



Behavioral Health Workforce: Recruitment and Retention

Utah Behavioral Health Crisis
Response Commission

August 17, 2023



Agenda



Behavioral health
workforce challenges



State strategies to recruit
and retain the behavioral
health workforce



Closing and additional
resources



Q&A

Behavioral Health Workforce Challenges

The Commonwealth Fund (May 2023)

- In 2021, less than half of people with a mental illness were able to access timely care.
- As of March 2023, 160 million Americans live in areas with mental health professional shortages.

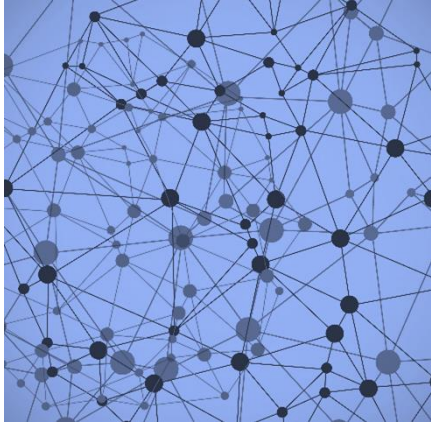
National Council for Mental Wellbeing (April 2023)

- 93% reported experiencing burnout.
- One-third reported spending most of their time on administrative tasks.
- Nearly two-thirds reported increased client caseload.
- 7 in 10 reported increased client severity since COVID-19 pandemic.

Government Accountability Office (Oct. 2022)

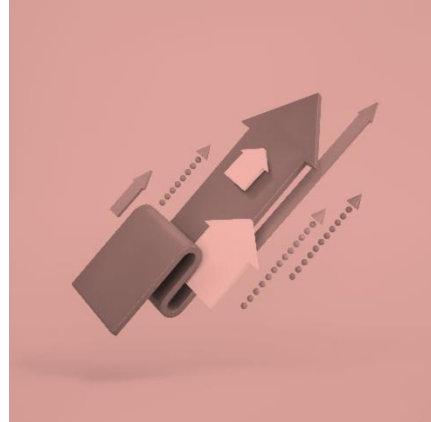
- Three main barriers to behavioral health professional recruitment and retention:
 - Financial: Reimbursement rates and compensation are low for behavioral health professionals.
 - Educational: Lack of pipeline for underserved professions to enter the behavioral health workforce.
 - Workplace: Shortage of supervisors and internship opportunities in rural areas and psychology programs.

State Strategies to Recruit and Retain the Behavioral Health Workforce (May 2022)



Understanding workforce needs

- Studying workforce trends
- Studying behavioral health trends
- Statewide plans for behavioral health



Increasing the supply of professionals

- Career pathways
- Educational and clinical training
- Professions that extend the health workforce



Expanding the reach of existing professionals

- Telebehavioral health
- Interstate licensure



Addressing the distribution of professionals

- Scholarships, loan forgiveness and loan repayment
- Tax incentives



Retaining professionals in the workforce

- Building provider resiliency
- Mentoring relationships
- Continuing education requirements

1. Understanding Health Workforce Needs

NCSL Legislative Summit Session – Strength in Numbers: Bolstering the Health Workforce

- Dr. Hannah Maxey, Bowen Center Health Workforce Research and Policy
- “Assess, then address”

Utah [HB 176](#) (2022)

- Established Utah Health Workforce Advisory Council to research and analyze data regarding Utah’s health workforce.



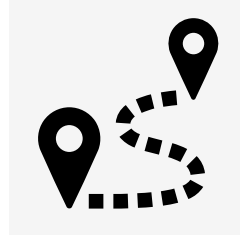
Behavioral Health Workforce Tracker Data

[Behavioral Health Workforce Tracker](#), George Washington Fitzhugh Mullan Institute (2021)

Professionals		Providers per 100,000 People	U.S. Average Ratio	Percent with Medicaid Billing	U.S. Average Percent
Psychiatrists and Addiction Medicine Specialists		10.5	15.9	90.3%	88.5%
	Psychiatrists	7.8	12.2	90.4%	87.5%
	Addiction Medicine	1	1.1	87.9%	92.8%
	Addiction Psychiatry	0.1	0.3	100.0%	89.2%
	Child and Adolescent Psychiatry	1.6	2.3	90.7%	91.9%
Psychologists		35.7	39.3	-	-
Counselors and Therapists		243.4	186.8	-	-
	Licensed Clinical Social Worker	153.6	90.8	-	-
	Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist	32	24.5	-	-
	Licensed Professional Counselor	57.8	71.5	-	-
Primary Care Physicians		52.1	66.0	88.0%	85.1%
	Family Medicine	30.8	32.6	87.8%	86.6%
	Internal Medicine	10	22.1	79.4%	79.6%
	Pediatrics	11.3	11.4	96.3%	91.8%
Advanced Practice Providers		75.2	65.1	80.8%	81.2%
	Nurse Practitioner	47.8	48.1	79.4%	81.4%
	Physician Assistant	27.4	17.0	83.4%	80.6%
Other Physicians		48.1	55.0	70.6%	67.7%



2. Increasing the Supply of Professionals



Career Pathways



Education and Clinical Training



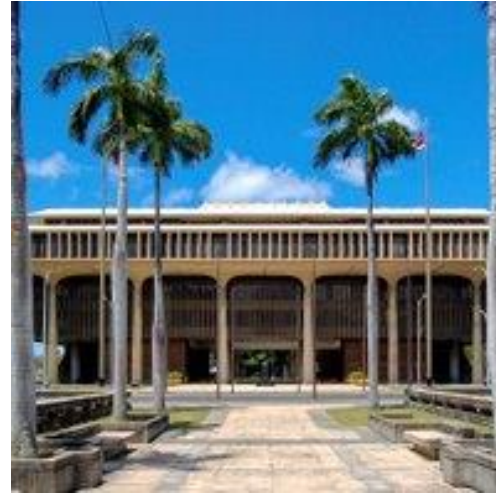
Emerging Professions

Career Pathways



Colorado: My Colorado Journey

Developed career pathways for counseling, therapy, social work, psychology, psychiatry and psychiatric nursing.



Hawai'i: Good Jobs Hawai'i

Established pathway program in high demand industries, including mental health technician.



Maine: Partners in Behavioral Health Pathways

Appropriated \$10 million to keep tuition and fees low.

NCSL Resource!

[Leveraging Career Pathway Programs Report \(June 2023\)](#)

Education and Training

NCSL Resource!

[Understanding Medicaid's Role in Graduate Medical Education](#) (May 2023)



[Illinois](#) (2018) required a study of psychiatry residencies, behavioral health internships and telehealth training in rural and underserved communities. The Behavioral Health Workforce Education Center [was created in 2021](#) to leverage workforce and behavioral health resources across the state.



[Pennsylvania](#) (2019) required a study of provider shortages, projections, retention and strategies to address disparities in rural communities. [The Commission recommended](#) encouraging developing additional psychiatric residency positions, increasing tuition repayment programs and encouraging the recruitment of underserved students.



[Iowa](#) (2019) the University of Iowa to conduct a physician workforce study and required psychiatry residency programs to provide rural rotations as an option for residents.



[New Jersey](#) (2020) appropriated [\\$4 million](#) for 10 four-year psychiatry residencies focused on the treatment of individuals with serious mental illness and co-occurring mental health and substance misuse conditions.

Professions that Extend the Health Workforce

Source: [Scope of Practice Alignment with Job Tasks for Paraprofessionals and Addiction Counselors](#), Behavioral Health Workforce Center (2017)

Community Health Worker	Addiction Counselor	Peer Support Specialist	Health Care Navigator
<p>High school diploma and on-the-job training.</p> <p>Duties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culturally responsive services • Advocate for local health needs • Translation and interpretation services • Health information access • Connect clients to services <p>Maryland Ann. Code Art. Health Occupations § 13-3601</p> <p>Washington SB 6032 (2018)</p>	<p>Bachelor’s or Master’s degree.</p> <p>Duties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substance use disorder health education • Create plans for client relapse prevention • Connect clients to group therapy sessions • Help develop individual treatment plans Participate in recovery group discussions • Informal counseling, support and follow up <p>Florida Stat. § 90.503</p> <p>Kansas Stat. Ann. §65-6606</p>	<p>High school diploma and lived experience of mental health or recovery from addiction.</p> <p>Duties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crafting individual wellness plans • Develop and implement individual recovery plans • Facilitate peer recovery support groups • Connect clients to community support groups • Screen for the presence of co-occurring disorders <p>Oklahoma Stat. tit. § 450:53-7-2</p>	<p>Bachelor’s degree.</p> <p>Duties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheduling medical appointments • Addressing transportation challenges • Coordinate care across providers • Create follow up care plans and treatment adherence • Health education activities • Help clients enroll in health plans <p>Illinois Rev. Stat. ch. 215 §121/5</p>

Community Health Workers



Reimbursement

[Kentucky](#) (2022) and [Nevada](#) (2021) required a state plan amendment, Medicaid waiver or alternative payment model to reimburse for services provided by community health workers.



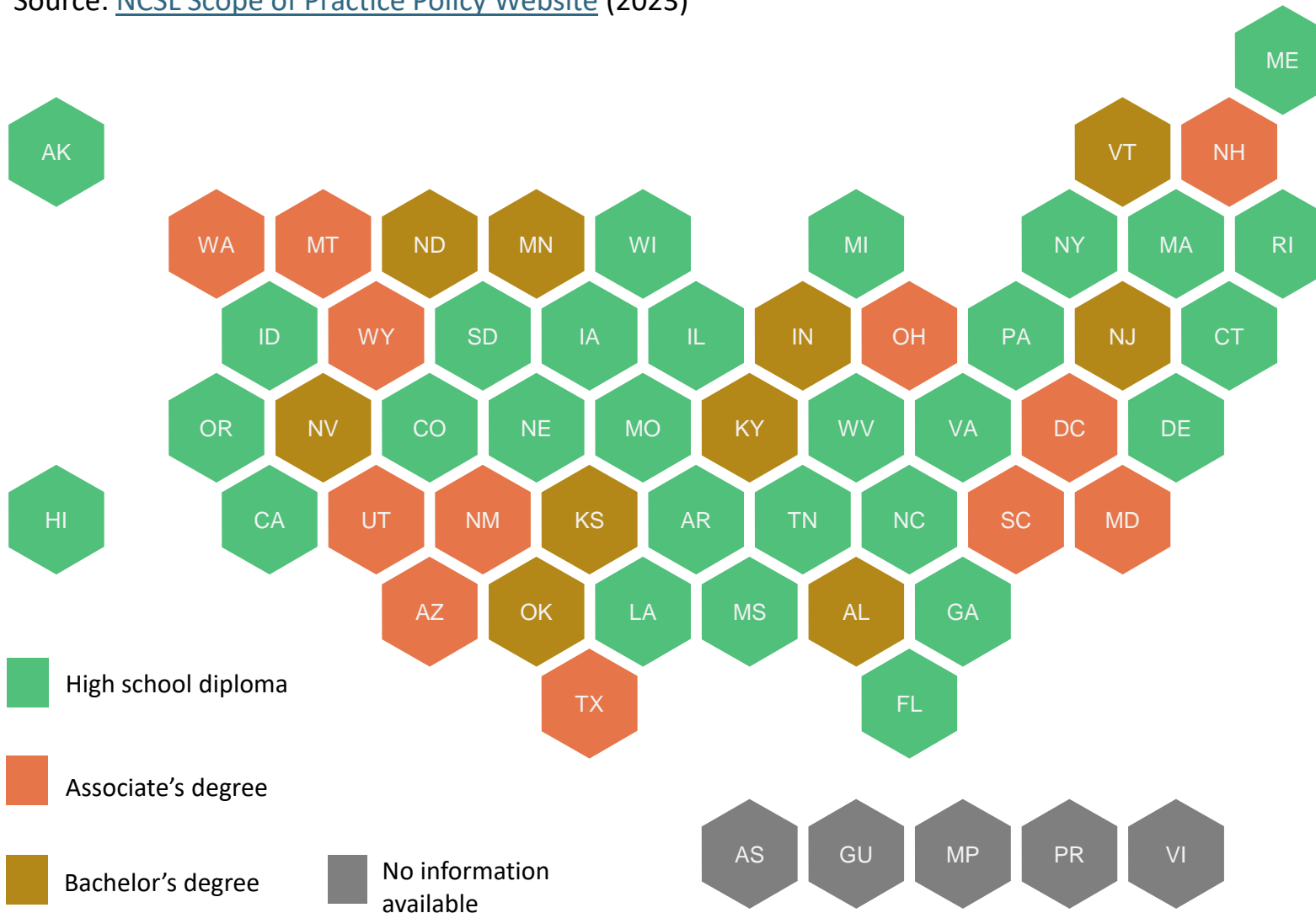
Certification

[Utah](#) (2022) and [Virginia](#) (2020) established certification requirements for community health workers.

Addiction Counselor Education Requirements

Source: [NCSL Scope of Practice Policy Website](#) (2023)

NCSL Resource!
[Scope of Practice Policy Website](#) (Ongoing)



Maryland [HB 291](#) (2023) expanded the educational requirements for clinical or graduate alcohol and drug counselors to include programs deemed equivalent in subject matter to counseling.

South Dakota [SB 8](#) (2023) allowed the board to reactivate an expired certificate or license within four years if the holder meets certain requirements.

Peer Support Specialist Reimbursement

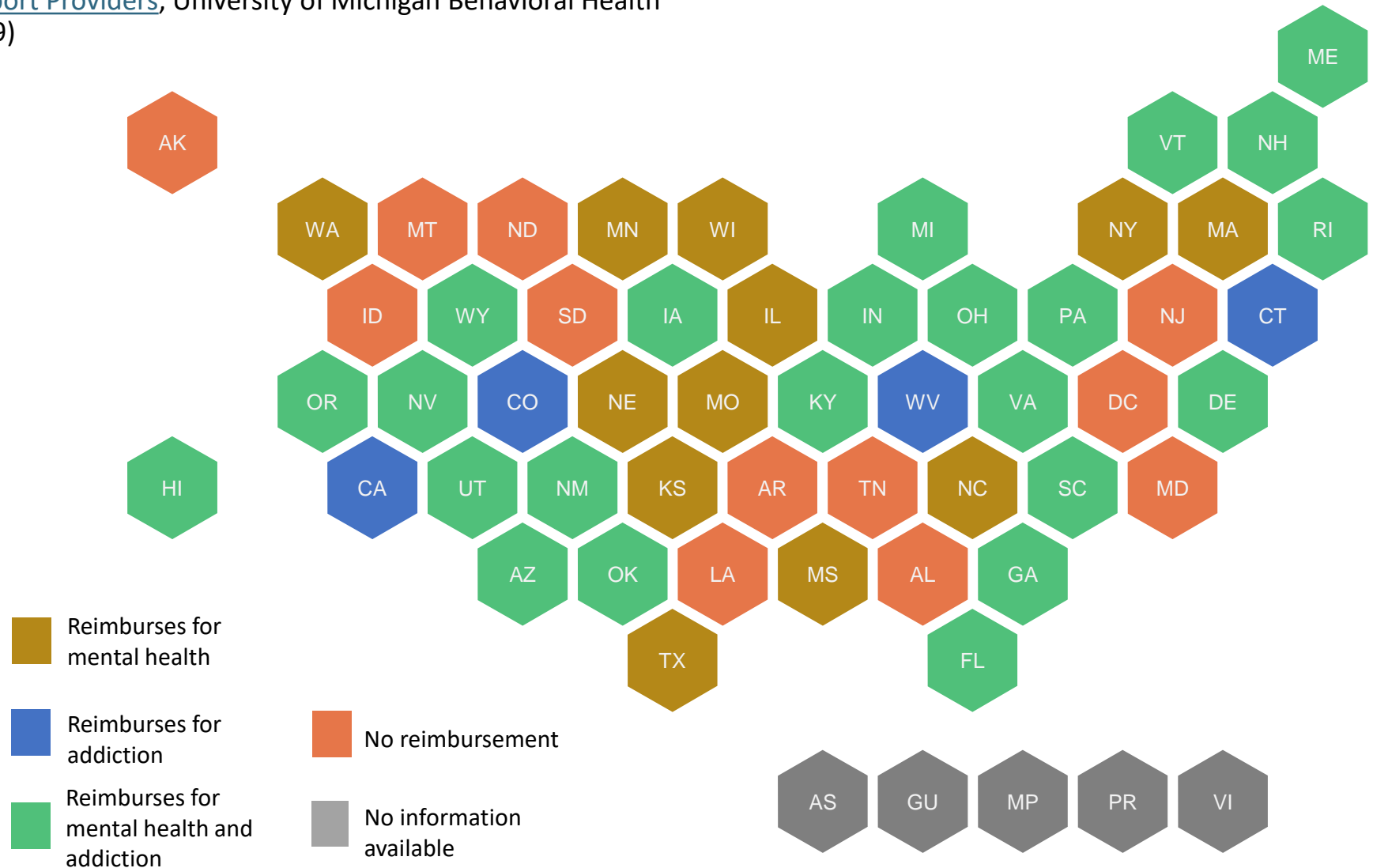
Source: [National Analysis of Peer Support Providers](#), University of Michigan Behavioral Health Workforce Research Center (Aug. 2019)

Washington [SB 5189](#) (2023): Behavioral Health Support Specialists

- Establishes certification requirements:
 - Bachelor's degree.
 - Behavioral health support specialist program.
 - Examination.
- Requires Medicaid reimbursement by January 1, 2025.

NCSL Resource!

[Peer Support Specialists: Connections to Mental Health Care](#) (2022)



3. Expanding the Reach of Existing Professionals

Telebehavioral Health

- Expanded settings:
 - Oklahoma [SB 674](#) (2021)
 - Mississippi [SB 2799](#) (2021)
 - New York SB 2507 (2021)
- Expanded providers:
 - Louisiana [HB 449](#) (2020)
 - Maryland [HB 1287](#) (2021)

Interstate Licensure

- [Psychological Interjurisdictional Compact \(PSYPACT\)](#)
 - 40 states enacted
 - 19 states effective
- [Counseling compact](#)
 - 39 states enacted
 - Six states and D.C. pending



4. Addressing the Distribution of Professionals

Scholarships, loan forgiveness and repayment

- [41 states, D.C. and the Northern Mariana Islands](#) receive federal State Loan Repayment Program funding.
- [The Kansas Bridging Plan](#) (2020)
- [The Minnesota Rural Physician Loan Forgiveness Plan](#) (2021)

Tax incentives

- Utah [Code Ann. 59-10-1111](#) (2017)
- Oregon [HB 2949](#) (2021)

5. Retaining Professionals in the Workforce



Building provider resiliency



Mentoring relationships



Continuing education

Addressing Burnout in the Behavioral Health Workforce Through Organizational Strategies
SAMHSA, 2022

- Practice delivery improvements
- Workflow modifications
- Institutional policy changes
- Organizational culture change
- Expanding resources for staff

Behavioral health programs for health professions:

- [Minnesota](#) Health Professionals Service Program operates peer support networks.
- [Florida](#) contracts with third-party organizations to promote health professional wellness.



Building Provider Resiliency





Mentoring Relationships

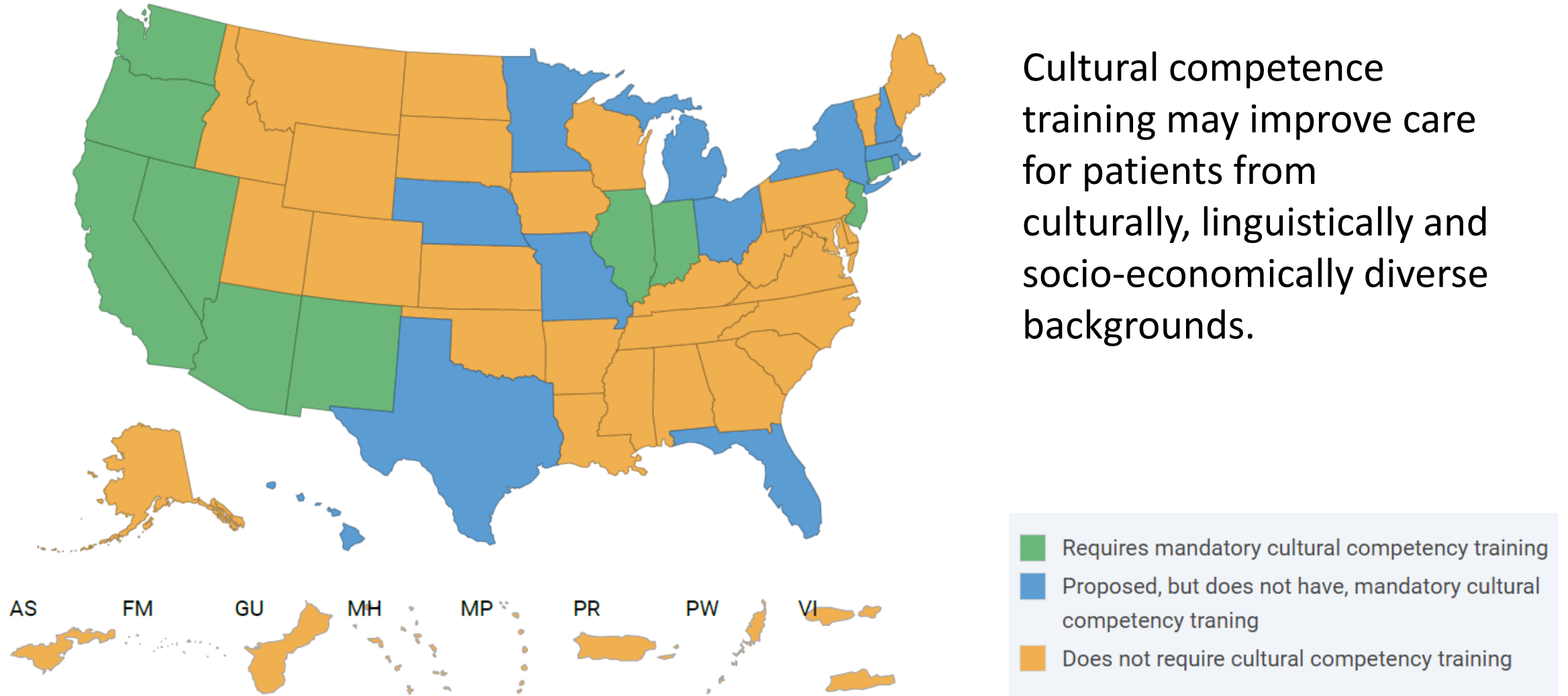


State Project ECHO Programs:

- [Indiana](#) established Opioid Use Disorder TeleECHO Clinics through the 21st Century Cures Act.
 - Knowledge about opioid use disorders increased.
 - External demands on time limited participation.
- [Minnesota](#) established a health professionals service program providing tele-mentoring by interdisciplinary specialists for providers in rural and underserved areas.
 - More likely to prescribe buprenorphine to patients.
 - Establish a robust continuum of care.

Continuing Education Requirements

State- and Territory-led Initiatives for Mandatory Cultural Competency Training ([Think Cultural Health](#), HHS, 2023)



NCSL Resources

- [Report: Leveraging Career Pathway Programs: State Strategies to Combat Health Workforce Shortages, 2023](#)
- [The Medicaid Toolkit, 2023](#)
- [Scope of Practice Policy Website, ongoing](#)
- [Our American States Podcast: The Growing Nursing Shortage, 2023](#)
- [Webinar: Understanding Medicaid's Role in Graduate Medical Education, 2023](#)
- [Report: State Strategies to Recruit and Retain the Behavioral Health Workforce, 2022](#)
- [Brief: Peer Support Specialists: Connections to Mental Health Care Brief, 2022](#)
- [Subscribe to NCSL's Health Link Newsletter: \[www.ncsl.org/subscribe\]\(http://www.ncsl.org/subscribe\)](#)



Reach Out Anytime!

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