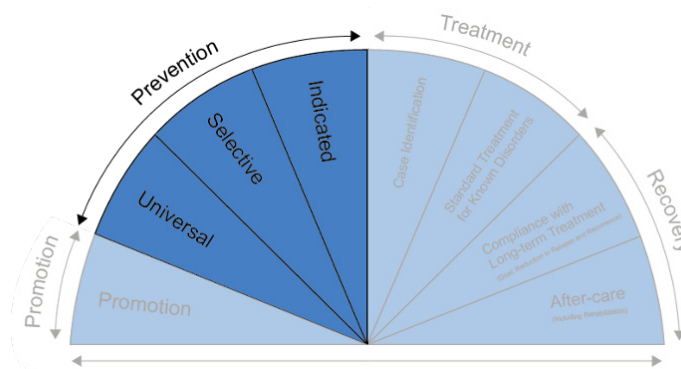# Institute of Medicine Classifications for Prevention

The Institute of Medicine (IOM) Model classifications, often referred to as a continuum of care, categorizes preventive interventions according to their population of focus. The definitions for these population classifications are:

+ **Universal:** Focuses on the general public or a whole population group and are not directed at a specific risk group.

    + Universal Direct: Interventions directly serve a group of participants who have not been identified based on individual risk.

    + Universal Indirect: Interventions support population-based programs and environmental strategies.

+ **Selective:** Focuses on individuals or a subgroup of the population whose risk of developing a disorder is significantly higher than average.

+ **Indicated:** Focuses on individuals in high-risk environments who have minimal but detectable signs or symptoms foreshadowing a disorder or have biological markers indicating predispositions for a disorder but do not yet meet diagnostic levels.

According to the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), a comprehensive approach to behavioral health also means seeing prevention as part of an overall continuum of care. The Behavioral Health Continuum of Care Model recognizes multiple opportunities for addressing behavioral health problems and disorders. Based on the Mental Health Intervention Spectrum, first introduced in a 1994 Institute of Medicine report, the model includes the following components:

+ **Promotion:** These services are designed to create environments and conditions that support behavioral health and the ability of individuals to withstand challenges. Promotion strategies also reinforce the entire continuum of behavioral health services.

+ **Prevention:** Delivered prior to the possible onset of a disorder, these services are intended to prevent or reduce the risk of developing a behavioral health problem, such as underage alcohol use, prescription drug misuse, illicit drug misuse, and/or problem gambling.

+ **Treatment:** These services are for individuals diagnosed with a substance misuse, problem gambling, or other behavioral health disorders.

+ **Recovery:** These services provide supports to help individuals live productive lives in the community and can often help with abstinence.