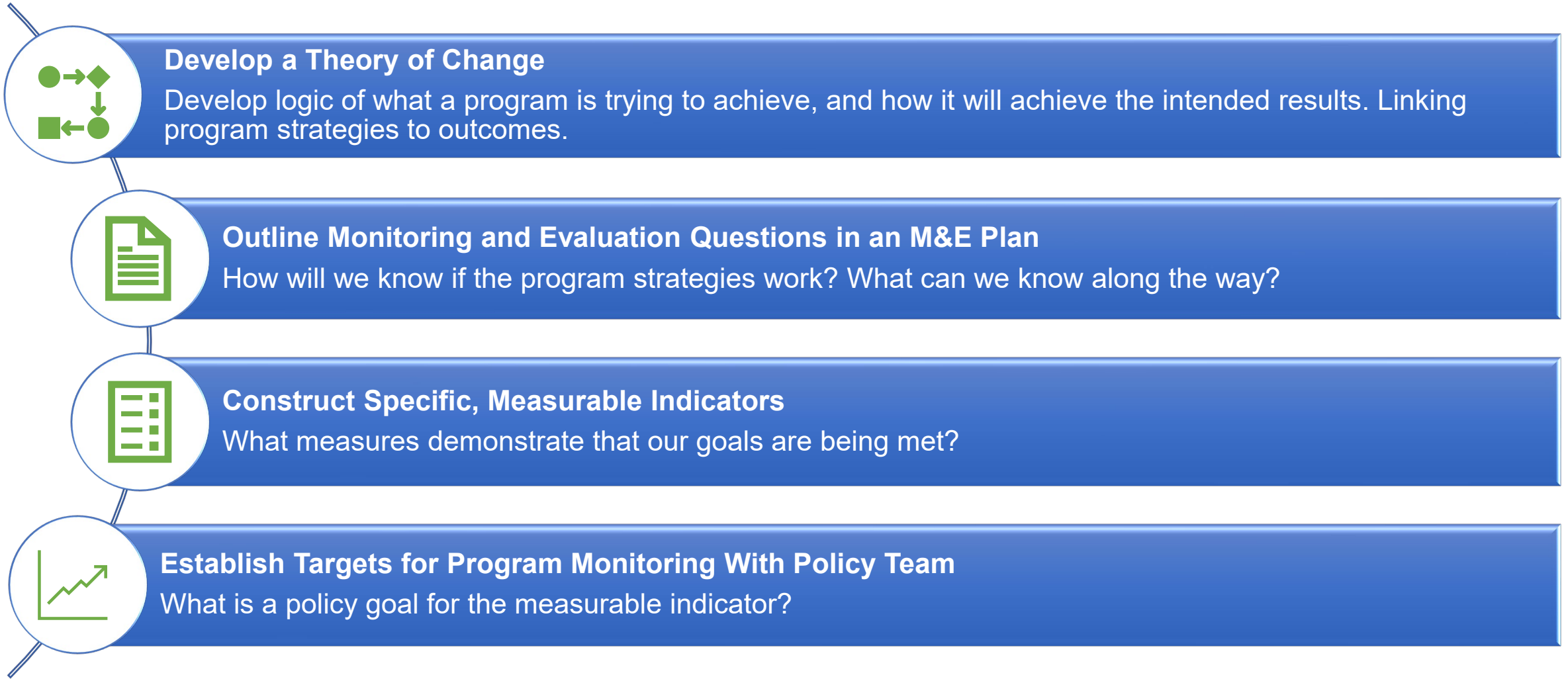
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Agenda Item 6:

HCAI Workforce Programs Evaluation Update

Presenters: Samantha Smith, Research Data Specialist II, Health Workforce Development, HCAI; Eric Neuhauser, Research and Evaluation Branch Chief, Health Workforce Development, HCAI

Monitoring & Evaluation Process



Monitoring & Evaluation Process (continued)



Program Evaluation: Workforce for a Healthy California Evaluation

What is it?

- Independent, multi-year external evaluation of the 19-program initiative.
- Evaluation funded by The California Endowment and evaluation conducted by Healthforce Center at UCSF.
- Combines initiative-level analysis with in-depth spotlights on seven programs, three of which are HCAI-administered: SUD Earn and Learn, PECE, and SWECE.

The three HCAI programs in focus

- **SUD Earn and Learn** — **$23.3M** one-time investment; training a diverse SUD counselor workforce.
- **PECE** — **$54.9M** to expand training capacity for psychiatrists and PMHNPs.
- **SWECE** — **$79.6M** to expand social work education at the bachelor's and master's levels.
- Together – **~$158M** targeting California's behavioral health workforce shortages.

Report is finalizing this fall. PECE/SWECE findings reflect data as of July 2025; SUD reflects through June 2026.

PECE: Psychiatric Education Capacity Expansion
PMHNP: Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner
SWECE: Social Work Education Capacity Expansion

SUD: Substance Use Disorder
UCSF: University of California, San Francisco

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Who the Evaluation Engaged

Findings will be grounded in direct input from program staff and grantees through qualitative interviews

SUD Earn and Learn

- **Interviewees**: Interviews with SUD Earn and Learn grantees, conducted June 2026.
- **Grantees**: Grantees span educational institutions, SUD treatment/prevention providers.
- **Geography**: North State, Sacramento, Central San Joaquin Valley, Central Coast, Los Angeles County.

PECE & SWECE

- **Interviewees**: Interviews with a subset of PECE and SWECE grantees, including public and private universities, medical schools, and other educational providers.
- **Grantees**: Grantees span social work schools, PMHNP programs, and psychiatric residency programs.
- **Geography**: Redwood Coast, North State, Sacramento, Bay Area, San Joaquin Valley, Central Coast, Los Angeles County, Inland Empire, etc.



What will be Spotlighted

Each spotlight will cover program design, implementation experience, reach, and lessons learned



SUD Earn and Learn

- How the earn-and-learn model is delivered by program (paid internships, stipends, tuition assistance), reach across target populations, and implementation lessons.
- Grantee spotlights: Central California Recovery and CCAPP.

PECE & SWECE

- How grants expand training capacity (faculty, stipends, curricula, clinical partnerships) plus program launches and accreditation milestones.
- Grantee spotlights: Chico State SWECE (bilingual MSW track, rural Northern CA) and UC San Diego PECE (new Imperial County psychiatry residency).

Closed Cycles Since Last Meeting



Medi-Cal Behavioral Health Scholarship Program (MBH-SP)



Medi-Cal Behavioral Health Community-Based Provider Training Program (MBH-CBPTP)



Medi-Cal Behavioral Health Scholarship Program

Cycle 1 Awardee Review

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MBH-SP Recap



The goal of MBH-SP is to expand the availability of **behavioral health (BH) professionals** in Medi-Cal safety net settings by supporting scholarships for individuals pursuing behavioral health degrees or certifications.



Scholarships are provided to eligible applicants who are pursuing BH degrees in exchange for experience in Medi-Cal safety net settings via a service obligation.



Up to $116,000,000 has been allocated for the MBH-SP Cycle 2, which launched in February 2026.

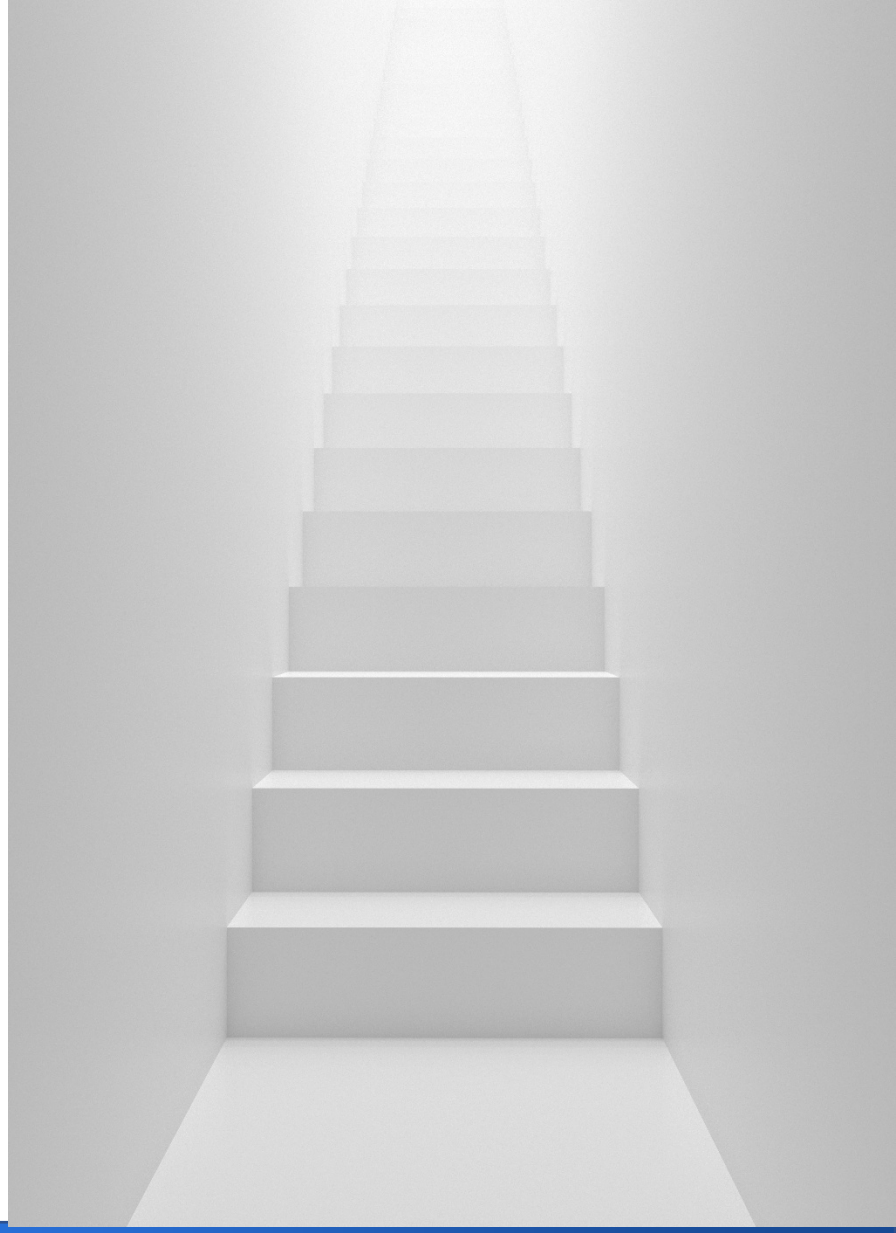
Individuals pursuing Nurse Practitioner and Physician Assistant pathways are eligible for $240,000 in scholarship funding.

Other professions are eligible for $120,000 – $180,000, depending on profession.

Application Status Summary

- Total applications received: 1,320
- Total eligible applications: 1,254
- Total awarded: 1,254
- Total ineligible: 59
- Total cancelled* prior to award announcement: 7

* Cancelled is defined as applicant was identified as awarded but applicant removed their consideration prior to Grant Agreement.

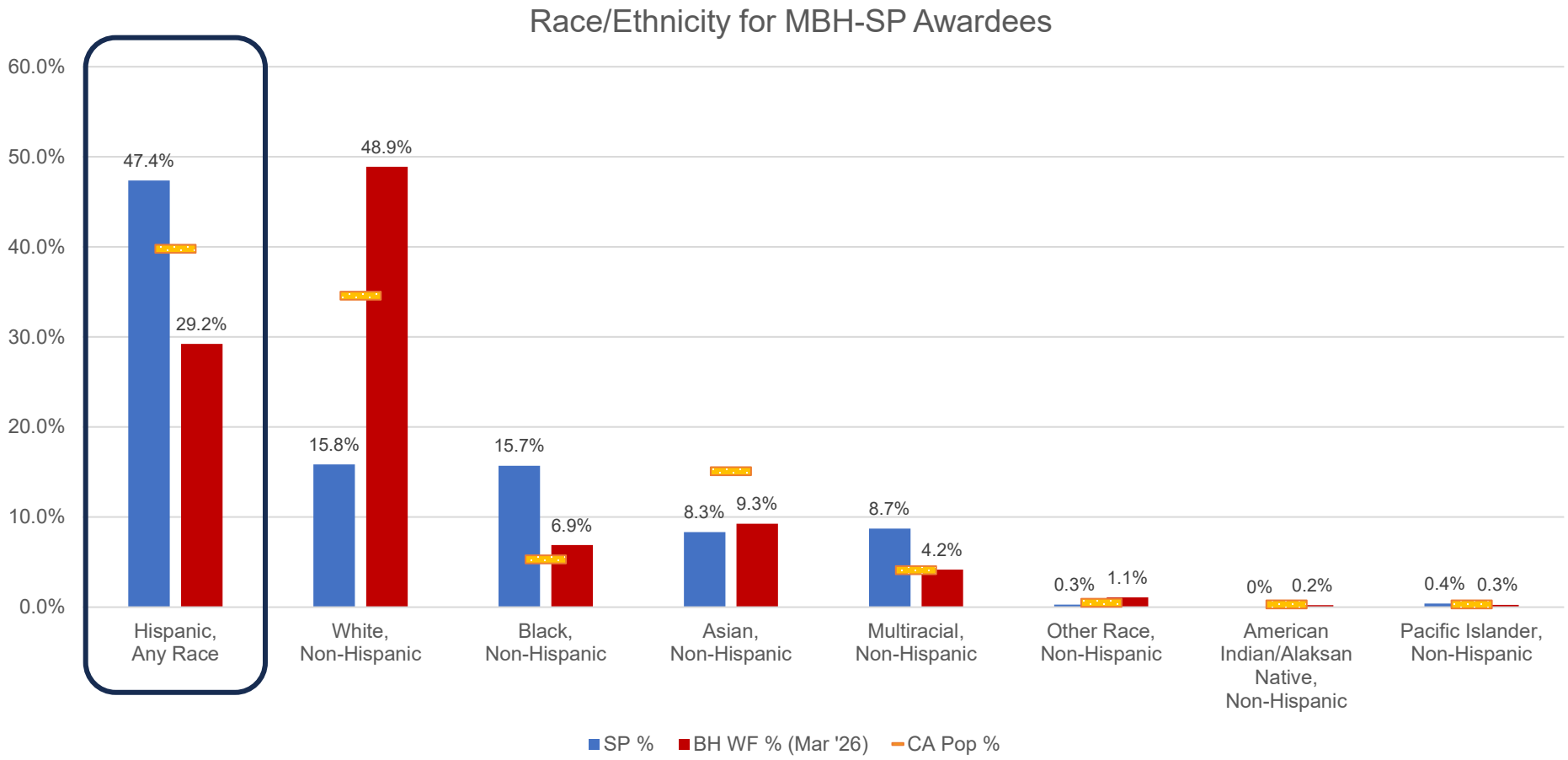


Awardee data source: MBH-SP Application Data, as of 9/3/2026

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MBH-SP Awardees Race/Ethnicity

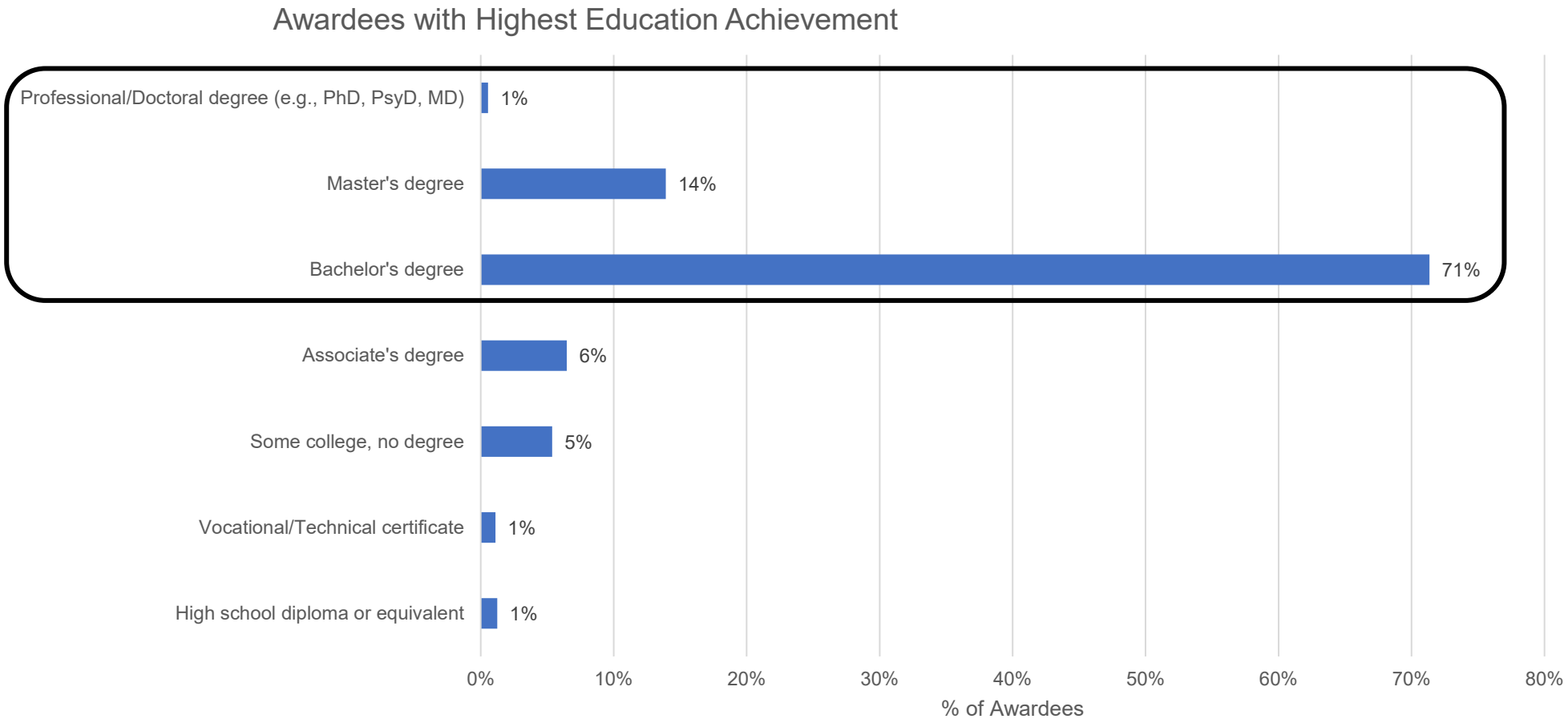
Hispanic groups (Any Race) — awards made are closing the gap between the share of the population and the existing behavioral health (BH) workforce.



Awardee data source: MBH-SP Demographic Survey, as of 9/3/2026
Number of respondents: 745
BH workforce data: HCAI Health Workforce License Renewal Survey, March 2026
Population data: US Census Bureau, 2023

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Highest Educational Attainment of Awardees

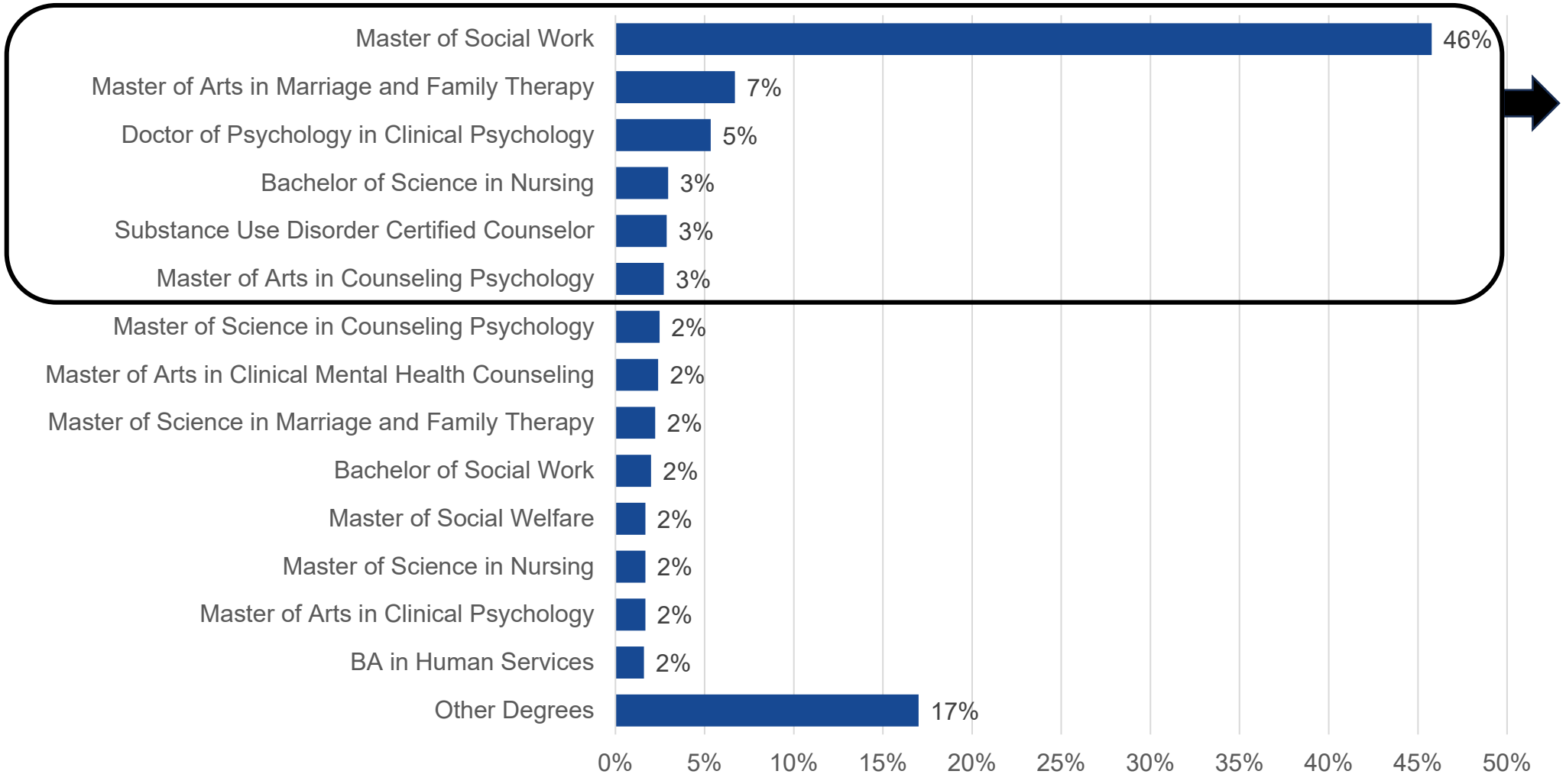


86% of MBH-SP awardees have a four-year degree or beyond.

Awardee data source: MBH-SP Baseline Survey, as of 9/3/2026
Number of awardees: 1,254, Number of respondents: n = 726

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Percent Share of Awardees by Degree Type

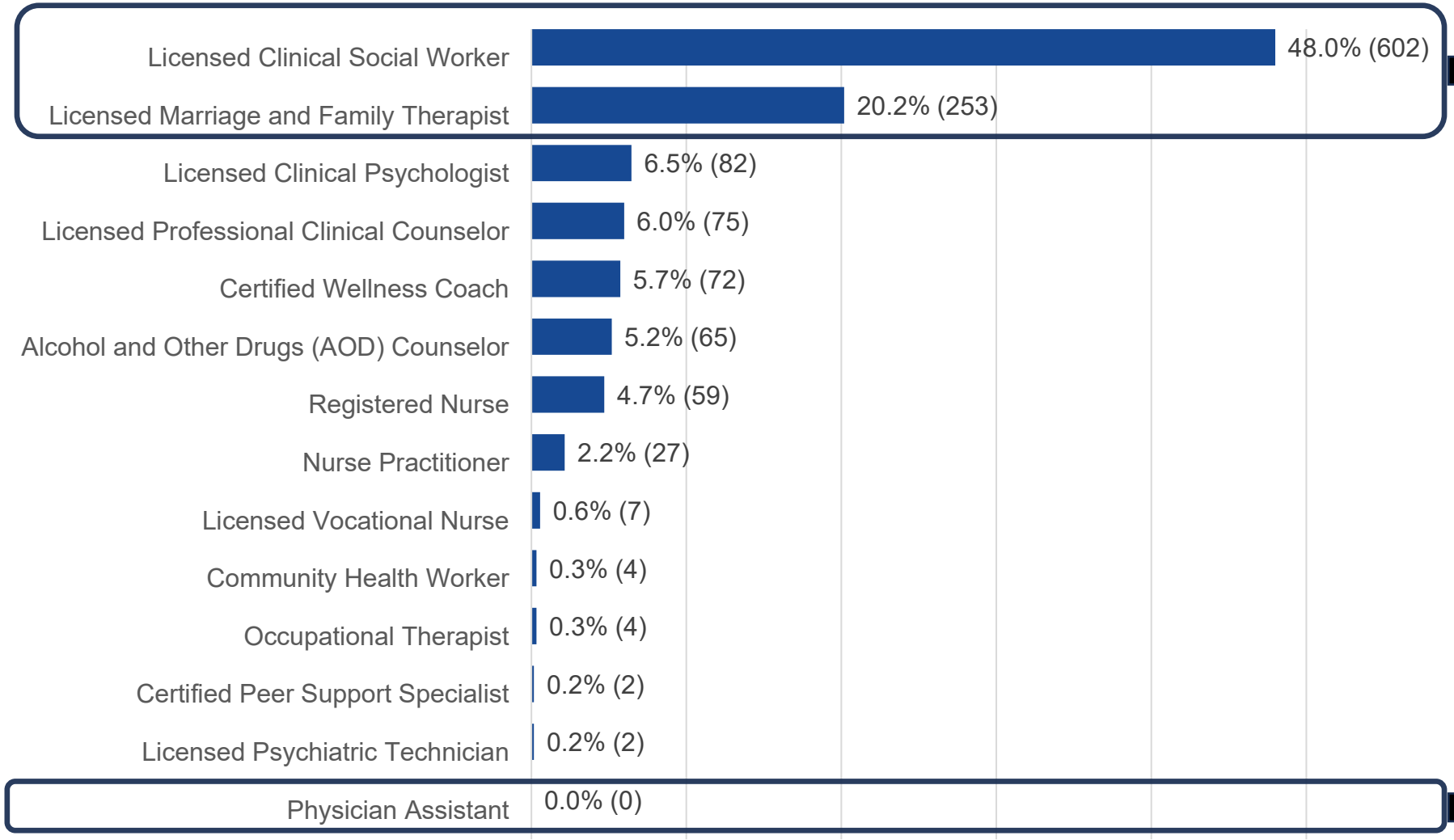


These degree types make up > 67% of the total awardees.

Awardee data source: MBH-SP Baseline Survey, as of 9/3/2026
Number of awardees: 1,254, Number of respondents: n = 726

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Percent Share of Awardees by Pursued Profession



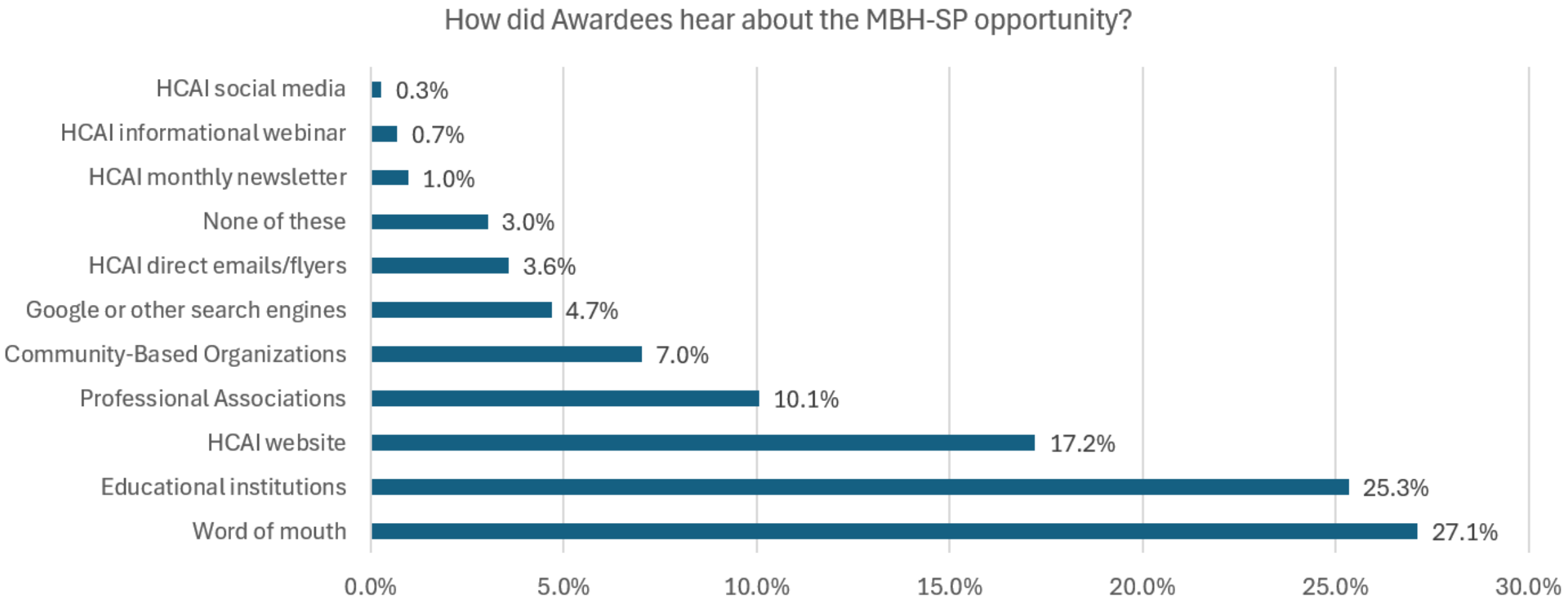
Two profession types make up > 68% (855/1,254) of the total eligible/ awardees.

Profession with 0 awards.

Awardee data source: MBH-SP Baseline Survey, as of 9/3/2026
Number of awardees: 1,254, Number of respondents: n = 726

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Reaching Our Awardees



Awardee data source: MBH-SP Baseline Survey, as of 9/3/2026
Number of awardees: 1,254, Number of respondents: n = 726

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Medi-Cal Behavioral Health Community-Based Provider Training Program

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MBH-CBPTP Recap



Supports the development of the following career pathways: Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) or Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Counselor; Community Health Workers/ Promotores/Representatives; Peer Support Specialists.



Training programs may receive up to $10,000 per practitioner participating in this program to fund tuition and/or program fees, textbooks and supplies, and professional exam fees.



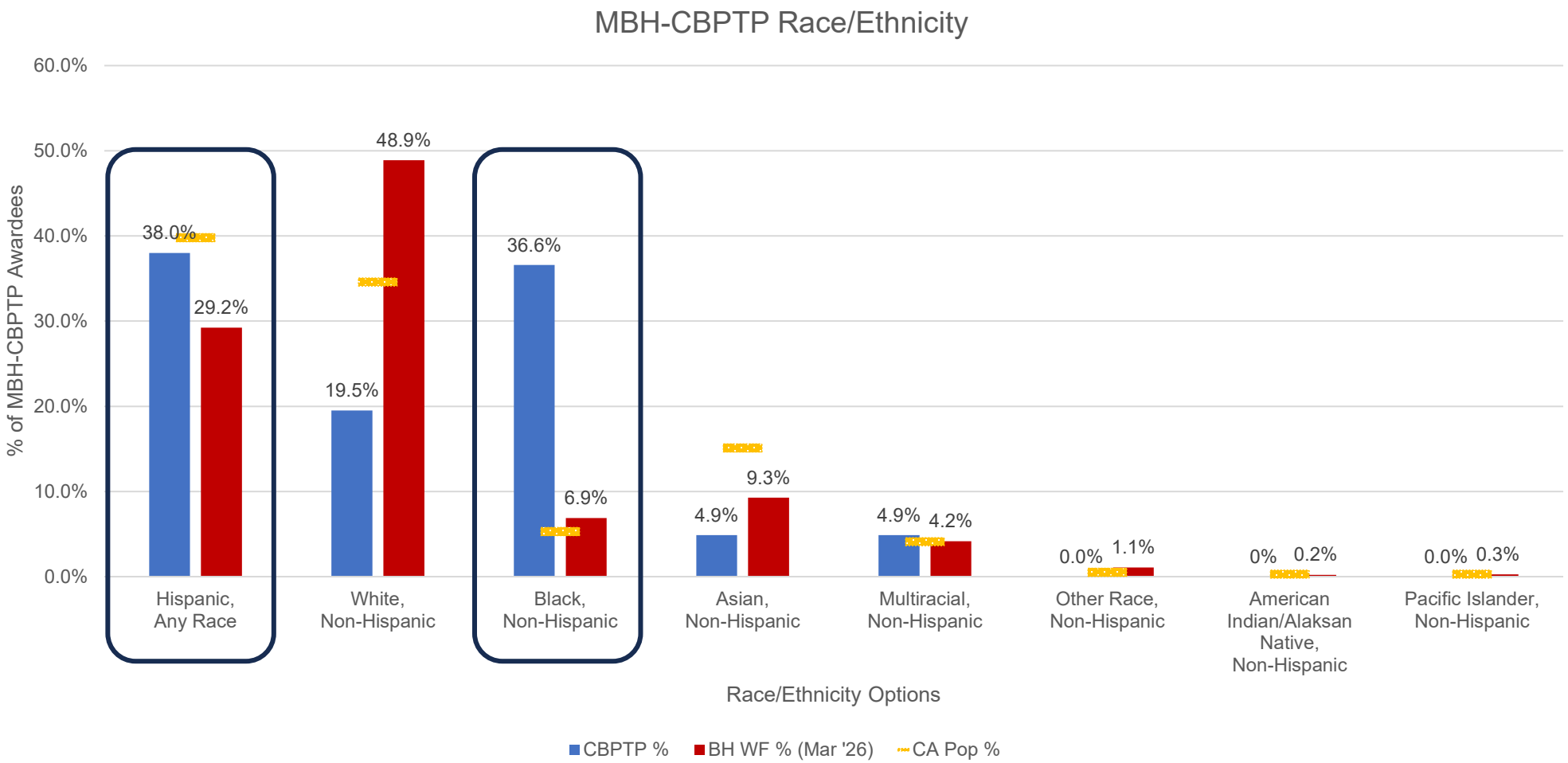
Awardees will be required to fulfill a three-year full-time service obligation in a Medi-Cal safety net setting including: FQHC, CMHC, RHC, or qualifying payor structures.

Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC)
Community Mental Health Center (CMHC)
Rural Health Clinics (RHC)

MBH-CBPTP Awardees' Race/Ethnicity

Awards made are closing the gap between the share of the population and the existing behavioral health workforce (BH WF) for Hispanic groups.

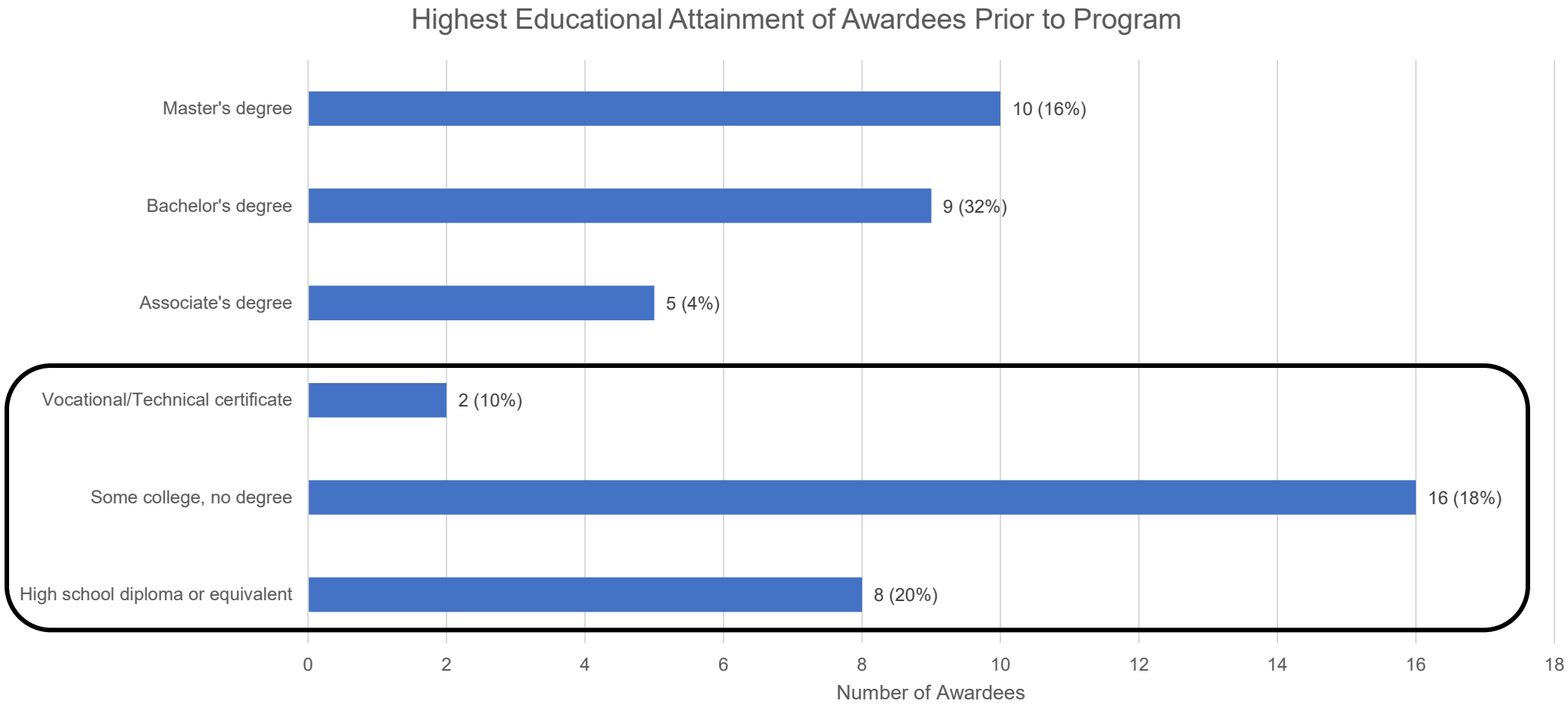
MBH-CBPTP has significant representation of Black/African groups.



Source of awardee data: MBH-CBPTP, Demographic Survey as of 9/16/26
Number of respondents: 41
BH workforce data: HCAI Health Workforce License Renewal Survey, March 2026
Population data: US Census Bureau, 2023

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Highest Educational Attainment of Awardees

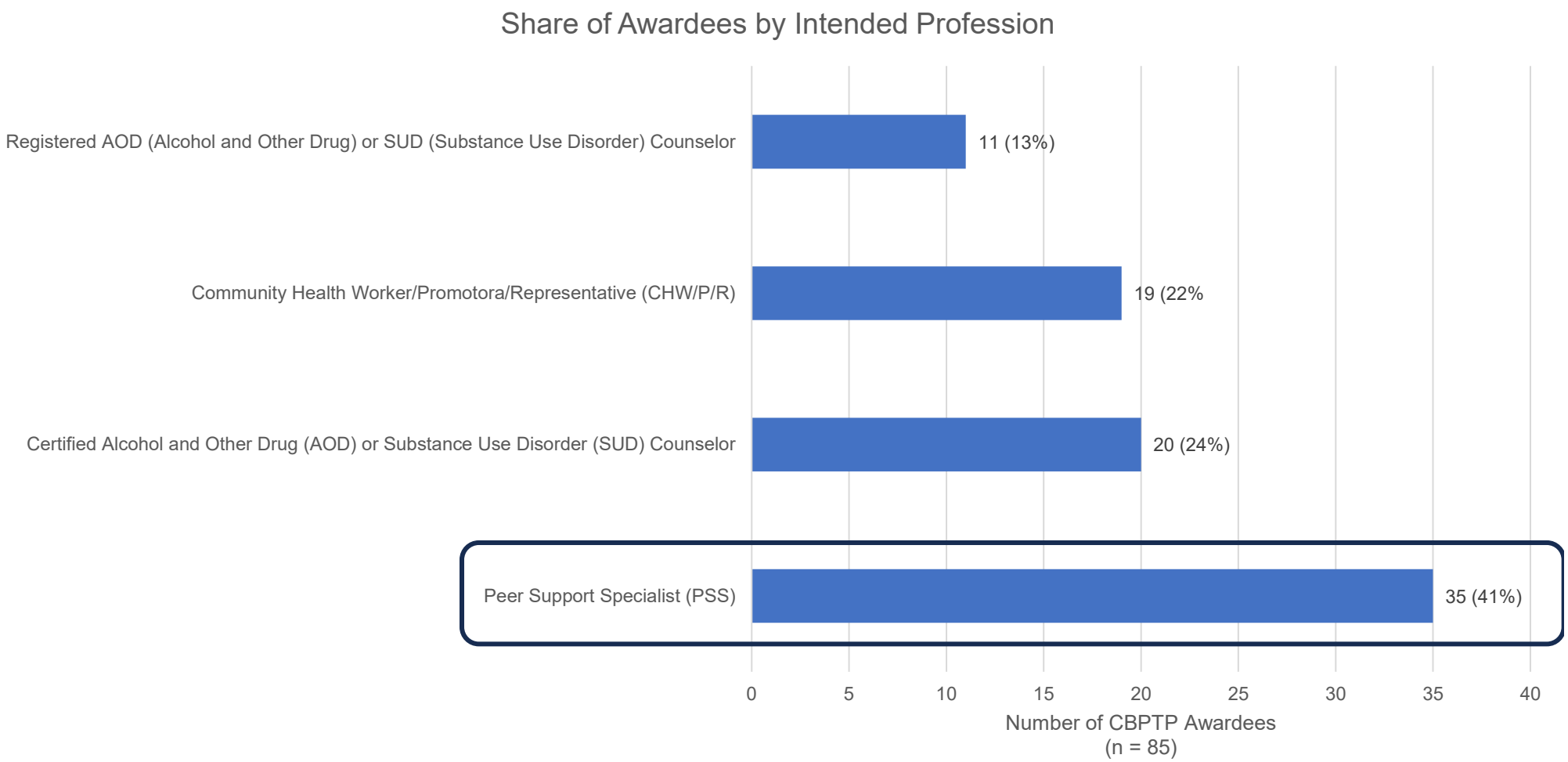


48% of CBPTP awardees do not have previous certifications or degrees.

Awardee data source: MBH-CBPTP Baseline Survey, as of 9/16/26.
n = 42

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Awardees by Intended Profession

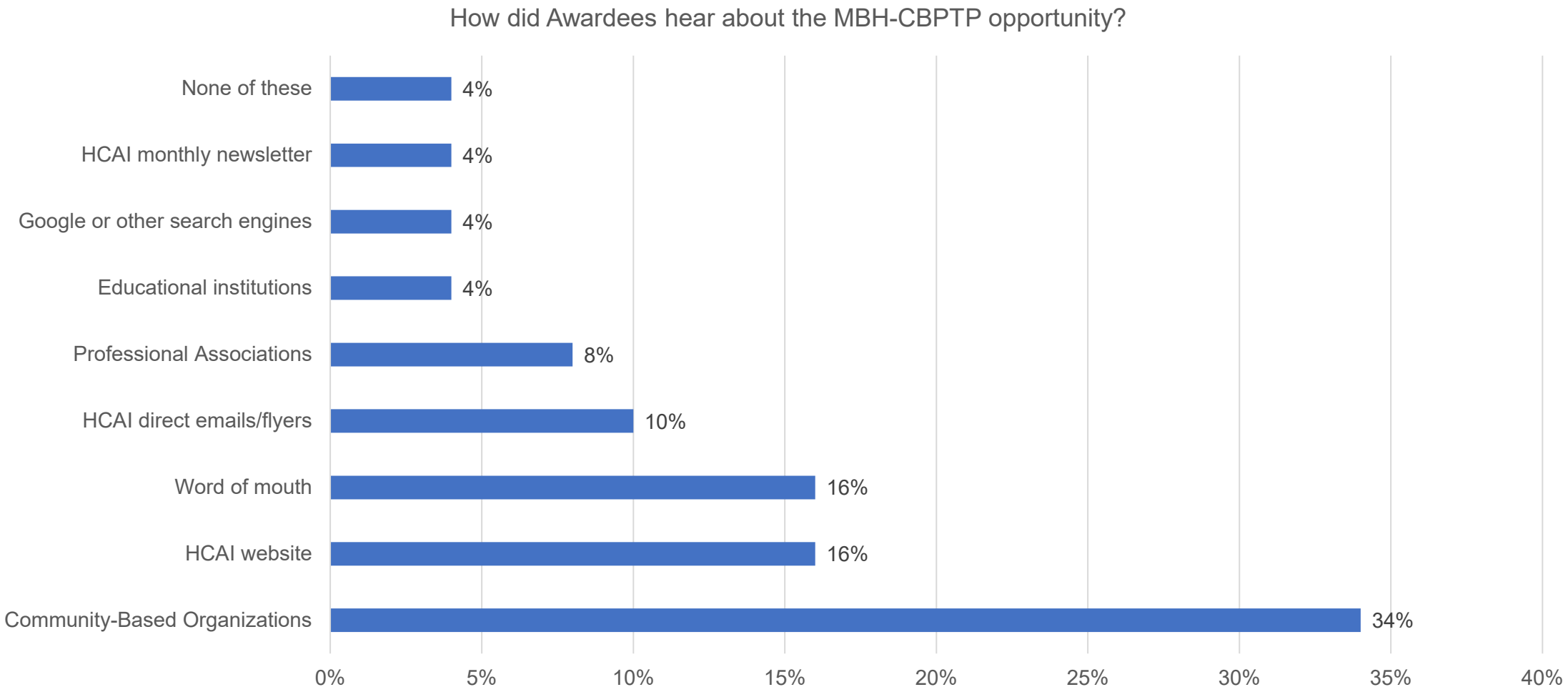


The profession with the largest awardee share is Peer Support Specialists, with 41% of awardees.

Source of awardee data: MBH-CBPTP Application Data, as of 9/3/26
n = 85

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Reaching Our Awardees



Awardee data source: MBH-CBPTP Baseline Survey as of 9/3/26
Number of awardees: 85, Number of respondents: n = 42

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Upcoming Cycles



Medi-Cal Behavioral Health – Recruitment and Retention Program (MBH-RRP): application open December 2026.



Song Brown Registered Nurse (SBRN): application cycle open now.



Small Rural Hospital Improvement Program (SHIP): application open November 2026.

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Thank you