An Overview of California’s Behavioral Health Workforce

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Why Behavioral Health Workforce Development Matters

• Demand for behavioral health services grew during the 2010s and accelerated during the COVID-19 pandemic.

• Many people have unmet need for behavioral health services.

• There are racial/ethnic and socio-economic differences in unmet need for behavioral health services.
Outline

• Defining the behavioral health workforce

• California’s workforce in behavioral health occupations

• California’s behavioral health workforce pipeline

• Conclusions and policy options
Defining the Behavioral Health Workforce
Who Constitutes the Behavioral Health Workforce?

- Primary Care Clinicians
- Behavioral Health Professionals and Paraprofessionals
- First Responders
Behavioral Health Occupations

- Licensed Professions
- Certified Professions
- Unlicensed Occupations
## Behavioral Health Occupations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Licensed Professions</th>
<th>Certified Professions</th>
<th>Unlicensed Occupations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Psychiatrists</td>
<td>Substance Use Disorder Counselors</td>
<td>Community mental health workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioners</td>
<td>Peer Providers (Medi-Cal, county-based)</td>
<td>Case managers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychologists</td>
<td></td>
<td>Service coordinators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage and Family Therapists</td>
<td></td>
<td>Social services/social work assistants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Clinical Counselors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Workers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychiatric Technicians</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
California’s Workforce in Behavioral Health Occupations
Availability of Quantitative Data

• Substantial amount of data available about psychiatrists

• Limited data on other licensed behavioral health professions

• Very limited data on certified and unlicensed behavioral health personnel
Licensed Behavioral Health Professionals, California, 2020 (n = 98,485)

- Psychiatrists: 40%
- Psychologists: 18%
- LMFT: 9%
- LPCC: 4%
- LCSW: 26%
- Psych Tech: 2%

Sources: Medical Board of California Mandatory Survey, 2020; Public Information Licensee List, 2020
# Actively Licensed Behavioral Health Professionals per 100K Population by Region, 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Psychiatrist</th>
<th>Psychologist</th>
<th>LMFT</th>
<th>LPCC</th>
<th>LCSW</th>
<th>Psych Tech</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central Coast</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>47.1</td>
<td>144.4</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>61.8</td>
<td>52.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Bay Area</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>72.6</td>
<td>135.3</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>82.8</td>
<td>17.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inland Empire</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>60.8</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>39.0</td>
<td>40.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>48.7</td>
<td>106.2</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>81.1</td>
<td><strong>8.8</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern &amp; Sierra</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>100.3</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>65.4</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>40.1</td>
<td>106.3</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>56.8</td>
<td>15.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacramento Area</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>37.6</td>
<td>98.4</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>72.8</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Diego Area</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>94.1</td>
<td><strong>7.3</strong></td>
<td>64.8</td>
<td><strong>3.1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Joaquin Valley</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>48.2</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td><strong>58.3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>44.2</td>
<td>100.8</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>65.9</td>
<td>22.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sources:** Medical Board of California Mandatory Survey, 2020; Public Information Licensee List, 2020
Age Distribution of Behavioral Health Professionals, 2105-2020

• In three behavioral health professions, over 20% of the workforce is 60 years old or older
  • Psychiatrists
  • Clinical and Counseling Psychologists
  • Marriage and Family Therapists

• In one profession, 35% of the workforce is under age 30 years
  • Substance Use Disorder Counselors

Sources: Medical Board of California Mandatory Survey, private tabulation American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2015-2019
Race/Ethnicity of Active Patient Care Psychiatrists, 2020

Source: Medical Board of California Mandatory Survey, private tabulation
Race/Ethnicity, Non-Prescribing Behavioral Health Professionals, California, 2015-2019

Source: American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2015-2019
Languages Spoken, Active Patient Care Psychiatrists, California, 2020

- Only English: 30%
- Spanish: 12%
- Cantonese or Mandarin: 9%
- Vietnamese: 3%
- Tagalog: 3%
- Korean: 3%
- Other: 12%

Source: Medical Board of California Mandatory Survey, private tabulation
Languages Spoken by Non-Prescribing Behavioral Health Professionals, California, 2015-2019

Source: American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2015-2019
California’s Behavioral Health Professions Education Pipeline
Number of 1st Year Psychiatry Residents in California, 2011-2012 to 2020-2021

Source: Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education
## Trend in Match Rates for Psychiatry Residency Programs in California, 2012 to 2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th># Positions Offered in the Match</th>
<th>% of Positions Filled</th>
<th>% of Positions Filled by U.S. MD Seniors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>99.2%</td>
<td>75.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>97.6%</td>
<td>78.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>97.8%</td>
<td>72.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>81.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>84.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>99.3%</td>
<td>81.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>82.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>82.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>99.4%</td>
<td>81.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>79.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** National Resident Matching Program
Graduates of Educational Programs for Licensed Behavioral Health Occupations, 2016 to 2020

- Doctorate Clinical Psychology
- Master Clinical/Counseling Psych
- Master MFT or MH Counsel
- Master Social Work

Source: Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System
Graduates of Educational Programs for Unlicensed Behavioral Health Occupations, 2016 to 2020

Source: Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System
Graduates of Behavioral Health Professions Educational Programs by Race/Ethnicity, 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Latino/a</th>
<th>Native Am/Hawaii</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Two or More</th>
<th>Unknown</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate – Psych</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master – Psych</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master – MFT/Couns</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master – Social Work</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bach – Social Work</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psych Tech</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUD Counselor</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System
Conclusions and Policy Options
Conclusions

• Some regions of California have small numbers of behavioral health professionals per capita relative to the state overall.

• Many behavioral health professionals are at or near retirement age.

• The behavioral workforce does not reflect the racial/ethnic and linguistic diversity of the state’s population, especially in professions that require a doctoral degree.

• Numbers of graduates of educational programs will not be sufficient to replace retirees or meet growing demand for behavioral health services.

• Existing sources of data are not sufficient to fully assess California’s behavioral health workforce needs.
Recommendations specific to behavioral health

• Pilot the Cal-HOSA Prevention and Early Intervention Mental Health and Workforce Development Model in middle and high schools
• Promote careers in behavioral health among college students
• Increase funding for stipends and scholarships for behavioral health professions students
• Increase psychiatry residency positions
• Establish a new psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner education program
• Expand train-the-trainer model for increase primary care providers’ ability to meet behavioral health workforce needs
• Scale engagement of peer providers through certification, training, and reimbursement

Source: California Future Health Workforce Commission, 2019
Other recommendations pertinent to the behavioral health workforce

• Expand pipeline programs for low-income and underrepresented students
• Increase funding for post-bac programs for medical school reapplicants from underserved communities
• Recruit and train students from underserved areas to practice in community health centers in their home regions
• Expand the PRIME program at UC medical schools

Source: California Future Health Workforce Commission, 2019
Questions and Answers