



# Integrated Care Training Program

UW Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences

Date

## **Behavioral Health Support Specialist: Increasing access to evidence-based interventions for common behavioral health conditions and expanding the workforce pipeline.**

Presented by:

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Director, Behavioral Health Support Specialist Clinical Training Program

# Speaker Disclosures

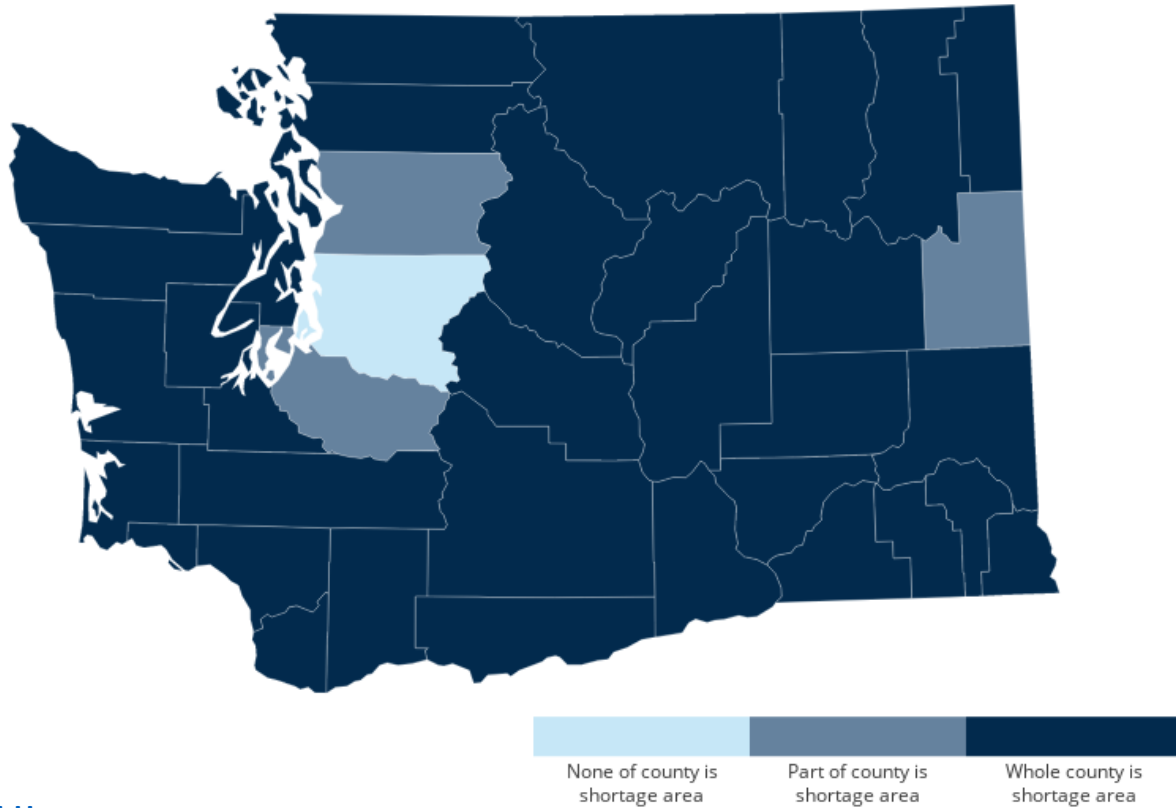
- Bill O'Connell has no conflict of interest to disclose for this presentation.

# Learning Objectives

- Describe the rationale, role and scope of practice for a BHSS.
- Explain core competencies for the BHSS role and relationship to integrated care.
- Explain the goals of the clinical training program.
- Discuss policy and legislative challenges to implement role.

# Setting the Stage

# — WA Mental Health Provider Shortage Areas



Source(s): [RHI](#)  
[Hub](#) & [HRSA](#)

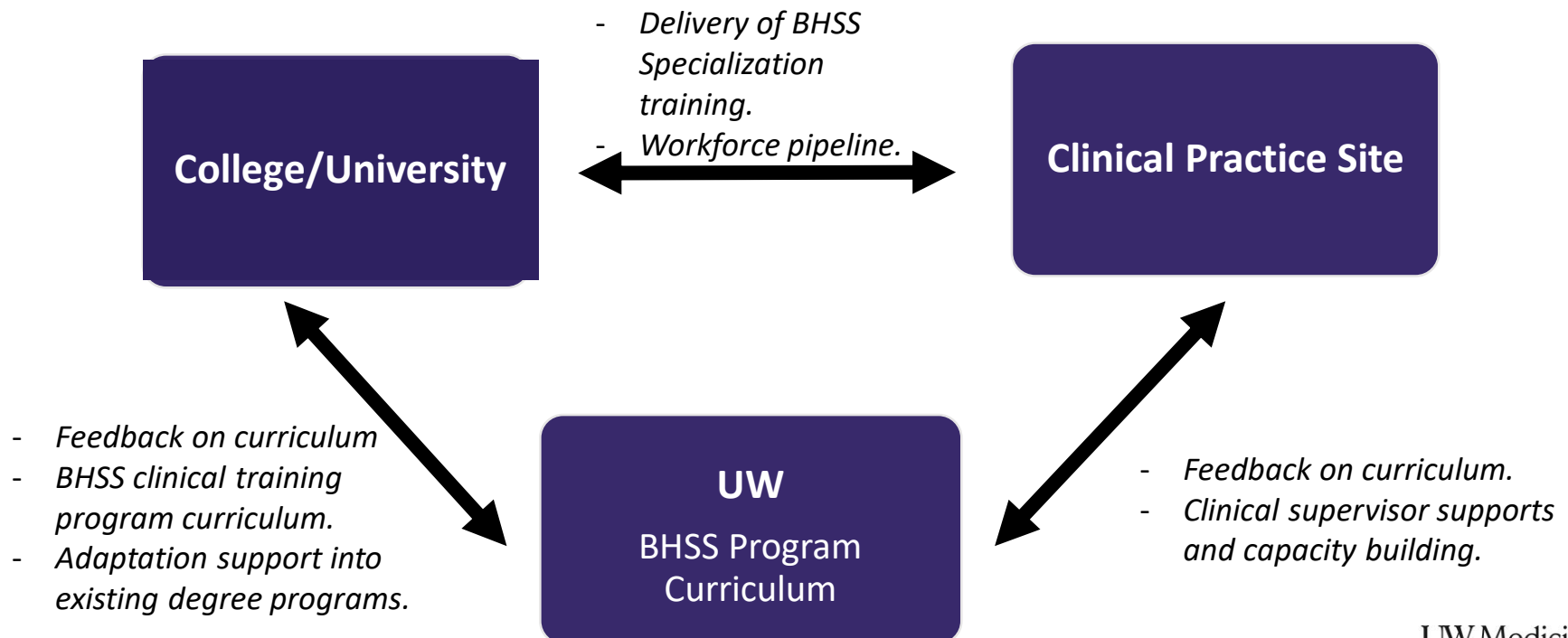
## What is a Behavioral Health Support Specialist or BHSS?



A BHSS is a bachelor level practitioner in psychology, social work, behavioral health or related program trained to provide evidence-based interventions for common behavioral health symptoms under the supervision of a provider licensed to diagnose and treat mental and behavioral health conditions.

# Designing Curriculum for BHSS Specialization

## Statewide Collaboration & Implementation



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# — Meta-Competencies (MC)

1. Health Equity
2. Helping Relationships
3. Cultural Responsiveness
4. Team-Based Care and Collaboration
5. Screening and Assessment
6. Case Management and Care Coordination
7. Evidence-Based Interventions
8. Law & Ethics

# — Sample Competencies

1. Health Equity
2. Helping Relationships
3. Cultural Responsiveness
4. Team-Based Care and Collaboration
5. Screening and Assessment
6. Case Management and Care Coordination
7. **Interventions**
  - a) Use focused, brief interventions to engage patients and foster shared decision-making with patients, their support network, and the healthcare team.
  - b) Provide psychoeducation to patients & their support network about BH conditions and treatment options consistent with recommendations from the healthcare team.
  - c) Apply low-intensity strategies for mild-to-moderate depression, based on cognitive behavioral principles and behavioral activation.

# — Operationalizing Competencies

## 7. Interventions

- a) Use focused, brief interventions to engage patients and foster shared decision-making with patients, their support network, and the care team.
- b) Provide psychoeducation to patients and their support network about BH conditions and treatment options consistent with recommendations from the healthcare team.
- c) Apply low-intensity strategies for mild-to-moderate depression, based on cognitive behavioral principles and behavioral activation.

Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes/Affect
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Describe the Behavioral Activation (BA) model of depressive symptoms.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide patient psychoeducation on the BA model of depressive symptoms, tailored to the patient's experience.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Recognize the effectiveness of BA for depression.</li></ul>



# Welcome to the ITS

Let's get you to the right place.

I AM AN  
INSTRUCTOR

I AM A  
STUDENT

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# — Current ITS Module Topics

Therapeutic Alliance Skills	Session Organization Skills	Intervention Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Empathy</li><li>• Reflection</li><li>• Cultural Responsiveness</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Agenda Setting &amp; Symptom Review</li><li>• Redirection</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enhancing Motivation</li><li>• Assigning Homework</li><li>• Reviewing Homework</li><li>• Suicide Prevention <i>(In Development)</i></li></ul>

# Varied Problem Types

**Case details & scenario**

**Progress bar shows how far until skill "Empathy" is completed**

**Question**

Juan is a 42 year-old-man who is unmarried and does not have children. His doctor recommended that he see you after a work-related injury for some help adjusting back to his daily activities.

He tells you: "I've been frustrated and upset lately. I feel achy and I'm in pain much of the day. It's hard for me just to get out of bed in the morning."

You could respond in the following ways. Choose **all** statements that demonstrate empathy

- That sounds hard -- I bet it hurts a lot!
- I bet you will start feeling better in no time if you just listen to your doctor.
- You just have to think about how lucky you are that the injury wasn't worse.

Submit

**Feedback and a second chance**

**Not quite. One or more of your selections are incorrect.**

Problems of this type are looking for traits like:

- helps name or describe the client's emotional experience
- communicates concern for the client's feeling or experiences
- expresses that a client's emotions or experiences are normal, expected, or understandable
- communicates that you understand the client's feelings

Try Again

You just have to think about how lucky you are that the injury wasn't worse.

Submit

Competency: Reviewing Homework



*Halima is a 45-year-old Arabic woman who has been experiencing significant anxiety since since giving birth to her son 9 years ago. Her doctor is no longer wanting to prescribe the benzodiazepine she has been taking for the past several years and refers Halima to counseling for coping strategies to manage anxiety.*

Halima tells you she was able to try out the relaxation exercise on several occasions before taking Xanax, and she rated rate her level of anxiety afterwards.

**Read the dialogue** between the provider and Halima. Think about how you would respond to Halima using the competency of **reviewing homework**.

**Halima:** I was happy that I was able to try out some of those anxiety management strategies. But there were definitely times when they weren't an option.

**Provider:** Well that's great you tried those out! You were also going to rate your level of anxiety before and after using these coping strategies.

**Halima:** Yes I did that, and my anxiety level did go down each time. Not always by much, but I did feel less anxious when I used one of those coping strategies.

**Provider:** Tell me about the times when using the new coping strategies was not an option.

**Halima:** Well, when I was already in bed for the night, I didn't want to go outside, and it was too late to call anyone. I felt stuck again, I couldn't slow my brain down and stop worrying.

**Therapist:**

In few sentences, write what you would say to Halima next.

Submit

**Next Steps and  
Connecting  
[bhsswa@uw.edu](mailto:bhsswa@uw.edu)**



# Licensed or Certified?

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- Bachelor-level credentials already exist in many states
- In WA, there are barriers to billing in group practices that do not identify as specialty mental health settings

## Our Project Goal

- Identify pathways to support full spectrum of care



## Comparison of Similar WA Provider Types

	BHSS	Agency Affiliated Counselor	Certified Counselor	Licensed Assistant Behavior Analyst
Education	4-year degree with BHSS specialization or post-baccalaureate certification	No degree req or prep. Range: high school diploma to graduate degrees.	Bachelor degree in a counseling related field.	Bachelor's degree with 135 contact hours in behavior analysis.
Field Study	400 hours	None required	None required	1000 supervised hours
Exam	Possible exam	No Exam	State Ethics Exam	No exam
Practice Settings & Credentialing	Potentially credentialed to support payment for services in non-specialty mental health settings such as community health settings, primary care, medical settings & schools.	May only work in a licensed state Behavioral Health Agency and may not supersede scope of independently licensed professional	Private practice or non-billable agency counseling with supervision.	Private practice or agencies/facilities. ABA is for a specific population and diagnosis. Does not serve general population.

## — Precedent for Baccalaureate-level Providers

	<b>North Carolina</b>	<b>Texas</b>	<b>Ohio</b>
<b>Education</b>	BSW from CSWE accredited school	BSW	BSW
<b>Field Study</b>	400 hours	None required	448 Hours
<b>Examination</b>	ASWB exam	ASWB exam	ASWB exam
<b>Scope of Practice</b>	Practice of social work under supervision.	Counseling, case management, biopsychosocial assessment; option to apply for independent practice of above.	Diagnose and treat mental and emotional disorders under supervision; independent provision of counseling.

# Takeaways

- *A BHSS will help increase access to evidence-based interventions for common behavioral health conditions for the Washington population.*
- *A BHSS will have a four-year degree from a program that integrates the BHSS clinical training program into their existing degree program.*
- *Legislative action is needed to help organizations, especially integrated primary care, capture revenue for BHSS services.*

**Next Steps and  
Connecting  
[bhsswa@uw.edu](mailto:bhsswa@uw.edu)**

# Additional Free Resources for Washington State Healthcare Providers

\*No cost

## EDUCATIONAL SERIES:

- [AIMS Center office hours](#)
- [UW Traumatic Brain Injury](#) – Behavioral Health ECHO
- UW Psychiatry & Addictions Case Conference ECHO [UW PACC](#)
- UW TelePain series [About TelePain \(washington.edu\)](#)
- TeleBehavioral Health 101-201-301-401 [Telehealth Training & Support - Harborview Behavioral Health Institute \(uw.edu\)](#) | [bhinstitute@uw.edu](mailto:bhinstitute@uw.edu)

## PROVIDER CONSULTATION LINES

- UW Pain & Opioid Provider Consultation Hotline [Consultation \(washington.edu\)](#) – 844-520-PAIN 7246)
- [Psychiatry Consultation Line](#) - (877) 927-7924
- [Partnership Access Line \(PAL\)](#) (pediatric psychiatry) - (866) 599-7257
- [PAL for Moms](#) (perinatal psychiatry) - (877) 725-4666

# Resources

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- [Partnership Access Line \(PAL\)](#)
  - (866) 599-7257
- [PAL for Moms](#)
  - (877) 725-4666
- [UW TBI-BH ECHO](#)

# Questions and Discussion

- Ask questions in the chat or unmute yourself



# Registration

- If you have not yet registered, please email [uwictp@uw.edu](mailto:uwictp@uw.edu) and we will send you a link