



BHPOC Work Group on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in Behavioral Health

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www.cga.ct.gov/ph/BHPOC

Co-Chairs: Alice Forrester and Selma Ward

Agenda

October 4, 2022 11:00 AM via ZOOM

The BHPOC is committed to creating to an environment that provides equal access to behavioral healthcare in a culturally competent capacity, with particular attention to social and racial justice.

Join Zoom Meeting

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Meeting ID: 973 0654 2389

Passcode: 131652

+19292056099,,95844380526#,,, *971141# US (New York)

+13017158592,,95844380526#,,, *971141# US (Washington DC)

Dial by your location +1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

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162.255.37.11 (US West)

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Yvonne Jones, Kelly Phenix, Alice Forrester, David Kaplan, Selma Ward, Bonni Hopkins, Noel Casiano, Yohanna Cifuentes, Christine Montgomery, Stephanie Springer, Loida Reyes, Heather Gates, Amy Soto, Jason Lang, John Lisher, Mark Vanacore, Carmen Rosario, Tanya Larson, Bert Plant, Lois Berkowitz, Sam Haun, Neva Caldwell, Brenetta Henry, Beresford Wilson, Bernie Park, Jaya Daptarder

I. Jason Lang, CHDI Policy Brief

Jason Lang of CHDI just published a paper on workforce issues and LMSW licensing about who will do the work came out yesterday. Article is available on the website. It is a policy brief that is intended to highlight some of the challenges with the behavioral health workforce and recommendations about strengthening the workforce in general.

<https://www.chdi.org/index.php/publications/policy-briefs/policy-brief-who-will-do-work-strengthening-childrens-behavioral-health-workforce-meet-families-increasing-behavioral-health-nee>

- Research and ideas from other states were brought in. The needs are clear in terms of not just the pandemic related increases in mental health the impact on the workforce, but long-standing needs before then have been exacerbated during the pandemic particularly for underserved children of color and there is an increase in disparities.
- Strategies or recommendations the paper centered around the idea of funding and reimbursement and things that can be done to support the workforce, funding services to keep pace with inflation and reasonable case load and professional development, time staff to do many of the things that they're already doing to support the children and families they work with. In the past 10 years the gap between Medicaid reimbursement rate and inflation adjusted rate came out to about \$17k per full time clinician with a typical case load.
- Also of focus are strategies for recruitment and retention and backing up the pipeline of high school students interested in a career in social services and recruiting students from schools that serve a diverse population and students of color. Another piece that is important in Connecticut is task shifting and the use of peer supports to expand and diversify the workforce.
- Reducing barriers to licensing is also a consideration as is supporting staff to increase retention.
- Through the pandemic and telehealth, clinicians are leaving to go to out of state telehealth companies or move into private practice. Ways of supporting retention goes back to reimbursement and salary and benefits but also balancing case-loads with the administrative burden that the kind of growing, administrative burden that is placed on agencies and clinicians and incorporating time helping clinicians to feel more successful, skilled, competent with the families that they serve using current best practices evidence-based treatments with special populations that they may be working with.
- Actual cost to deliver care in FQHC or CCBHC models in other states has made a significant difference in expanding services and get reimbursed appropriately. However, they are still facing the same work force shortages and challenges. Every state is allowed to do their own thing under Medicaid, therefore there is a parity in rate structures.
- In process of finalizing new work around workforce development.
- The policy brief touches on the mental health of staff over the past couple of years through the pandemic.

II. Update on New Workforce Money

- All the Grant proposals are being um worked on. CCIC schools, the CSU system, and UConn all have the application and funds should starting to roll out by January so they can start putting their plans into place. It is a three-year initiative. Bernie Park's next call will address any questions and discuss interesting ideas for the behavioral mental health workforce and how do we increase the MSW workforce um looking at some creative ideas that are coming through. Ben Stang will share the RFP that went out to schools. Schools are being asked to partner with employer partners. That is one of the metrics that they have to meet. Diversifying placement is a big part of that.

III. Updates on Status of Workforce Issues Related to Diversity, MSW Test, Etc.

- CSWE announced they are eliminating the licensing exam requirement so the e-pass for 2022. When goes for re-accreditation they need the exam rate to be close to the 80% and it counted towards a recurrence. There is a national meeting on November ninth with deans and directors from colleges that are part of the National Association of Deans and Directors and CSW and ASWB discuss strategies for each individual state. Looking at eliminating the 90 days between exams if you fail. Also looking to allow for the licensing kit and practice exams to be free for students. Southern running a workshop to ensure students are well prepared.

IV. New Business, Announcements, Adjournment

None discussed

Next Meeting: Tuesday, January 3, 2022 at 11:00 AM via ZOOM