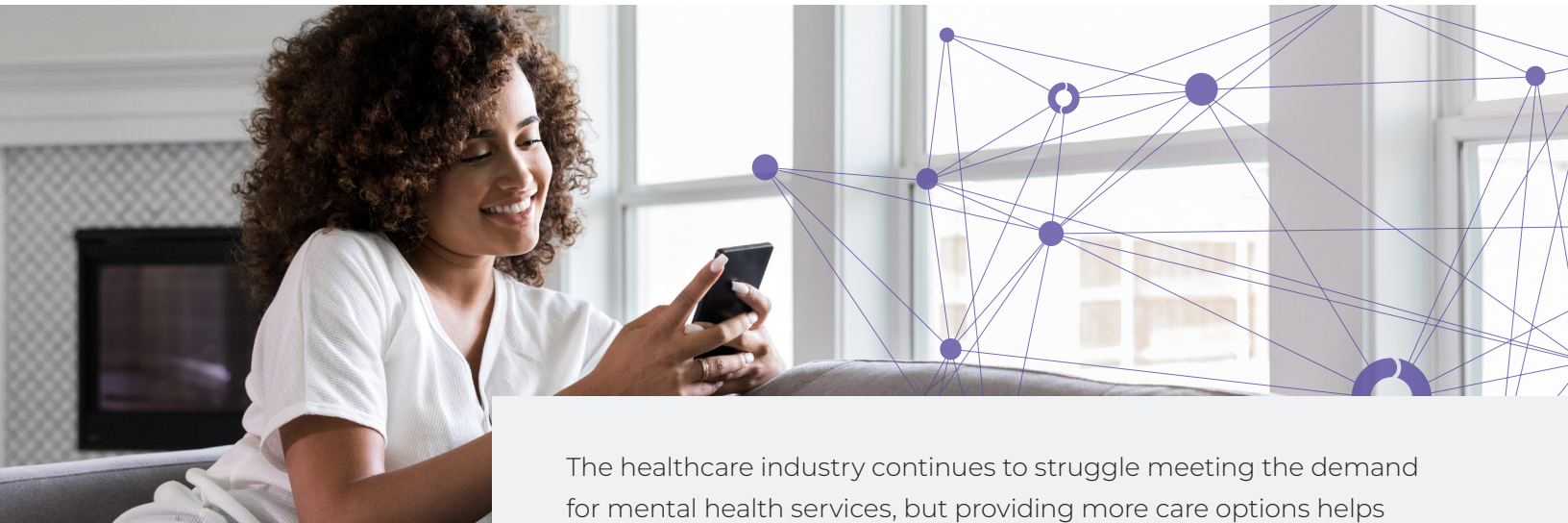


# Mental health coaching introduces diversity and speed to a strained system

Highlights from our interview with Julia Hoffman, Psy.D



The healthcare industry continues to struggle meeting the demand for mental health services, but providing more care options helps close those gaps while also working around long-held stigmas about “therapy.” We recently asked Teladoc Health’s Dr. Julia Hoffman to explain mental health coaching, one of the options within a full spectrum of mental health services, and how it can be an effective solution for people with non-clinical mental health needs.



**Dr. Julia Hoffman,**  
Head of Mental Health Strategy,  
Teladoc Health

Dr. Julia Hoffman is a licensed clinical psychologist in California who attended Stanford University, completed a Psy.D. in clinical psychology at the PGSP-Stanford Psy.D. Consortium, and a fellowship at Yale University School of Medicine. At Teladoc Health, Dr. Hoffman is responsible for establishing and executing strategy to serve a scalable, personalized approach to a full spectrum of mental health challenges.

## What is a mental health coach?

Mental health coaches are professionally trained to deliver structured skills training to those managing mild or subclinical mental health needs—issues that don’t necessarily require clinical intervention. When done correctly mental health coaching:

- follows a structured protocol
- offers behavioral tips to help build better habits and resiliency
- provides swift assistance via synchronous coaching sessions

## Why should I consider mental health coaching in my benefits package?

There has been a clear and constant shortage of mental health clinicians for the past few decades. There simply aren’t enough mental health providers in the world to serve all of the mental health needs. We’re starting at a disadvantage with a supply-demand mismatch, but we know we have to find a way through it in order to get folks to the care they need.

What we also know is that coaching, when done correctly, can be just as effective as traditional forms of care. This approach is a more accessible way to get care, both literally and for those individuals who may not be ready for therapy.

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Coaching is a word that's well-known to most. For those that aren't ready for 'therapy' or 'psychiatry,' engaging with a coach to work on solution-focused issues can be a lot more feasible and tolerable ... without further taxing an overtaxed system.

### How do I evaluate the quality of a mental health coaching program?

It's important to look for guardrails that ensure mental health coaching is not a clinical service in different packaging. You don't want to redirect members who need clinical care away from licensed providers. Certified coaches need to follow strict quality standards that include:

- clear protocols delivered on best available evidence
- adherence monitoring to those protocols
- training at the front end and ongoing supervision
- delivering clear, structured outcomes



In virtual mental health care, quantity AND quality matter. Having more resources available helps provide exceptional patient care and improve clinical outcomes.

[Listen to the entire discussion](#) with Dr. Hoffman to hear more about how mental health coaching could help your organization and the people you support.

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