

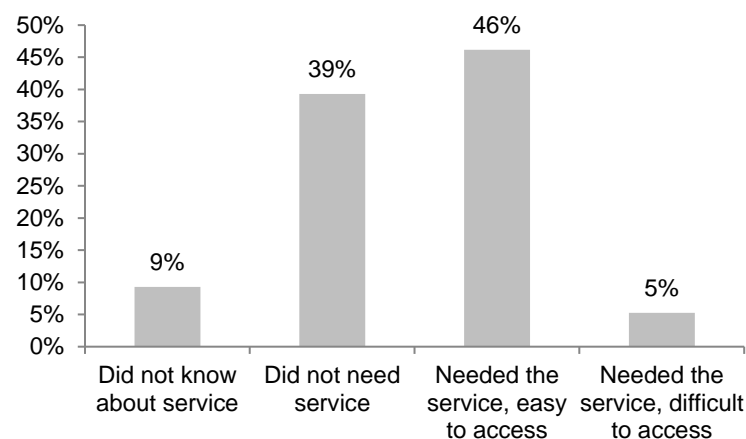
MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

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 2020 Houston HIV Care Services Needs Assessment, 51% of participants indicated a need for *mental health services* in the past 12 months. 46% reported the service was easy to access, and 5% reported difficulty. 9% 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, and education and awareness (each 22%). Administrative barriers reported include staff changes, hours of operation, client dismissal from the agency, and understaffing. Education and awareness barriers reported include lack of knowledge about service availability, where to go to access the service, and who to contact to access the service.

GRAPH 1-Mental Health Services, 2020



(**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 males than females found the service accessible.
- More Hispanic/Latino 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 recently released, rural, and homeless PLWH found the service difficult to access when compared to all participants.

TABLE 1-Top 5 Reported Barrier Types for Mental Health Services, 2020

	No.	%
1. Administrative (AD)	7	22%
2. Education and Awareness (EA)	7	22%
3. Health Insurance Coverage (I)	4	13%
4. Interactions with Staff (S)	3	9%
5. Transportation (T)	3	9%

TABLE 2-Mental Health Services, by Demographic Categories, 2020

Experience with the Service	Sex (at birth)		Race/ethnicity				Age		
	Male	Female	White	Black	Hispanic	Other	18-24	25-49	50+
Did not know about service	11%	5%	6%	10%	11%	12%	5%	12%	6%
Did not need service	39%	39%	35%	40%	42%	19%	43%	36%	44%
Needed, easy to access	46%	47%	47%	45%	45%	54%	52%	46%	45%
Needed, difficult to access	4%	8%	12%	5%	2%	12%	0%	5%	5%

TABLE 3-Mental Health Services, by Selected Special Populations, 2020

Experience with the Service	Homeless ^a	MSM ^b	Out of Care ^c	Recently Released ^d	Rural ^e	Transgender ^f
Did not know about service	16%	9%	7%	11%	11%	8%
Did not need service	38%	38%	63%	25%	57%	54%
Needed, easy to access	39%	48%	30%	49%	17%	33%
Needed, difficult to access	7%	5%	0%	14%	11%	4%

^aPersons reporting current homelessness ^bMen who have sex with men ^cPersons with no evidence of HIV care for 12 mo.

^dPersons released from incarceration in the past 12 mo. ^eNon-Houston/Harris County residents ^fPersons with discordant sex assigned at birth and current gender