

HB 1724: INCREASING THE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH WORKFORCE

The problem:

- Washington has shortage of behavioral healthcare workers
- There are many barriers such as training and education costs and licensure requirement that prevent people from entering the behavioral health workforce.

What would HB 1724 do?

- The goal of HB 1724 is to make it easier for people to enter behavioral health professions by offering targeted supports to new behavioral health professionals and making the process easier.

TALKING POINTS

- In 2021, the Health Resources and Services Administration reported that 83.2% of Washington residents in need of mental health care do not receive it.
- According to UW Center for Health Innovation and Policy Science, the community behavioral health workforce shrank by 11% in 2021 and vacancy rates hover at 13%.
- The demand for behavioral healthcare workers continues to outpace available services and disparities have only been exacerbated by the pandemic
- Master's level clinicians have to pay out-of-pocket for supervision which can cost anywhere from \$100 to \$150 an hour. Washington state currently requires 4000 hours of supervised clinical hours for licensure.
- Clinicians licensed in other states who move to Washington face barriers from practicing in our state due to practice-setting limitations for probationary licenses.
- Marginalized and rural communities are disproportionately impacted by behavioral health workforce shortage.

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