to support county and regional suicide prevention efforts.

In 2016, FDRHPO facilitated the formation of a regional presence among the three county coalitions, allowing them to partner together and strengthen prevention efforts

by promoting region-wide campaign messages and leveraging available resources. Since then, the coalitions have worked together to organize regional awareness and prevention campaigns, suicide prevention summits, community forums, community surveys, public outreach events, bereavement support groups, and community resource guides.

