



Agenda Item 18:

Day Two Meeting Reflections

Presenters: Van Ton-Quinlivan, Chair; Dr. Nader Nadershahi, Vice-Chair, Health Workforce Education and Training Council

Purpose

The Reflections agenda item highlights key takeaways from the day and invites Council members to share insights on how the discussions can inform efforts to advance health workforce development in California. These reflections will funnel into the annual policy report.

Day Two Meeting Presentations

- BH-CONNECT Cycle Review
- Behavioral Health and the Aging Population
- Panel on Needs of Behavioral Health Workforce Caring for Older Adults

BH-CONNECT Cycle Review Key Takeaways

- The launch of the Medi-Cal Behavioral Health Loan Repayment Program marked a major milestone.
- The cycle review provides insights on application trends, including scoring results, geographic distribution, and languages spoken.
- Findings help assess progress toward goals, highlight successes, and identify areas for improvement.

BH and the Aging Population Key Takeaways

- California's aging and diversifying population is driving higher demand for behavioral health care.
- Workforce shortages and limited geriatric training hinder access to needed services.
- Informal and paraprofessionals caregivers face low wages, burnout, and limited formal training.
- Expanding training, integrating behavioral health into aging services, investing in data infrastructure, and supporting caregivers are key opportunities for policy action.

Panel on Needs of BH Workforce Caring for Older Adults Key Takeaways

- Panelists:
 - Anni Chung, President & CEO, Self Help for the Elderly
 - Sarah Steenhausen, Deputy Director of Policy, CA Department of Aging
 - Debbie Toth, President & CEO, Choice in Aging
- Panel highlighted on-the-ground perspectives on behavioral health needs of older adults and workforce challenges in meeting those needs.
- Discussion surfaced potential strategies and partnerships to strengthen California's behavioral health workforce for older adults.

Discussion Questions

- What insights from the BH-CONNECT Cycle Review can help inform future BH-CONNECT cycles and workforce initiatives?
- What insights from the guest presentation and panel discussion about behavioral health workforce for aging adults can help inform workforce strategies?
- How can the Council use these findings to guide broader strategies for strengthening California's behavioral health workforce?

Questions?