

Investment Brief: Idaho Pediatric Psychiatry Access Line (ID-PPAL)

Overview

The Idaho Pediatric Psychiatry Access Line (ID-PPAL) is a groundbreaking initiative to strengthen pediatric mental health care across the state. Idaho is currently the *only state in the nation* without a program like this, leaving children, families, and providers without timely access to psychiatric expertise. By investing in ID-PPAL, sponsors and partners will help Idaho close this critical gap, support providers statewide, and ensure children get the right care at the right time, in their own communities.

The Need

- Idaho ranks among the lowest in the U.S. for access to mental health services for children and adolescents.
- Families in rural areas face wait times of 6–12 months for psychiatric evaluation, often requiring out-of-state referrals.
- Foster youth and children with complex behavioral health needs are at higher risk of over-prescribing of psychotropic medications and misdiagnosis due to lack of specialty oversight.
- Primary care providers, who deliver the majority of children's mental health care, report being under-equipped and urgently need access to psychiatric consultation support.

Without intervention, these gaps drive higher health care costs, unnecessary hospitalizations, and worsening outcomes for Idaho youth.

The Solution

Housed within the University of Idaho's School of Health and Medical Professions (SHAMP), ID-PPAL will give primary care providers direct access to child and adolescent psychiatrists (CAPs) and a multidisciplinary team for:

- Clinical consultation (diagnosis, treatment planning, medication management guidance)
- Resource support (connection to local services and care coordination)
- Provider education (ongoing training to upskill Idaho's workforce)

This model has proven success in every other state across the nation. Programs consistently demonstrate:

- Reduced wait times for specialty care
- Increased provider confidence in treating youth locally
- Lower emergency department utilization

- Long-term cost savings for payers and health systems

Investment Opportunity

Initial state and philanthropic investment will enable Idaho to launch ID-PPAL, collect utilization and ROI data, and demonstrate proof of concept. Over a five-year period, we will:

1. Build the program infrastructure (staffing, technology, outreach, evaluation).
2. Collect and analyze data on utilization, outcomes, and cost savings.
3. Leverage data to secure sustainable funding through Medicaid and commercial insurance partnerships, a model successfully implemented in other states.

Your investment makes possible:

- A statewide lifeline for pediatric providers
- Direct impact on children's health outcomes
- Visibility as a leader in advancing child behavioral health in Idaho

All contributions will be made through the University of Idaho Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

Return on Investment

Funders can expect:

- **Financial ROI:** Evidence from other states shows significant reductions in avoidable hospitalizations and costly out-of-state placements.
- **Workforce ROI:** Strengthened local provider capacity to deliver mental health care.
- **Community ROI:** Healthier children, stronger families, and reduced long-term system costs.
- **Visibility ROI:** Recognition as a founding sponsor of a first-in-state initiative, with opportunities for co-branding, public acknowledgment, and participation in statewide convenings.

Sponsorship & Partnership Opportunities

ID-PPAL welcome investments from:

- Health systems and hospital leaders
- Commercial insurers
- Medicaid partners
- Philanthropic foundations
- Community organizations committed to child health

Opportunities include:



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- Founding sponsorship (naming recognition, statewide visibility)
- Programmatic sponsorship (care coordination, CAP consultation, provider education)
- Data and evaluation partnership

Estimated Cost of Implementation

Launching ID-PPAL will require approximately \$2.5 million in direct costs over a 5-year period. This includes:

- Clinical consultation services
- Care coordination
- Program management and evaluation
- Technology and infrastructure
- Stakeholder engagement and outreach
- Comprehensive data collection and evaluation

This 5-year investment will stand the program up statewide, allowing ID-PPAL to demonstrate measurable outcomes and establish its value. Beyond this period, the program will transition to a sustainability model in which Medicaid and commercial insurers proportionally fund the service, as successfully adopted in other states.

We are actively seeking additional federal, state, and philanthropic partners to help fund implementation. Through robust data collection, ID-PPAL will generate evidence of cost savings and improved access to timely care, data that funders and insurers can directly point to when justifying continued investment.



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Next Steps

To explore partnership opportunities in more depth, funders are invited to meet with members of the University of Idaho's School of Health and Medical Professions:

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Together, we can build a future where every child in Idaho has timely access to mental health care, no matter where they live.