

Family Education Sheet

Levels of Psychiatric Care: Your Child's Treatment



Boston Children's Hospital
Until every child is well™

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We have recommended that your child receive behavioral health treatment at a higher level of care. We will help your family find the facility that best meets your child's needs.

It is very important that your child get behavioral health care right away.

What kinds of higher-level care are available?

- Your child's care team will consider two higher-level treatment options based on your child's needs, health insurance and facilities' availability:
 - Admission to a Psychiatric Hospital–Inpatient Level of Care
 - Admission to a Community Based Acute Treatment program (CBAT)/Residential Treatment program
- If high-level treatment options are not available, your child may need to stay in our Emergency Department or on a medical/surgical unit. These settings cannot provide intensive psychiatric treatment, but your child's care team will keep your child safe and your family supported as we find the right treatment program. Your child's care team (including pediatric and behavioral health clinicians) will meet with your child daily.
 - This process of waiting for a higher level of care is called "**boarding.**"

What if my child needs a lower level of care?

Our recommendations for levels of care may change throughout your child's hospital stay. The lower levels of care that may be recommended are:

- Sending your child home with outpatient and community resources
 - This may include going to a Partial Hospitalization Program (PHP)

What is the behavioral health care ladder?

- The behavioral health care system ranges from the most intensive services (inpatient) to less intensive services (outpatient).
- It is like a ladder that a child can move up and down depending on the changing needs (*see Figure 1*). The level of care, or position on the ladder, changes with time and support. While your child is at Boston Children's, we will communicate with you each day about these changes. Our goal is to help your child access care in the least intensive and safest environment.
- *Definitions of each level of care can be found on page 2*

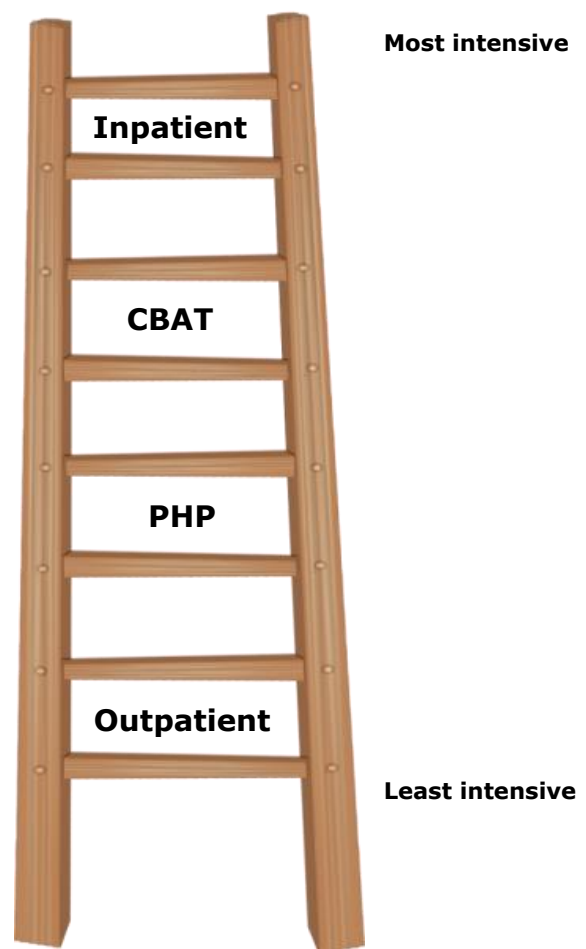


Figure 1

