

BHECN Inaugural Behavioral Health Workforce Summit

Developing a Statewide Strategy

Marley Doyle, MD

BHECN

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
EDUCATION CENTER
OF NEBRASKA



University of Nebraska
Medical Center™

Marley Doyle, MD

**Director, Behavioral Health Education of Nebraska
(BHECN)**

 @drmarleydoyle.blsky.social

 Marley Doyle MD

 @DrMarleyDoyle



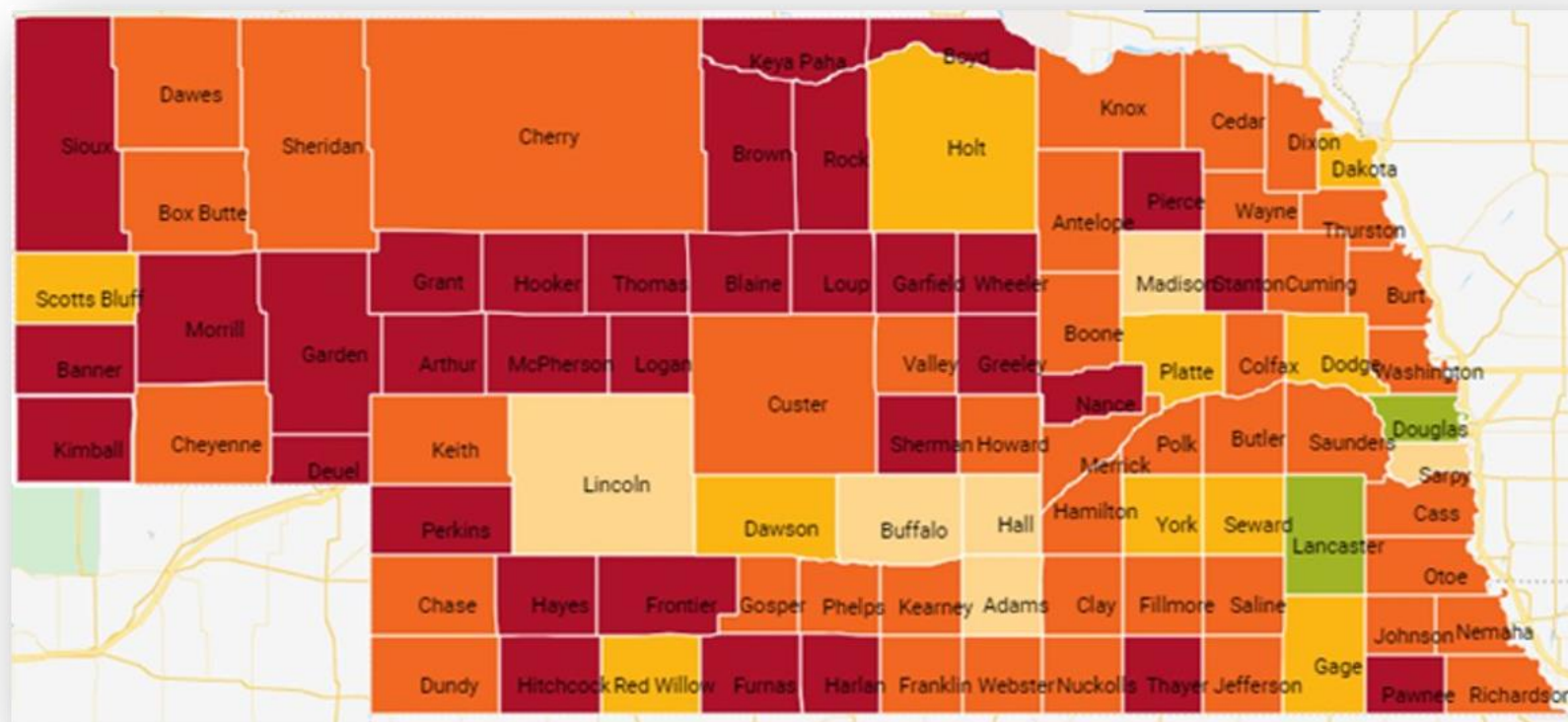
Objectives

- Learn about national behavioral health workforce trends and state-specific interventions
- Connect state workforce leaders and identify priority workforce needs in Nebraska
- Develop a collaborative, statewide behavioral health workforce plan based on input and feedback

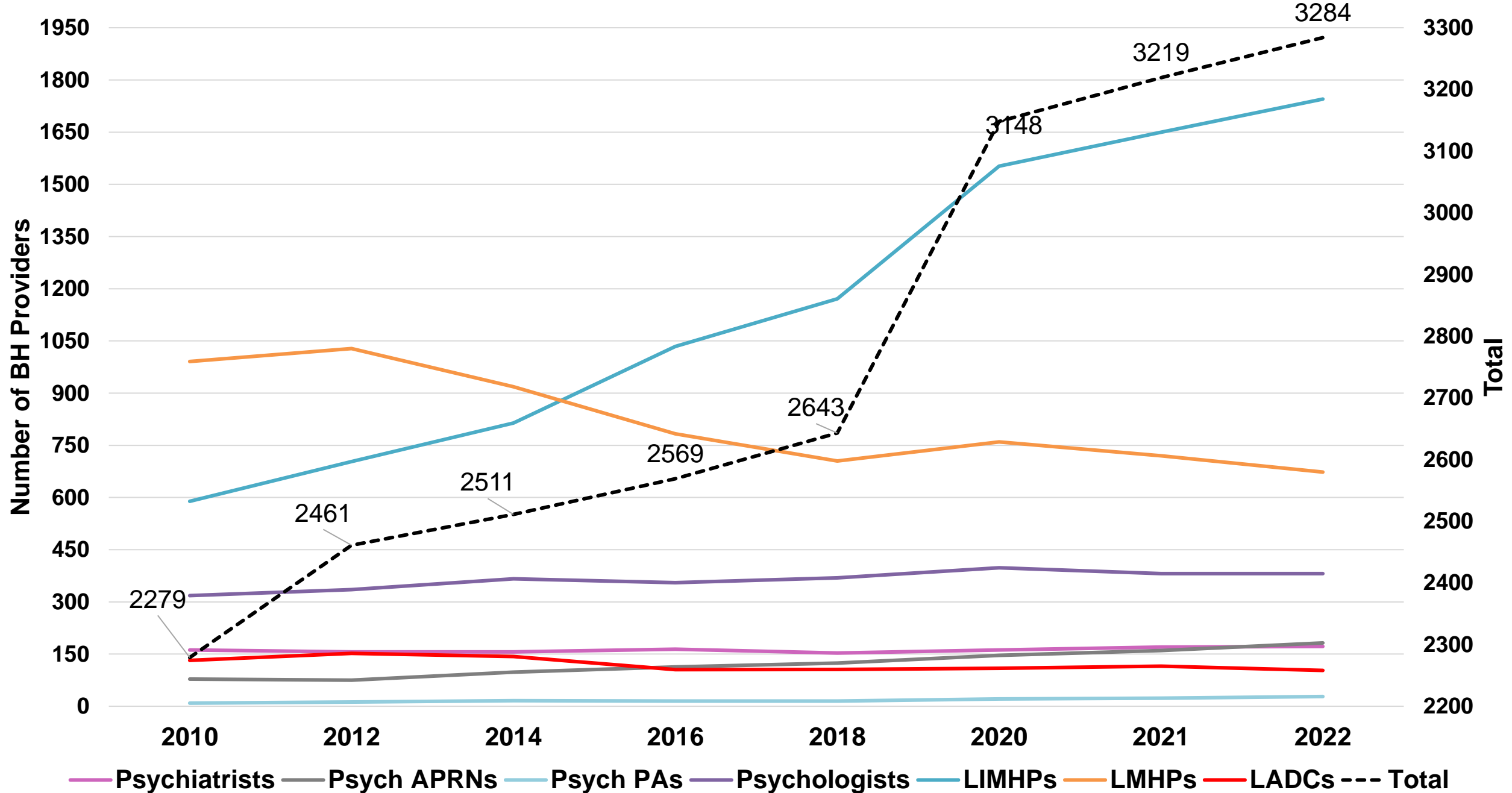
Workforce Composition and Distribution

- **In 2023, more than half of Americans live in a Mental Health Professional Shortage Area.⁵**

In Nebraska, 95% of counties are designated as Mental Health Profession Shortage Areas.



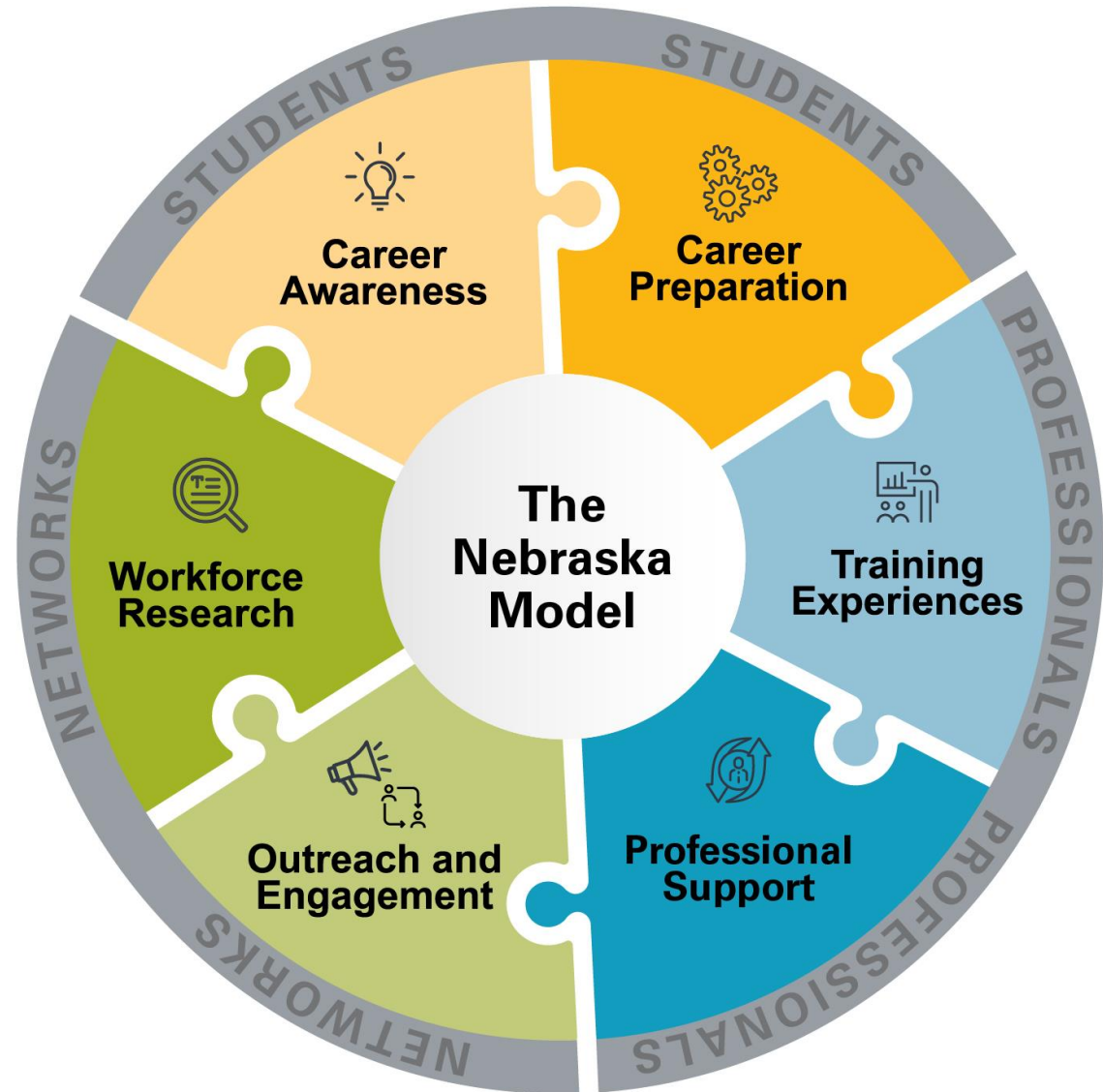
Nebraska BH Providers Trends



Change in Licensure over time

Year	2010	2012	2014	2016	2018	2020	2021	2022	Difference 2022-2010	% Difference 2022- 2010
Psychiatrists	162	156	156	164	153	162	170	172	10	6%
Psych APRNs	78	75	98	113	124	146	160	182	104	133%
Psych PAs	9	12	16	15	15	21	23	28	19	211%
Psychologist s	318	335	366	355	369	398	381	381	63	20%
LIMHPs	589	703	814	1034	1171	1552	1650	1745	1156	196%
LMHPs	991	1028	918	783	705	760	720	673	-318	-32%
LADCs	132	152	143	105	106	109	115	103	-29	-22%
Total	2279	2461	2511	2569	2643	3148	3219	3284	1005	44%

The Nebraska Model

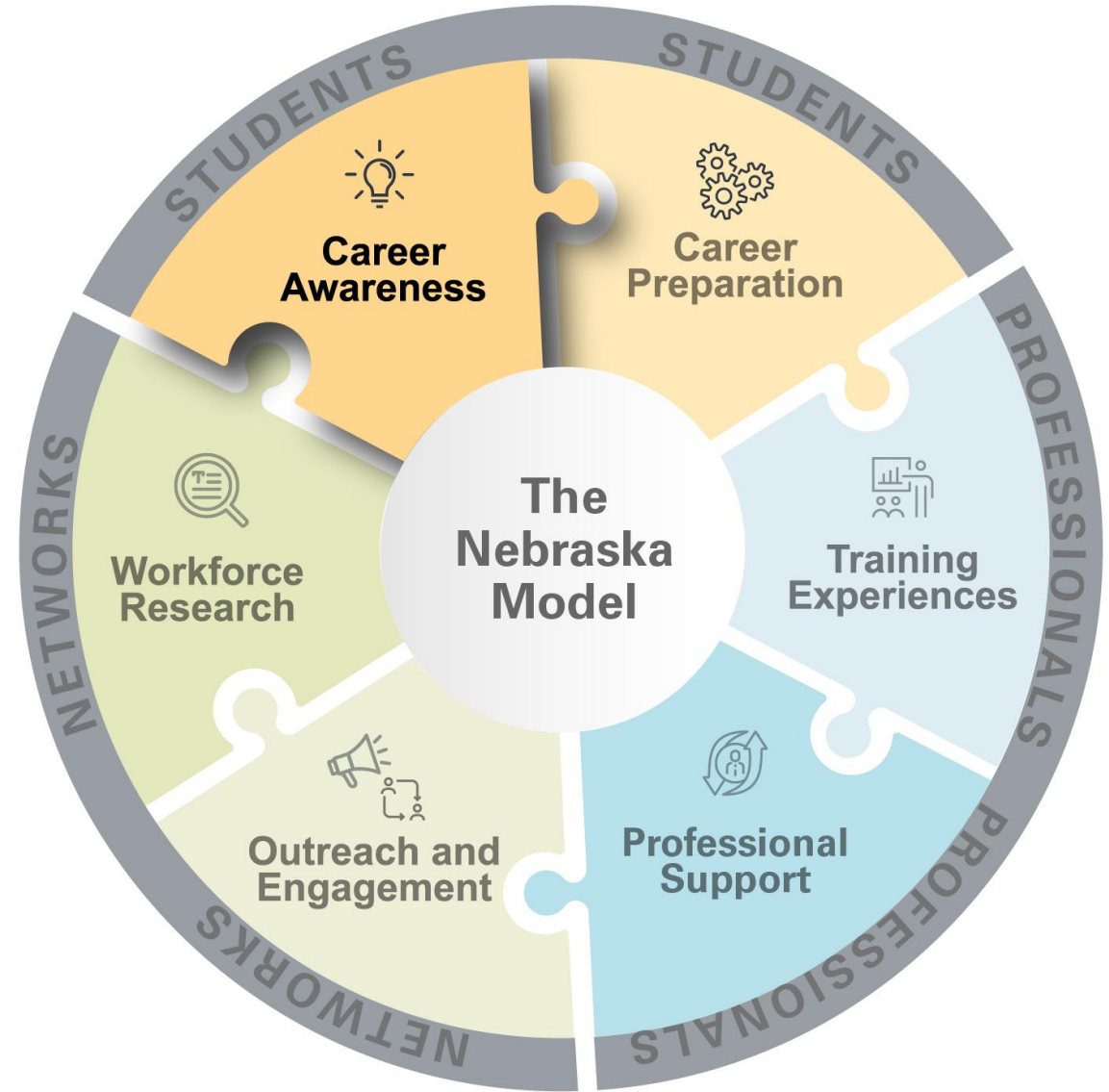


BHECN

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
EDUCATION CENTER
OF NEBRASKA

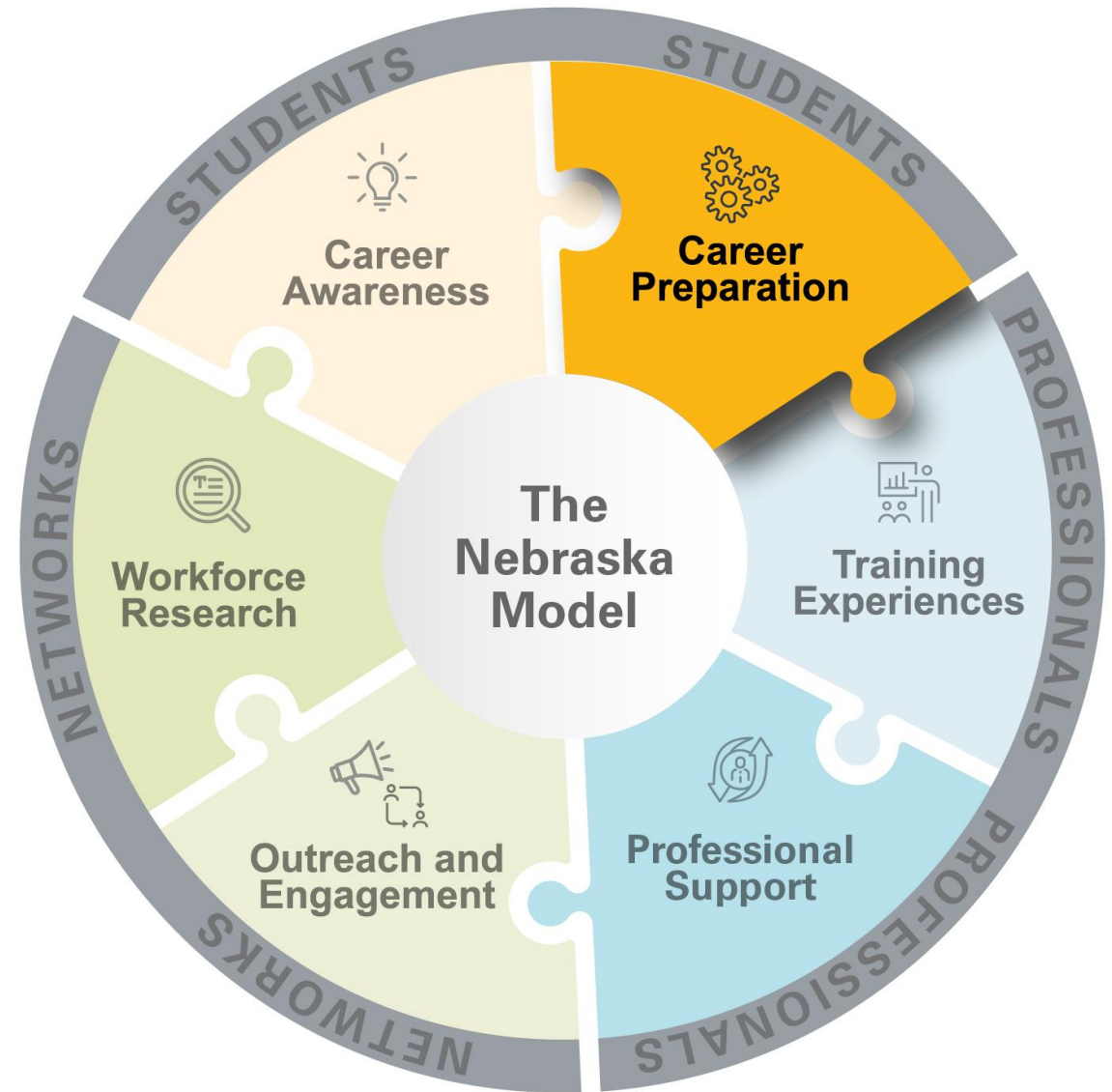
The Nebraska Model Career Awareness

- 15–20 students at FARM Camp (Panhandle)
- uBEATS Behavioral Health Careers Module
- UNMC High School Alliance



The Nebraska Model Career Preparation

- 10 BHECN Scholars (Undergraduates)
- 50 Mentor/Mentee pairs

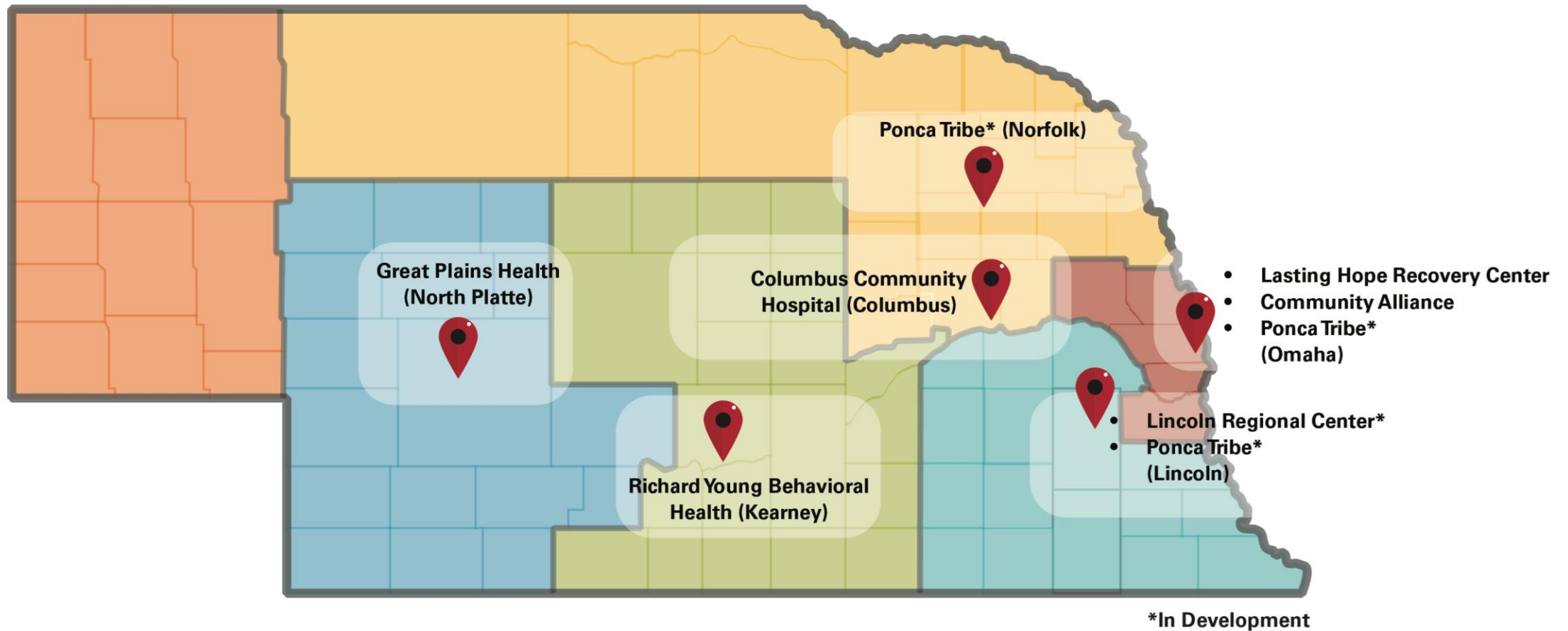


The Nebraska Model Training Experiences

- 9 Psychiatry Residents
- 15 Psych NP Supervisors
- 8 Psychology Trainees
- 35 Master's-Level Trainees

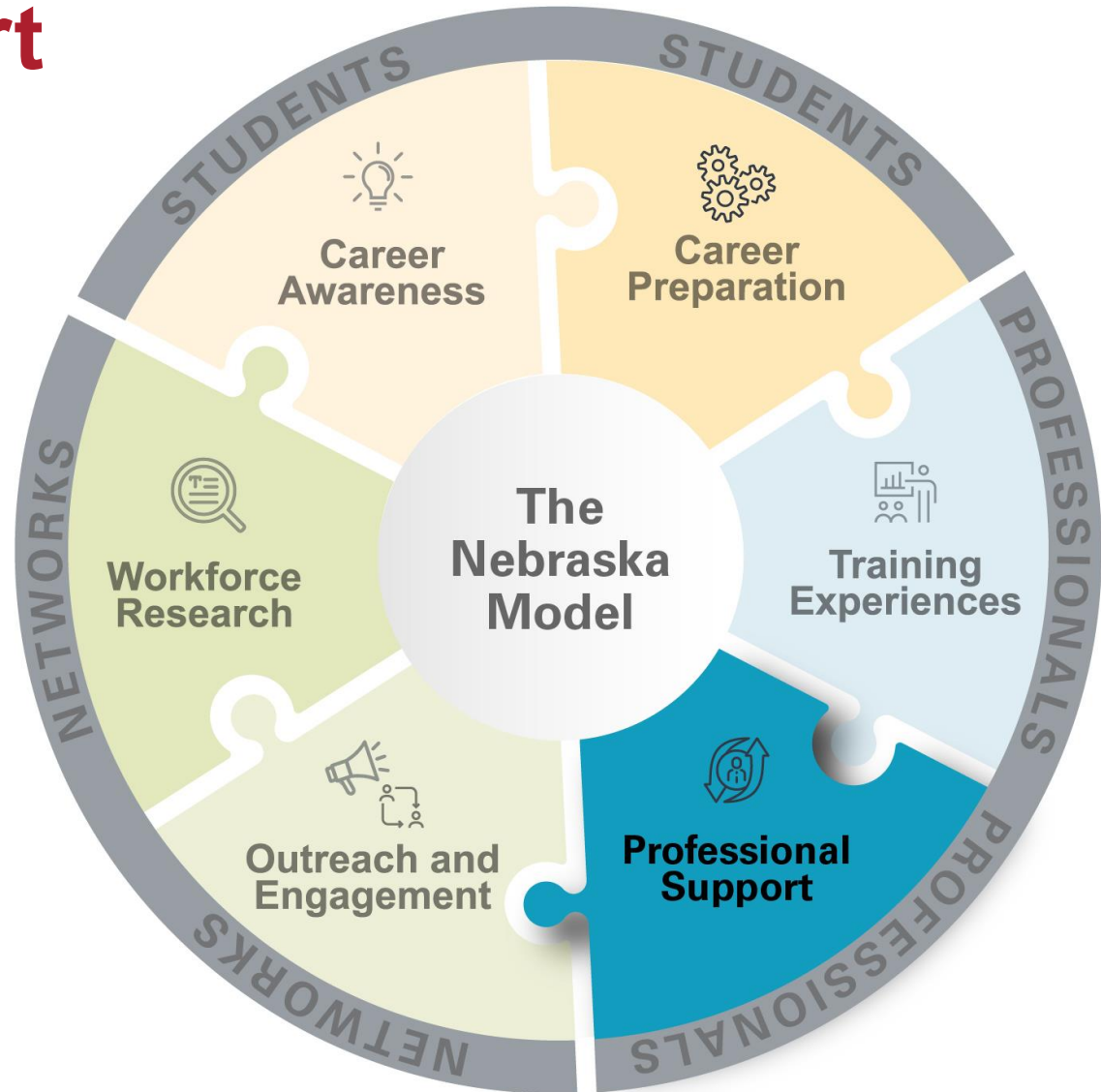


BHECN Training Partners



The Nebraska Model Professional Support

- 30 professionals supported via Lifelong Learning Fund
- 40 Supervisors for Master's-Level Trainees via the Graduate Trainee Stipend Program
- CE Training Opportunities



BHECN

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
EDUCATION CENTER
OF NEBRASKA

The Nebraska Model Outreach & Engagement

- Annual Policy Forum
- Nebraska Behavioral Health Education Partnership
- Medicaid Audit Convenings
- Behavioral Health Center Workforce Alliance

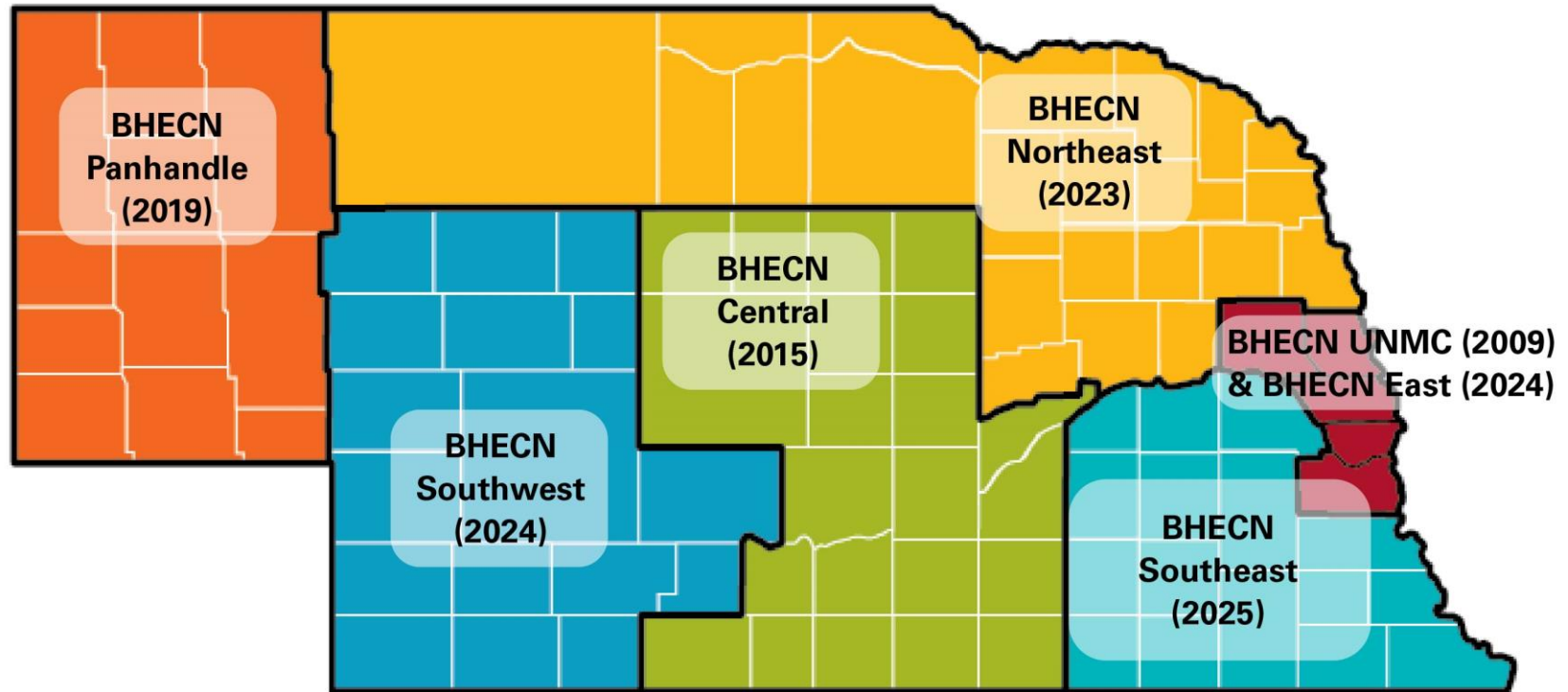


BHECN

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
EDUCATION CENTER
OF NEBRASKA

BHECN Sites

- Panhandle
- Southwest
- Central
- Northeast
- Southeast
- East



BHECN Partnerships

- Statewide

- Nebraska Behavioral Health Education Partnership (NEBHEP)
- Department of Health & Human Services (NE DHHS)
- Nebraska Association of Behavioral Health Organizations (NABHO)
- National Alliance on Mental Illness Nebraska (NAMI)
- Nebraska Behavioral Health Workforce Partnership

- National

- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
- Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)
- Behavioral Health Workforce Alliance (BHWCA)
- National Association for Rural Mental Health (NARMH)
- Behavioral Health Workforce Research Center (BHWRC)
- CDC Foundation

The Nebraska Model Workforce Research

- Workforce Dashboard tracks 7 licensed provider types
- Annual updates using licensure and Health Professions Tracking Service (HPTS) data
- New investments in program evaluation



BHECN

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
EDUCATION CENTER
OF NEBRASKA

Dashboard

<https://app1.unmc.edu/publichealth/bhecn/#/home>

UNMC | [Nebraska Medicine](#)

[ARPA](#)

[Legislative Reports](#)

Behavioral Health Education Center of Nebraska



[Career Pathways](#) ▾ [Education and Training](#) ▾ [Research, Data & Policy](#) ▾ [Rural Sites](#) ▾ [BHECN Model](#)



Nebraska Behavioral Health Workforce Dashboard i

Psychiatrists & Advanced Practice Providers

Psychiatrists



Nurse Practitioners



Physician Assistants



Psychologists & Therapists

Psychologists



LIMHPs



LMHPs



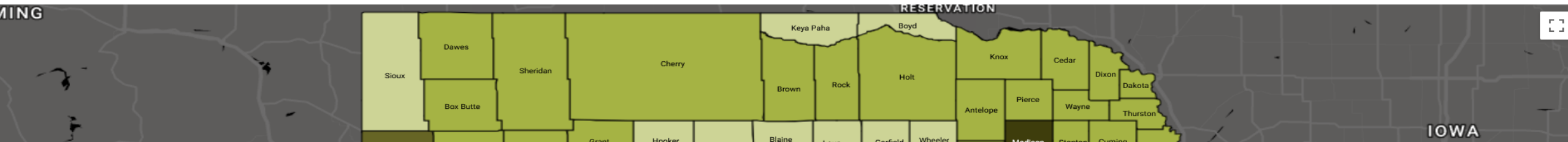
LADCs



[See All Providers](#)

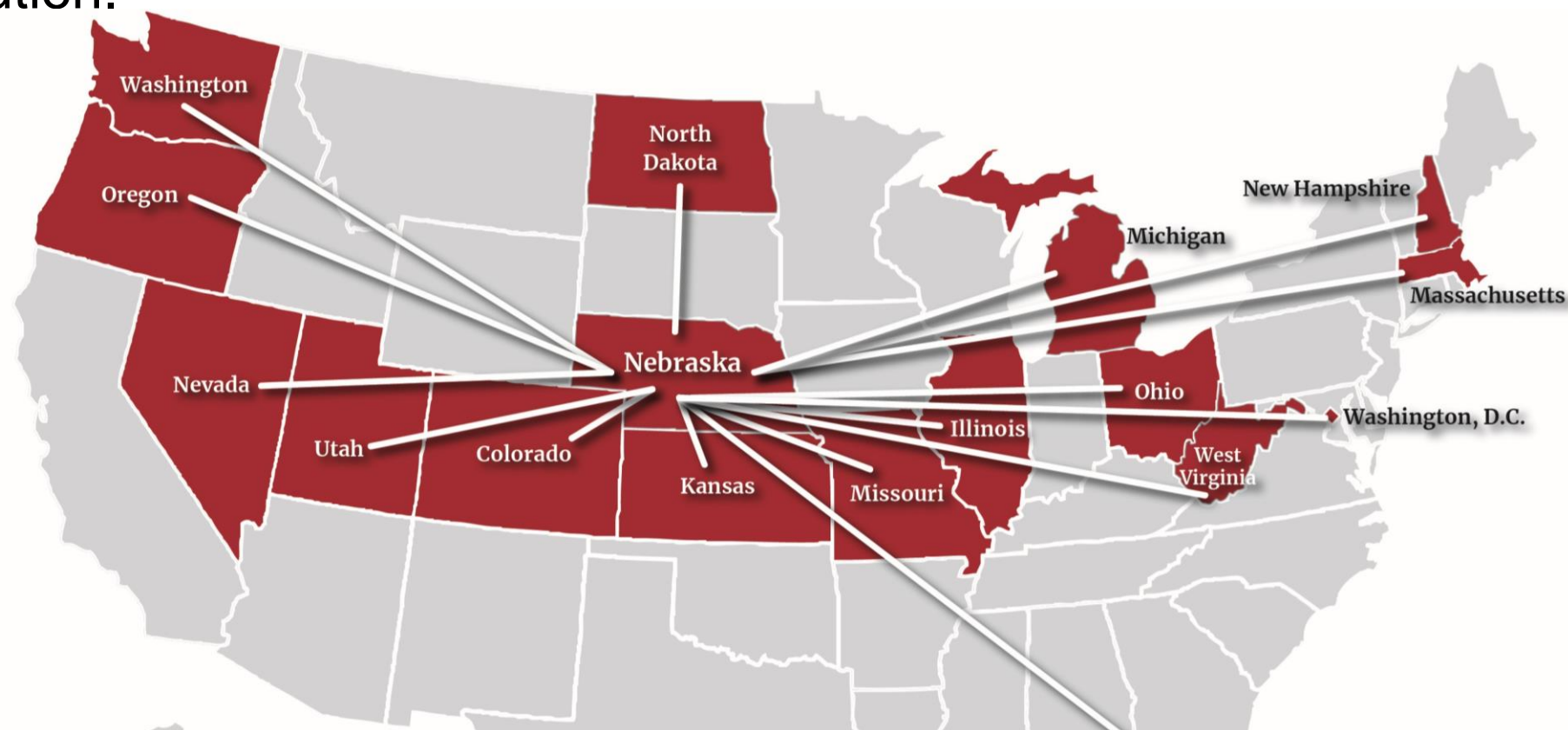
All Providers ?

Select Provider Type: [All Providers](#) ▾ Select Behavioral Health Region: [Nebraska Regions](#) ▾ Select County/Countries: [Select Counties](#) ▾ [Reset Map](#)



Why It Matters

- The Nebraska Model is a replicable framework.
- A comprehensive strategy utilizes resources most effectively.
- Funding and interventions have a proven impact on workforce growth and distribution.



BHECN

Next Steps

- White paper detailing discussion points
- **SAVE THE DATE: APRIL 24, 2026**
 - Annual convening in which this group comes together to discuss priority areas
- Ad hoc meetings/committees to discuss time-sensitive topics affecting workforce

3 Questions to Consider

- 1. What are the most significant challenges or gaps you are currently experiencing within this area of focus that impacts the behavioral health workforce?**
- 2. Considering this area of focus, what collaborative strategies or innovative solutions can we implement to enhance the behavioral health workforce in Nebraska?**
- 3. How can we improve communication, information sharing, and support among stakeholders in this area of focus to create a stronger, more connected behavioral health workforce?**

Social Media



facebook.com/BHECN

instagram.com/bhecn

linkedin.com/company/bhecn

vimeo.com/bhecn

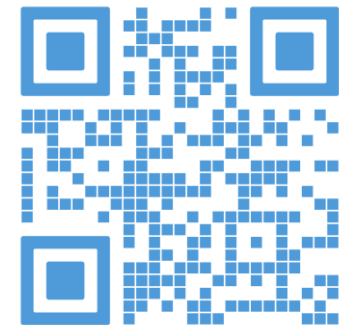
x.com/BHECN1

bit.ly/BHECNNews



NEW!

Bluesky
@BHECN.bsky.social





Laura Galbreath
Director, Behavioral Health and Workforce



Rebekah Falkner
Senior Policy Associate

BHECN

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
EDUCATION CENTER
OF NEBRASKA



University of Nebraska
Medical Center™



BHECN | BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
EDUCATION CENTER
OF NEBRASKA



Mind the Gap: How States Are Tackling Behavioral Health Workforce Shortages

Laura Galbreath, MPP

Director, Behavioral Health and Workforce

Rebekah Falkner, LMSW

Senior Policy Associate





RF

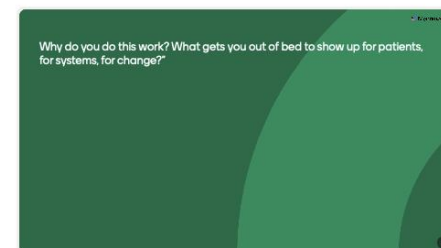
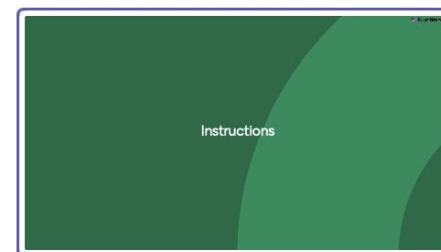


Menti

Nebraska behavioral he...



Choose a slide to present



Join at menti.com | use code **3764 8100**



Instructions

Go to

www.menti.com

Enter the code

3764 8100



Or use QR code



Join at menti.com | use code **3764 8100**

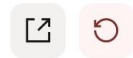


0/2



Menti

Nebraska behavioral he...



Choose a slide to present



Join at menti.com | use code **3764 8100**



What piece of the workforce puzzle do you work in?



0/2

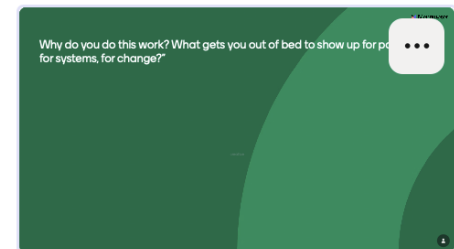
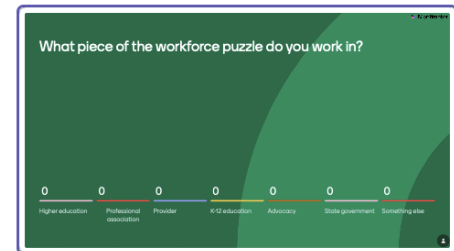
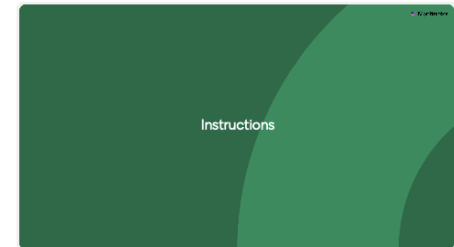


Menti

Nebraska behavioral he...



Choose a slide to present



Workforce Policy Landscape and State Strategies



NATIONAL ACADEMY
FOR STATE HEALTH POLICY

nashp.org

Behavioral Health Work Is Changing

Where Care Happens

- CCBHCs
- Mobile Crisis / Crisis Stabilization
- Telehealth
- Primary & Specialty Care
- In community (schools, nursing facilities)

How Work is Done

- Team-based care
- Interdisciplinary collaboration
- Working at top of license
- Integrated care across systems

Who's Doing the Work

- Peer support & lived experience providers
- Licensed MH/SUD Clinicians
- Crisis counselors and techs
- New credentialed roles (e.g., CHWs, associate-level staff)

A System in Motion: Policy Shifts Shaping the BH Workforce



Unprecedented Focus on the Behavioral Health Workforce



Constrained Resources & Systemic Stressors



Shared Responsibility Across Sectors



State Levers Are Driving Action

- **State Planning, Workgroups, and Committees:** Coordinating efforts across agencies and stakeholders to develop targeted workforce solutions.
- **Investments Targeting Identified Shortages:** Allocating resources based on specific workforce gaps to enhance service delivery.
- **Licensure Data Collection and Analysis:** Gathering and analyzing licensure data to inform workforce planning and policy decisions.
- **Investing in Education and Training:** Supporting educational initiatives and training programs to build a skilled workforce.
- **Pathway Programs for Rural and Underserved Populations:** Creating targeted pathways to attract and retain workers in high-need areas.
- **Leveraging Telehealth and Workforce Extenders:** Expanding access to care through telehealth and utilizing support roles to extend workforce capacity.
- **Supporting Community-Based Workforce:** Strengthening community-based roles and fostering local recruitment and retention.
- **Facilitating Practice at the Top of the License:** Promoting full utilization of practitioners' skills to enhance service delivery and reduce workforce strain.



Tracking What Matters: Behavioral Health Workforce Data for Systems Change

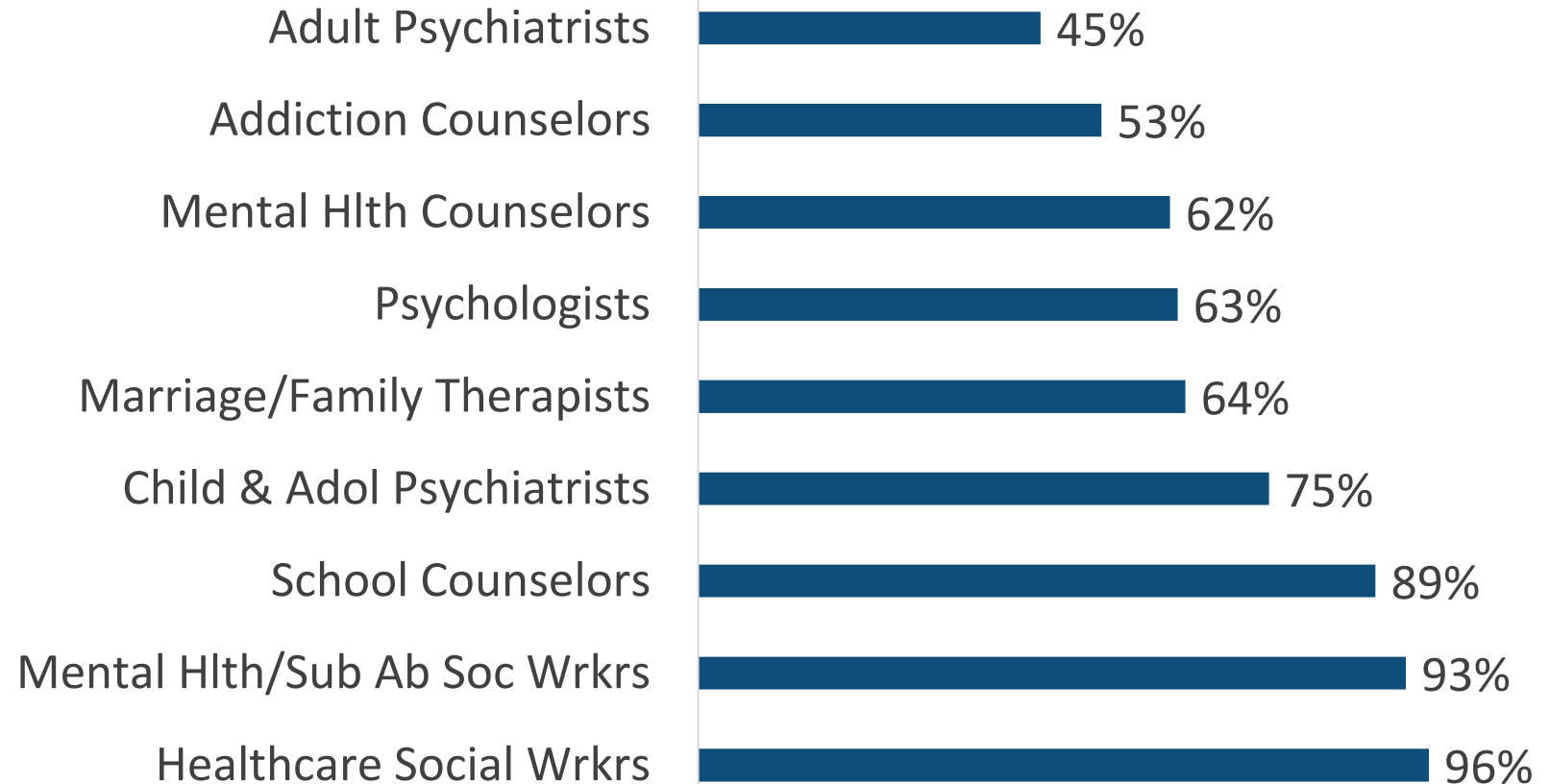
Behavioral Health Workforce Projected Adequacy (2036)

2036 projections

overall
adequacy **79%**

occupations with
shortages **9**

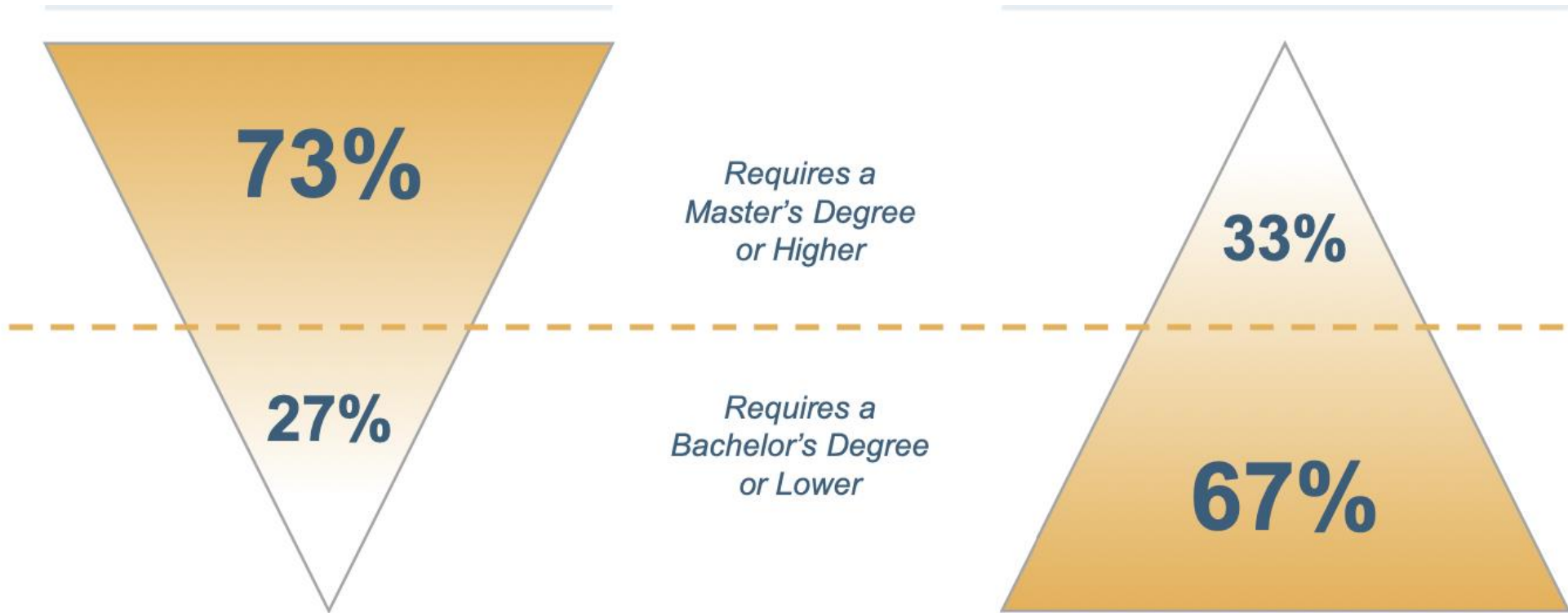
occupations in
surplus **3**



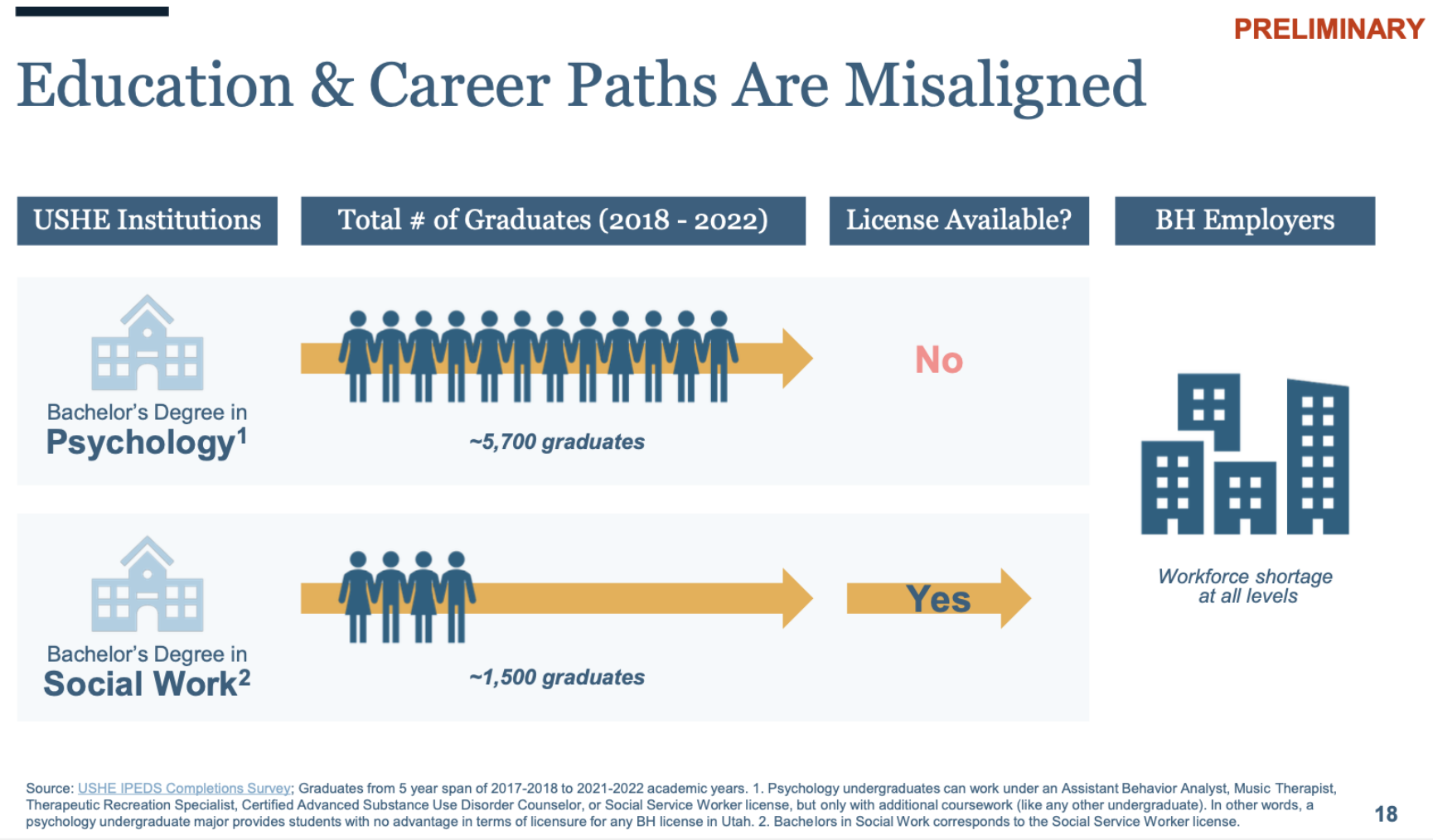
<https://data.hrsa.gov/topics/health-workforce/workforce-projections>

*Adequacy estimates do not include all occupations within the field due to data limitations

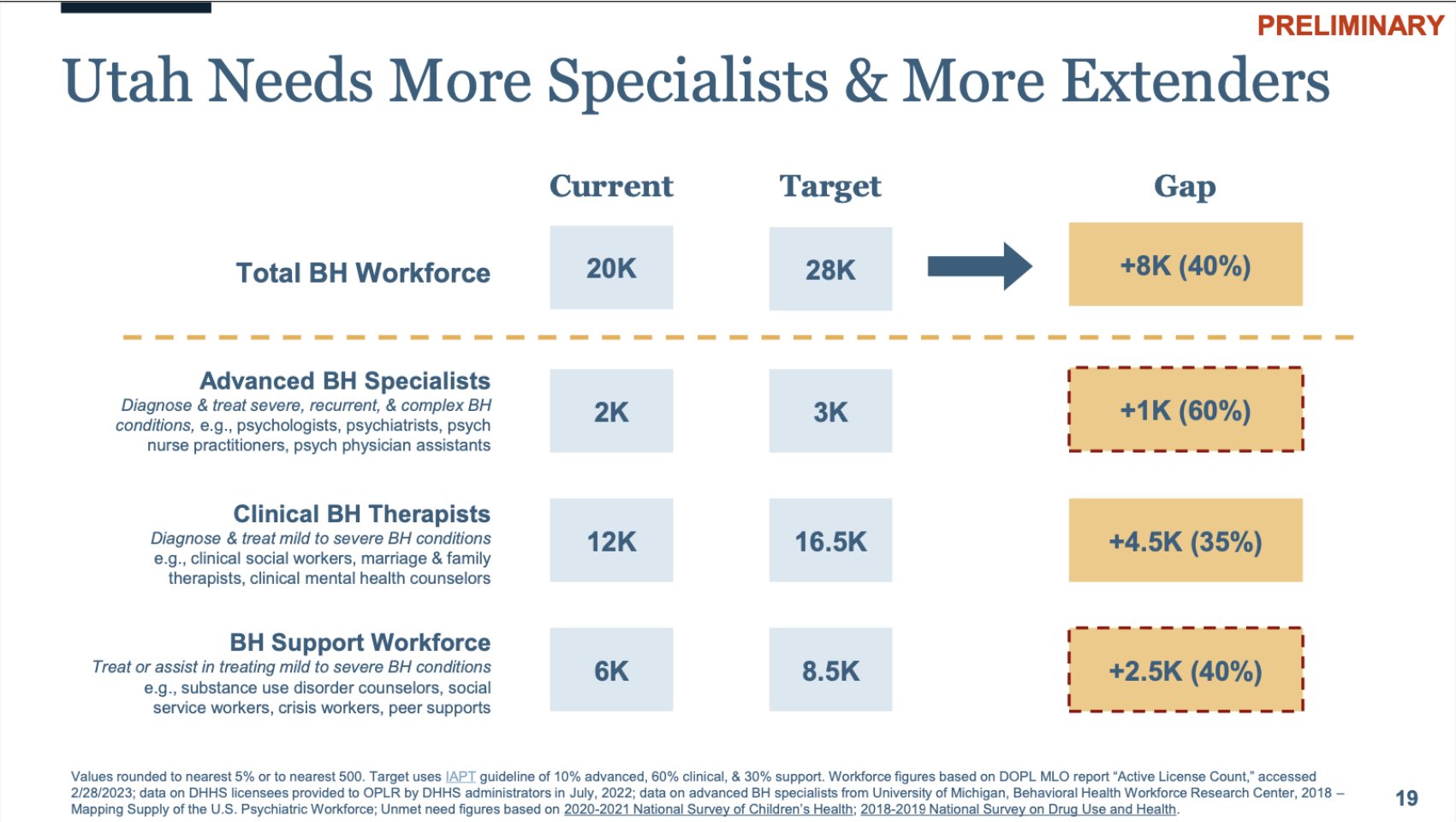
Utah: Behavioral Health Lacks Extenders



Utah: Inconsistent Education and Career Pathways



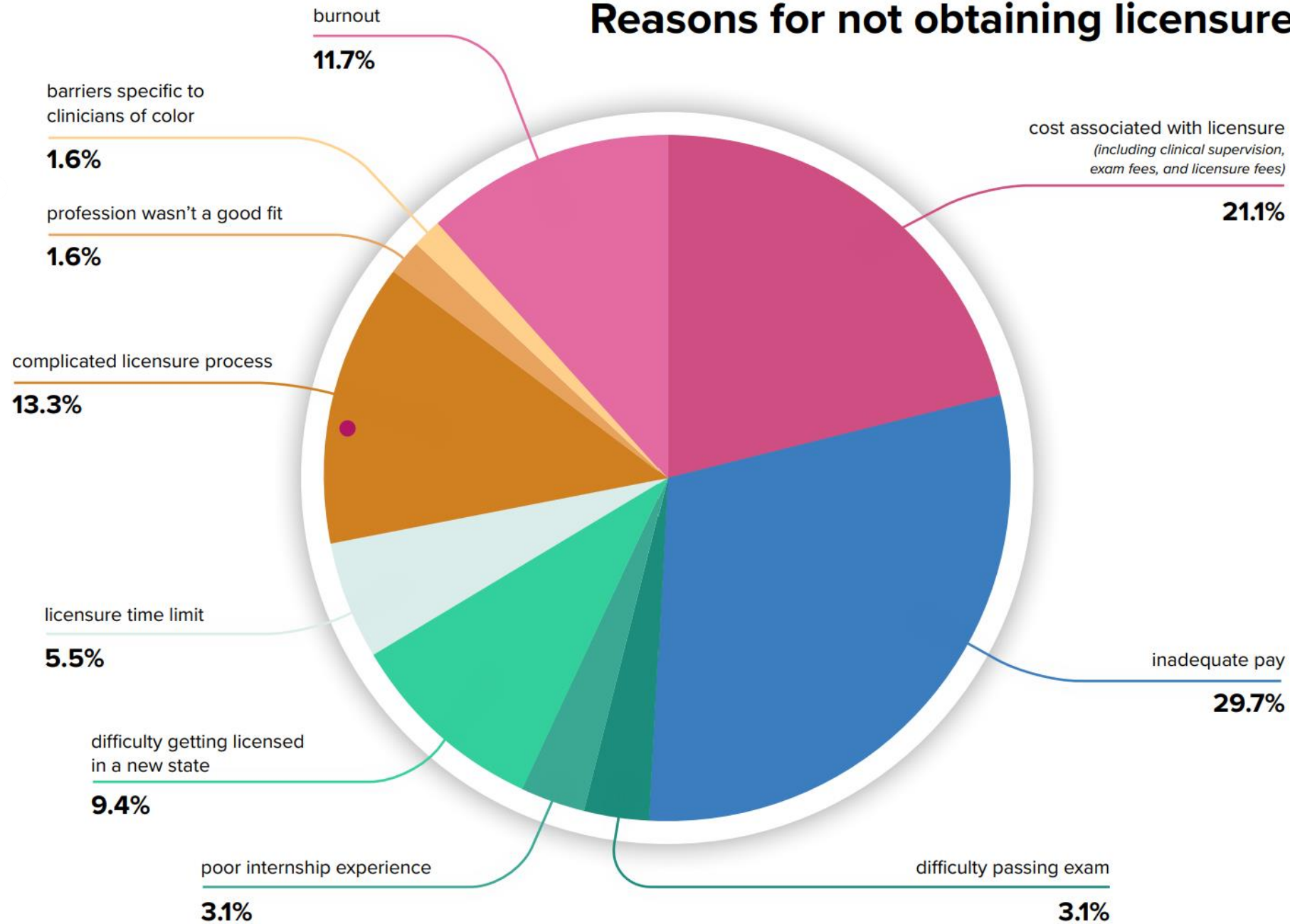
Utah: Demanding Need for Behavioral Workforce Expansion





Unlocking Workforce Capacity Through Supervision Policy

Reasons for not obtaining licensure



State Strategies in Supervision

- Paying for supervision
- Allowing associates level practitioners to bill while under supervision
- Removing barriers to become a supervisor





Enabling Career Pathways Through Stackable Credentials

Education and Workforce

- States are pursuing novel ways to build workforce education efforts, including “stackable microcredentials.”
- Microcredentials are a win-win. Providers can find credentialing for workforce issues like front desk staff, and students have the flexibility to earn credentials as they have capacity.
- In many cases, stackable microcredentials offer a pathway to roles with greater scope and responsibility.
- States are partnering with community colleges to build microcredential programs.

Colorado

Available Behavioral Pathways by CCCS College

Qualified Behavioral Health Assistant	+
Behavioral Health Assistant II	+
Behavioral Health Plus	+
Addiction Recovery Assistant	+
Patient Navigator	+
Associate of Applied Science Degree	+
Bachelor of Applied Science Degree	+

Colorado

Qualified Behavioral Health Assistant



Development of entry-level behavioral health knowledge and competencies needed to become an effective entry-level behavioral healthcare practitioner and eligible to be included in a Medicaid care team. Upon completion of this coursework, they will be a Qualified Behavioral Health Assistant as outlined by the State of Colorado Behavioral Health Administration.

Upon completion, students will be a QBHA as outlined by the Behavioral Health Administration (BHA) and eligible to serve as part of a Medicaid-reimbursed care team. Skills and competencies include:

- Understanding of Behavioral Health & Healthcare Systems
- Trauma-Informed Care and Cultural Competency
- Crisis Intervention and Wellness
- Therapeutic Communication Skills
- Case Management and Documentation
- Empathy and Healthy Boundaries



Alaska Behavioral Health Career Matrix

Job Title	Experience	Training
Behavioral Health Tech (no degree)	1 year (2000 hours)	100 practicum hours + 127 training hours
Behavioral Health Tech (degree)	NA	100 practicum hours + 12 training hours in specific content areas
Behavioral Health Counselor I (no degree)	2 years (4000 hours)	100 practicum hours + 159 training hours
Behavioral Health Counselor I (degree)	NA	100 practicum hours + 36 training hours in specific content areas
Behavioral Health Counselor II (no degree)	4 years (8000 hours)	100 practicum hours + 127 training hours
Behavioral Health Counselor II (degree)	NA	100 practicum hours + 40 training hours in specific content areas
Advanced Behavioral Health Counselor (no degree)	6 years (12,000 hours)	100 practicum hours + 127 training hours
Advanced Behavioral Health Counselor (degree)	NA	100 practicum hours + 70 training hours in specific content areas



Interstate Compacts: A Tool for a Stretched Workforce

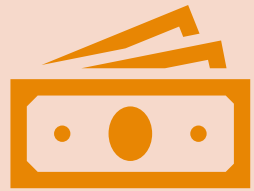
Compacts are one tool — not a substitute — for strategic investment and coordination.

- **Psychology (PSYPACT)** – implemented in 40+ states
- **Counseling Compact** – seeing steady adoption
- **Nursing and APRN Compacts** – especially relevant for psychiatric nurse practitioners
- **Social Work Compact** – officially enacted in seven states in April 2024
- **School Psychologist** – Colorado became the first state to enact the compact in April 2024

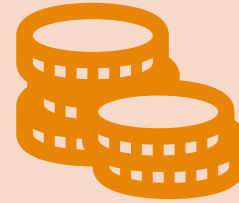


Advancing Workforce Capacity Through Existing State Tools

Targeted Financial Incentives



LOAN REPAYMENT
PROGRAMS



SCHOLARSHIPS AND GRANTS

Medicaid-Funded Workforce Strategies



- **TEACH Program:** Offsets training costs at FQHCs, CMHCs, CCBHCs, and rural clinics
- **FRAME Loan Repayment Program:** Repays loans for primary care, mental health, and nursing providers



- **Career Pathways Training:** support for two career pipelines - new carriers and career advancement.
- **Student Loan Repayment**



Leveraging technology to extend capacity, reduce burden, & enhance care

AI & Automation: Enhancing Clinician Workflows and Streamlining Systems

AI tools to reduce administrative burden by supporting clinical documentation

Virtual training simulations improve clinician skills, especially in rural or under-resourced areas

Automation accelerates licensure processing and Medicaid operations

Policy Discussions:

- Ensuring AI supports, not replaces, clinical decisions
- Protecting data privacy and HIPAA compliance
- Legal and regulatory frameworks



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY](#)

Digital Therapeutics: Changing How Behavioral Health Care is Delivered

- Software-driven tools for anxiety, depression, substance use recovery, and insomnia
- 2,000+ mental health apps available; only a small subset FDA-approved and clinically validated
- Extend care; not a replacement — especially effective in stepped-care models.
- Policy Discussions:
 - What is the clinical evidence?
 - Are these tools accessible to people without smartphones or broadband?
 - How are they reimbursed and integrated into care models?

Expanding Access Through Telehealth and Teleconsultation

Telehealth continues to play a critical role in addressing workforce shortages, particularly in rural and underserved areas.

Teleconsultation models like **Project ECHO** extend the reach of specialists by building local provider capacity

Policy Discussions

Efficacy, Quality, and Patient Choice

Licensure Reciprocity & Pay Parity

Program Structure & Flexibility



Tailored Approaches the SUD Workforce

State Strategies to Strengthen the SUD Workforce

Using Opioid Settlement Funds to Support the SUD Workforce

- **Indiana's** [settlement plan](#) allocated \$25M to matching local initiatives, funding projects like hiring peer recovery and treatment coordinators, expanding recovery housing and transportation, and providing evidence-based curricula in correctional facilities.
- **New Jersey's** [2023 Annual Opioid Abatement Report](#) committed \$17.5M of settlement funds in 2023 to expanding operations at peer recovery centers.
- The [Massachusetts Opioid Recovery and Remediation Fund Advisory Council](#) committed \$15M to strengthening workforce effort with a significant investment in the Substance Use Treatment Provider Loan Repayment Initiative.

Building the Peer and Recovery Support Workforce: Indiana is [covering training and certification costs](#) to ensure greater access to recovery-oriented care statewide.

Expanding Mid-Level Provider Roles to Increase OUD Treatment Access: States like Arizona, New York, and Massachusetts have enacted legislation that broadens the prescriptive authority of Nurse Practitioners (NPs) and Physician Assistants (PAs), specifically aiming to increase access to medications for OUD.



Statewide Behavioral Health Workforce Reports and Plans: Driving Toward Clear and Consistent Goals

Texas

- Recommend the Texas Education Agency (TEA) take action to collaborate with local educational agencies (LEAs) to include behavioral health careers in career readiness programs, career days and career promotion activities to all grade levels.

Strong Families, Supportive Communities: Moving Our Behavioral Health Workforce Forward

*Statewide Behavioral Health
Coordinating Council*

September 2020



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services



Texas

- Increase entry-level employment opportunities for high school and undergraduate students in behavioral health facilities.
- Create opportunities to expand access to integrated health care through provision of behavioral health services via telehealth and telemedicine.
- Re-examine Medicaid rates for behavioral health services and update (if possible based on available funding) to better reflect the cost of delivering services.

Strong Families, Supportive Communities: Moving Our Behavioral Health Workforce Forward

*Statewide Behavioral Health
Coordinating Council*

September 2020



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services



Utah

- Improve the quality of clinicians' postgraduate supervised experience, while also addressing supervision capacity constraints by 1) requiring supervisors to complete targeted training in effective supervision techniques, 2) requiring that a portion of supervisors' continuing education hours directly relate to supervision, and 3) implementing one or more measures to increase supervision capacity.



Washington

- Washington Student Achievement Council should work with its planning committee, participating sites, potential applicants, and awarded providers to ensure clear understanding that behavioral health loan repayment participants' hours worked in community settings, such as crisis response services, homeless shelters, supportive housing, street outreach, and families' homes, may count towards the required service obligation hours.



Discussion

- Thinking about what you heard today, what resonated most with your current efforts—or surprised you in terms of where Nebraska stands or could go next on behavioral health workforce?



Thank you!



NATIONAL ACADEMY
FOR STATE HEALTH POLICY

nashp.org



@NASHPhealth



NASHP | National
Academy for State
Health Policy

Thank you for joining us today!

Please take a moment to share
additional feedback or ideas.



BHECN

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
EDUCATION CENTER
OF NEBRASKA



University of Nebraska
Medical Center™