

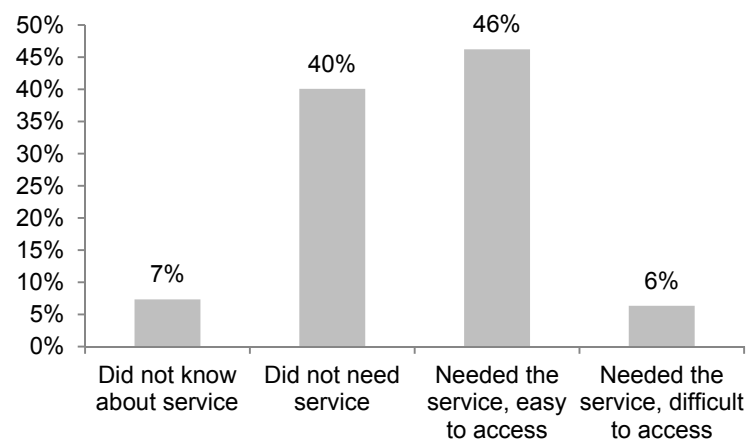
## MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

*Mental health services*, also referred to as *professional mental health counseling*, provides psychological counseling services for persons living with HIV (PLWH) who have a diagnosed mental illness. This includes group or individual counseling by a licensed mental health professional in accordance with state licensing guidelines.

(**Graph 1**) In the 2016 Houston HIV Care Services Needs Assessment, 53% of participants indicated a need for *mental health services* in the past 12 months. 46% reported the service was easy to access, and 6% reported difficulty. 7% stated that they did not know the service was available.

(**Table 1**) When barriers to *mental health services* were reported, the most common barrier types were administrative (25%) and wait-related barriers (25%). Administrative barriers reported include hours of operation, complex processes, and staff changes without notification to the client. Wait-related barriers reported include placement on a waitlist.

**GRAPH 1-Mental Health Services, 2016**



**TABLE 1-Top 5 Reported Barrier Types for Mental Health Services, 2016**

	No.	%
1. Administrative (AD)	6	25%
2. Wait (W)	6	25%
3. Health Insurance Coverage (I)	2	8%
4. Interactions with Staff (S)	2	8%
5. Resource Availability (R)	2	8%

(**Table 2 and Table 3**) Need and access to services can be analyzed for needs assessment participants according to demographic and other characteristics, revealing the presence of any potential disparities in access to services. For *mental health services*, this analysis shows the following:

- More females than males found the service accessible.
- More other/multiracial PLWH found the service accessible than other race/ethnicities.
- More PLWH age 18 to 24 found the service accessible than other age groups.
- In addition, more rural and unstably housed PLWH found the service difficult to access when compared to all participants.

**TABLE 2-Mental Health Services, by Demographic Categories, 2016**

Experience with the Service	Sex		Race/ethnicity				Age		
	Male	Female	White	Black	Hispanic	Other	18-24	25-49	50+
Did not know about service	8%	6%	4%	8%	9%	0%	13%	8%	6%
Did not need service	40%	39%	29%	41%	47%	40%	33%	39%	43%
Needed, easy to access	46%	48%	57%	45%	39%	60%	54%	47%	44%
Needed, difficult to access	6%	8%	10%	6%	5%	0%	0%	6%	7%

**TABLE 3-Mental Health Services, by Selected Special Populations, 2016**

Experience with the Service	Unstably Housed <sup>a</sup>	MSM <sup>b</sup>	Out of Care <sup>c</sup>	Recently Released <sup>d</sup>	Rural <sup>e</sup>	Transgender <sup>f</sup>
Did not know about service	11%	5%	0%	3%	0%	14%
Did not need service	25%	37%	50%	22%	50%	18%
Needed, easy to access	53%	51%	50%	69%	35%	68%
Needed, difficult to access	10%	6%	0%	6%	15%	0%

<sup>a</sup>Persons reporting housing instability <sup>b</sup>Men who have sex with men <sup>c</sup>Persons with no evidence of HIV care for 12 mo.

<sup>d</sup>Persons released from incarceration in the past 12 mo. <sup>e</sup>Non-Houston/Harris County residents <sup>f</sup>Persons with discordant sex assigned at birth and current gender