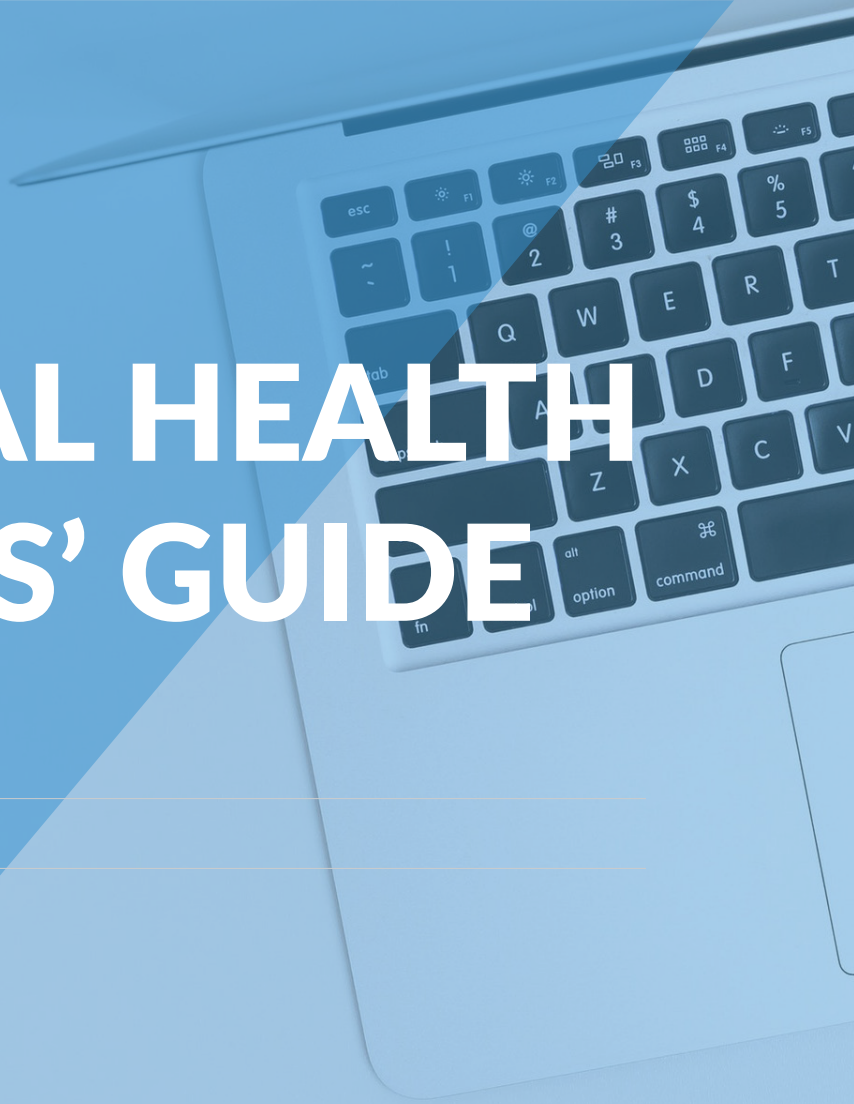
EHR IN PRACTICE

MENTAL & BEHAVIORAL HEALTH EHR BUYERS' GUIDE

Find the best software for your practice



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WHAT'S COVERED?

This guide is designed to answer **four questions** which are essential in selecting the right EHR for your behavioral or mental health practice. These are:

- What are the **key EHR requirements** for behavioral and mental health practices?
- **What features** should you look for in a behavioral and mental health EHR?
- **How much** does behavioral and mental health EHR cost?
- Which **behavioral and mental health vendors** should I consider?

WHAT ARE THE KEY EHR REQUIREMENTS FOR BEHAVIORAL & MENTAL HEALTH PRACTICES?

Needless to say, behavioral and mental health practices face a challenging set of requirements when selecting EHR software.

These include:

Complex treatment plans: treatment plans are often long-term, and can take into account personal background, living situation and socio-economic factors. They may comprise a mixture of talking therapies, medication and input from other providers.

Patient non-compliance: mental and behavioral health patients have a high rate of non-compliance due to the nature of their illnesses and the life situations that accompany them.

Patient confidentiality: mental health practices need to meet key compliance requirements regarding patient data, so should be looking for vendors with a good track record of data security and reliable storage

Accommodation of multiple facility types: clinicians treat mental health patients as inpatients, outpatients and everything inbetween.

WHICH MENTAL HEALTH EHR FEATURES DO YOU NEED?

CORE MENTAL HEALTH EHR FEATURES

Core mental health features are essential in creating and coordinating complex treatment plans. These will typically include:

- Lab integration
- E-prescription of controlled substances
- Flexible charting
- Easy-to-use patient portal
- Appointment scheduling and reminders
- Meaningful Use/HIPAA compliance

ADVANCED MENTAL HEALTH FEATURES

These might increase the overall cost of the system, but should be considered for the efficiency benefits they offer your clinicians:

- Hands-free notes
- Specialty-specific menus and intake forms (e.g Sadness Scale, suicidal/violent risk factors)
- Medication management with harmful drug alerts
- Specialty billing

$45,000

HOW MUCH DOES EHR COST?

Studies pitch the TCO of purchasing and implementing a general EHR between $15,000 and $75,000 (average $45,000) per provider depending on deployment model/size of practice

$90

HOW MUCH DOES CLOUD BEHAVIORAL HEALTH EHR COST?

A survey of popular behavioral health EHR vendors pitches the out-of-box price at $30-$150 per clinician per month (average $90 per clinician per month)

$1,500

HOW MUCH DOES ON-PREMISE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH EHR COST

One-time fees tend to vary from around $500 per practitioner to $2,500 per practitioner (average $1,500)

HOW MUCH DOES BEHAVIORAL AND MENTAL HEALTH EHR COST?

HIDDEN COSTS

Beware - hidden costs can increase the out-of-box prices quoted above significantly. When budgeting, ensure you factor in:

- Updating hardware (for on-premise systems)
- Implementation services/consultancy
- Staff training
- Productivity loss during implementation
- Staff overtime during implementation
- Updates/upgrades

EHR SOFTWARE TCO

$48,000: five year TCO of an on-premise EHR

$58,000: five year TCO of a cloud-based EHR

(Source: Michigan Center for Effective IT Adoption)

Prices sometimes vary depending on number of prescribing and non-prescribing users - so it's essential to have a good idea of who your user base will be before starting to budget.

WHICH BEHAVIORAL & MENTAL HEALTH EHR VENDORS SHOULD YOU CONSIDER?

EHR VENDOR	EHR SOFTWARE	BUILT FOR...	MORE INFO
ICANotes	ICANotes EHR	Behavioral health and addiction treatment	
TherapyNotes	TherapyNotes EHR	Psychiatry, psychology, therapy, counselling	
Carepaths	CarePaths EHR	Behavioral health practices who want cloud EHR	
Valant	Valant EHR	Private behavioral health practices	
CareCloud	CareCloud Charts	Practices of all sizes who want a customizable EHR	
drchrono	drchrono EHR	Practices who want EHR with good mobile features	
Practice Fusion	Practice Fusion EHR	Practices looking for free cloud-based EHR	
CureMD	All In One EHR	Practices looking for all-in-one EHR, PM and billing	
Qualifacts	Carelogic EHR	Enterprise behavioral health/human services organizations	
athenahealth	athenaOne	Practices looking for comprehensive operational support	

Vendors in the first half of this table provide mental health-specific EHR. The second half of the table is comprised of general EHR vendors who sell into the behavioral and mental health EHR market, and are ideal for multi-specialty practices for whom a specialty software would be too limiting

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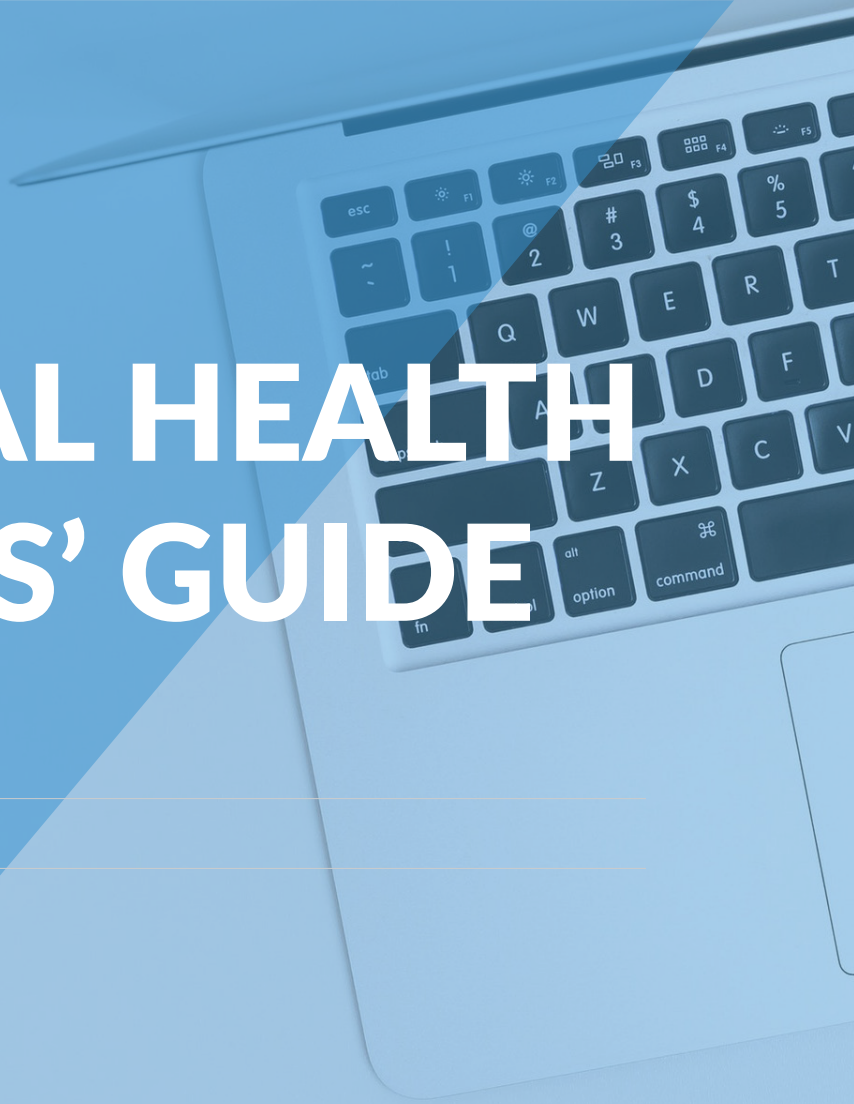

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