



MENTAL HEALTH CAREERS

Pathway
to
SUCCESS



Creating and Guiding Tomorrow's Mental Health Workforce

Introduction

The purpose of this booklet is to introduce you to all of the exciting career opportunities that exist in the counseling and mental health field. Careers in behavioral and mental health can be rewarding both personally and financially. Careers exist for all different educational backgrounds and are both clinical and administrative.

We've included a resource page for you to obtain more information or to contact a specific county.

We hope you learn a great deal from the information in this booklet and decide to pursue a career with us helping those with mental health and substance abuse issues. We look forward to you joining our workforce in the future!

Career Quiz

- ◀ Do you enjoy working directly with people to help them overcome problems?
- ◀ Do you enjoy working to solve practical, real-world issues?
- ◀ Would you enjoy working with clients in a doctor's office, hospital or mental health clinic?
- ◀ Are you able to deal with high stress situations?
- ◀ Are you good at reading body language?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, a career in Mental Health may be for you.

What is Mental Health?

According to the World Health Organization, "Mental health is not just the absence of mental disorder. It is defined as a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community. It is related to the promotion of well-being, the prevention of mental disorders, and the treatment and rehabilitation of people affected by mental disorders."



How We Serve: | **Career Pathways.**

Mental health is a broad field with a wide range of career choices. In general, it involves counseling patients or clients in order to promote their optimum mental health, with an emphasis upon prevention. Working with individuals and/or groups of all ages, health professionals in this field help children, adolescents, adults and older adults deal with a variety of life stresses and problems.

Peer Support Specialist

Peer Support Specialists, because of their life experience in dealing with mental illness in themselves or a family member, have expertise that professional training cannot replicate. Tasks commonly performed by Peer Support Specialists include assisting clients in setting and pursuing their recovery goals, monitoring and quantifying their progress, lending assistance with treatment, and leading by example when it comes to coping strategies that have been helpful in their own experience.

Psychiatric Technicians

Psychiatric Technicians are professionals who work for residential care centers, rehabilitation facilities or hospitals. Psychiatric Technicians work with a team of mental health providers including therapists, nurses and physicians. Psychiatric Technicians provide hands-on care to clients in need and help implement treatment plans in acute care settings. Most Psychiatric Technicians need a certificate or an Associate's Degree in Psychiatric Technology.

Mental Health Case Manager

A Mental Health Case Manager counsels clients with emphasis on prevention. They work with individuals and groups to promote optimum mental health. Also help individuals deal with addictions and substance abuse; family, parenting, and marital problems; stress management; problems with self-esteem; and issues associated with aging and mental and emotional health. A Mental Health Case Manager must have a Bachelor's Degree in mental health or social work, depending on the requirements of the facility.

Mental Health Therapists

Therapists provide inpatient or outpatient services to clients with mental health needs. These positions usually require being licensed for optimal employment opportunity. Mental health therapists can be employed by agencies or hospitals. Additionally, mental health therapists may be self-employed in private practice settings, and may or may not accept insurance for payment. Examples of Mental Health Therapists are Marriage and Family Therapists (MFT,) and Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSW). This position requires a Masters degree in Social Work or Marriage and Family Therapy.

Psychologist

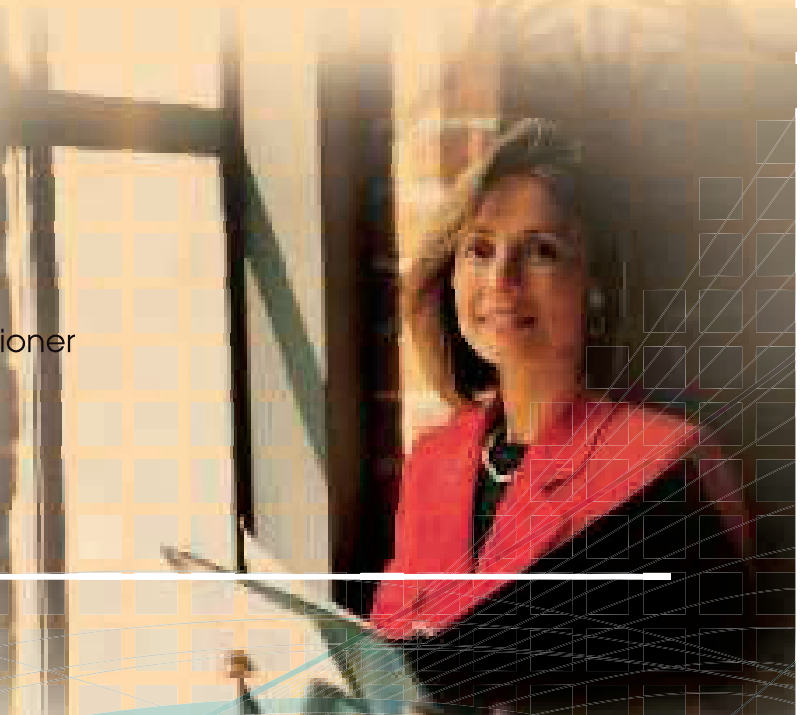
Psychologists study the human mind and human behavior. Psychologists may perform a variety of duties in a vast number of industries. For example, those working in health service fields may provide mental healthcare in hospitals, clinics, schools, or private settings. Psychologists employed in applied settings, such as business, industry, government, or nonprofit organizations, may provide training, conduct research, design organizational systems, and act as advocates for psychology. To work as a clinical or counseling psychologist one must have a doctoral degree — either a Ph.D. or a Psy.D. degree. With a Ph.D. one can teach, do research or have a clinical and counseling position. With a Psy.D. one can work in a clinical or counseling setting.

Psychiatrist

Psychiatrists are advanced-practice Medical Doctors. They evaluate a patient's mental condition in conjunction with his/her physical condition. Psychiatrists are physicians that can prescribe medication to mental health patients. Psychiatrists require education in medical school. Psychiatrists typically manage medication and rarely provide counseling services. Psychiatrists may work in private practice and hospitals.

List of other careers:

- Alcohol and Drug Counselor
- Art Therapist
- Clinical Manager
- Counseling Aide
- Family Advocate
- Healthcare Administrator
- Mental Health Counselor
- Mental Health Nurse
- Mental Health Nurse Practitioner
- Parent Partner
- Prevention Specialist
- Rehabilitation Aide
- Social Service Worker
- Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor



How You Get There: | **Educational Pathways.**

While almost all careers require some college, different careers have different educational demands. You can choose to attend college for months or for many years. The kind of college education you need depends on what kind of work you want to do.

Certificate Programs (9 weeks to 1 year)

Certificate Programs award you a certificate of completion rather than a degree when you finish class requirements. This training is specific and will qualify you for specialized jobs. Most certificate programs are six months to a year.

Associates Degrees (2 years)

Associates Degrees are two-year degrees. You take classes in a specific field of interest as well as general education courses. You can take courses at a Community College that count for an Associate Degree. There are many careers that pay good wages and are in high demand that can be yours with a two year degree.

Bachelors Degrees (4 years)

Bachelor Degrees are four-year degrees. You must complete about two years of general education requirements that include basic subjects like English, History and Math; and an additional two years of classes in your major area of study. A college or university awards a Bachelor of Arts (BA) and Bachelor of Science (BS) degrees.

Masters Degrees (6 years)

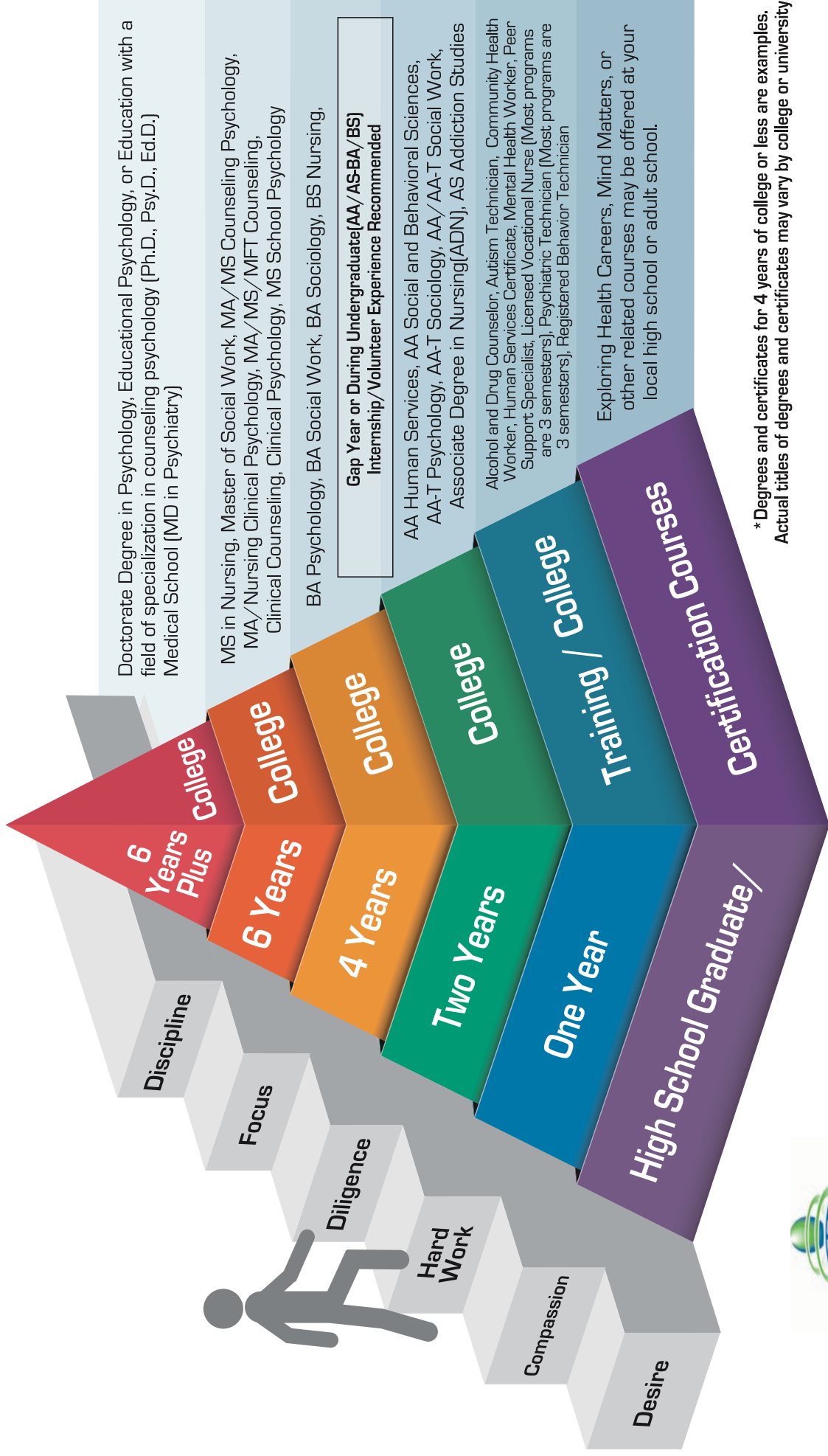
A Master's Degree is an academic degree granted to individuals who have undergone study demonstrating a mastery or high-order overview of a specific field of study or area of professional practice. It provides higher qualification for employment and prepares for doctoral studies.

Advanced Degrees (8+)

Earning a doctorate requires successful completion of a regimen of coursework beyond the master's level. A doctorate is an academic degree or professional degree that refers to a class of degrees which qualify the holder to teach in a specific field. Professional doctorates are awarded in certain fields where most holders of the degree are engaged in a profession, such as law, or medicine.



Behavioral-Mental Health Related Certificates and Educational Degrees



- AA = Associate in Arts
- AA-T = Associate in Arts for Transfer
- AS = Associate in Science
- AS-T = Associate in Science for Transfer
- MA = Master of Arts
- MD = Medical Doctor
- MFT = Marriage and Family Therapist
- MS = Master of Science
- MSW = Master of Social Work
- Ed.D = Doctor of Education
- Ph.D = Doctor of Philosophy
- Psy.D = Doctor of Psychology



Health Workforce Initiative
<https://ca-hwi.org>

Professional Title	Years of Graduate Program after Bachelors Degree	Internship Hours & Licensing Exam After Degree	Educational Program and Licensing Board	Area of Study	Work Locations	Prescribes Medication
Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW)	2-3	X <i>(Can work in non "clinical" areas with MSW alone)</i>	Master's Degree in Social Work (MSW) <i>(Licensed by the CA Board of Behavioral Sciences)</i>	Strong emphasis on social justice, equality, social policy, human behavior, research, & clinical practice including psychotherapy, diagnosis, treatment & prevention of mental, emotional & behavioral disorders.	community agency, school, hospital, medical facility	
Licensed Educational Psychologist (LEP)	2-3	X	Master's Degree (MA/MS) in School Psychology, Counseling and Guidance, or similar degree <i>(Licensed by the CA Board of Behavioral Sciences)</i>	Emphasis in performing academic & psychological assessments, identifying special education needs, & developing support strategies.	community agency, school, hospital, medical facility	
Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT)	2-3	X	Master's Degree (MA/MS) in Marriage and Family Therapy, Clinical Counseling, or similar degree <i>(Licensed by the CA Board of Behavioral Sciences)</i>	Emphasis of relational and interpersonal dynamics within families, marriages, and couples. Psychotherapy including diagnosis & treatment, & prevention of mental, emotional & behavioral disorders.	community agency, school, hospital, medical facility	
Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor (LPCC)	2-3	X	Master's Degree (MA/MS) in Clinical Counseling, Counseling Psychology or similar degree <i>(Licensed by the CA Board of Behavioral Sciences)</i>	Emphasis on individual counseling. Psychotherapy including diagnosis & treatment, & prevention of mental, emotional & behavioral disorders.	community agency, school, hospital, medical facility	
Licensed Psychologist	5-6	X	Doctorate (Ph.D., Psy.D., Ed.D.) in Clinical Psychology, Educational Psychology or similar degree <i>(Licensed by the Board of Psychology of CA: Licensed Psychologist)</i>	Emphasis on psychotherapy, psychosocial interventions including assessment & psychological testing, relationship between brain function & behavior and the environment & behavior.	community agency, school, hospital, medical facility	
Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner	2-6	X	Master's Degree (MS) or Doctorate (Ph.D.) in Nursing <i>(Licensed by CA Board of Nursing)</i>	Emphasis on diagnosis, treatment & prevention of mental, emotional & behavioral disorders including physical & mental aspects from a nursing perspective	community agency, school, hospital, medical facility	X
Psychiatrist	8-10	X	Medical School plus Psychiatry Residency <i>(Licensed by Medical Board of CA: Licensed Psychiatrist)</i>	Branch of medicine focused on the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of mental, emotional and behavioral disorders.	community agency, school, hospital, medical facility	X

Behavioral-Mental Health Nursing Educational Career Pathway

***DNP** ⁽¹⁾
(DNP is also an APRN)
Doctorate in Nursing Practice



6 Years Plus

(1) DNP is one of the highest levels of education available to nurses. It is designed to help nurses advance in their careers, either in an advanced nursing job or a leadership role within their organization.

(2) A Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP) is an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) who provide comprehensive mental health care to patients suffering from behavioral problems and mental health disorders. Not only do PMHNPs provide diagnostic care and treatment, they also focus on psychiatric/mental health maintenance and wellness. They use both medicinal and therapeutic interventions in treatment plans to help patients.

***NPMH** ⁽²⁾
(NPMH is also an APRN)
Nurse Practitioner Mental Health



CNS/*PMH-APRN ⁽³⁾
Clinical Nurse Specialist/
Psychiatric Mental Health
Nursing-Advanced Practice
Registered Nurse

(Requires 2 yrs. of full time experience, some hrs. can be earned during Master's)

(3) A Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS)/Psychiatric-Mental Health (PMH) is an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) who works with individuals, families, groups, and communities, assessing their mental health needs. The PMH-APRN nurse develops a nursing diagnosis and plan of care, implements the nursing process, and evaluates it for effectiveness. Areas of specialty can include child and adolescent mental health nursing, gerontological-psychiatric nursing, forensics, or substance use disorders. Some PMH-APRNs specialize in the consultation-liaison role, providing consultation and services to patients and families with multiple and complex mental and physical health concerns. Others specialize in collaborative, integrative health care roles with primary care providers.

(4) A Bachelor's of Science in Nursing (BSN) nurse, is a nurse working in a Psychiatric or Behavioral Health setting who specializes in caring for patients receiving treatment for a variety of mental illnesses, addiction, eating disorders or substance abuse.



MS Degree
Master of Science in
Nursing

(5) The Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA) assists mentally impaired or emotionally disturbed patients, working under direction of nursing and medical staff. May assist with daily living activities, lead patients in educational and recreational activities, or accompany patients to and from examinations and treatments (Job titles may include Mental Health Aide or Psychiatric Nursing Assistant).



Master's Degree

(6) The Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN) assists mentally impaired or emotionally disturbed patients, working under direction of nursing and medical staff. May assist with daily living activities, lead patients in educational and recreational activities, or accompany patients to and from examinations and treatments, help with personal hygiene, and administer oral or injectable medications. (Job titles may include Mental Health Tech or Psychiatric Aide).

(7) LPT: Licensed Psychiatric Technician (LPT) cares for individuals with mental or emotional conditions or disabilities, following the instructions of physicians or other health practitioners. Monitor patients' physical and emotional well-being and report to medical staff. May participate in rehabilitation and treatment programs, help with personal hygiene, and administer oral or injectable medications.



Bachelor's Degree

Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN)⁽⁴⁾



**Associate of Arts/
Science Degree**

Associate's Degree in Nursing/*Registered Nurse (ADN/RN)



Certificate Programs

*Certified Nurse Assistant ⁽⁵⁾, *Licensed Vocational Nurse ⁽⁶⁾ & *Licensed Psychiatric Technician ⁽⁷⁾



High School Diploma/GED

Exploring Health Careers, Mind Matters, or other related courses may be offered at your local high school or adult school.

RESOURCES

Imperial County	www.bhs.imperialcounty.org
Kern County	www.kernbhhs.org
Orange County	www.ochealthinfo.com/services-programs
Riverside County	www.rcdmh.org
San Bernardino County	www.sbcounty.gov/dbh
San Diego County	www.sandiegocounty.gov/hhsa/programs/bhs
San Luis Obispo County	www.SLOBehavioralHealth.com
Santa Barbara County	www.countyofsb.org/Behavioral-Wellness
Tri-City	www.tricitymhs.org
Ventura County	www.vcbh.org

California Addiction Credentialing	www.californiacredentialing.org
California Board of Behavioral Sciences	www.bbs.ca.gov
California Board of Psychology	www.psychology.ca.gov
California Board of Registered Nursing	www.rn.ca.gov
California Board of Vocational Nursing/Psychiatric Techs	www.bvnpt.ca.gov
California Peer Support Specialist Certification	www.capeercertification.org

California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists	www.camft.org
California Institute for Behavioral Health Services	www.cibhs.org
American Art Therapy Association (AATA)	www.arttherapy.org
American Counseling Association (ACA)	www.counseling.org
American Psychological Association (APA)	www.apa.org
National Alliance for the Mentally Ill /California	www.namicalifornia.org
National Association of Social Workers (NASW)	www.socialworkers.org



The Southern Counties Regional Partnership (SCRCP) is a collaborative effort to develop career pathways in the behavioral health fields throughout Southern California. The SCRCP is funded by Proposition 63, the Mental Health Services Act. The following counties participate in collaborative workforce related activities:



Imperial County



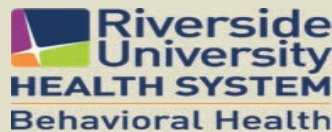
San Luis Obispo County



Kern County



Santa Barbara County



Riverside County



Ventura County



Tri-City



San Bernardino County



Orange County



San Diego County

SOUTHERN COUNTIES REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP

<http://www.scrpcalifornia.org>

