

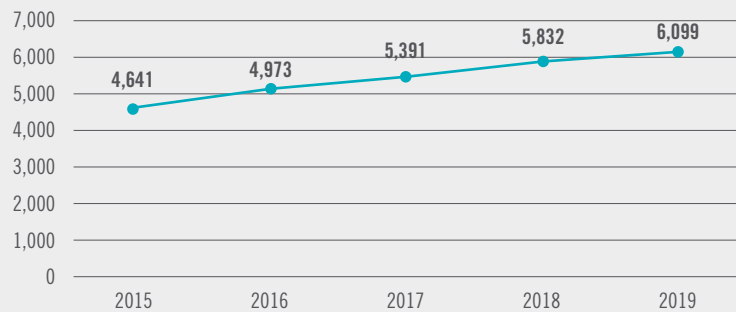
Behavioral health professionals provide mental health assessment, diagnosis, treatment and crisis intervention services for adults and children. Their patients have a broad range of mental health and social needs.

Behavioral health professionals may work independently or collaborate with treating physicians, psychiatrists and allied health professionals to plan and direct treatment. They also may administer, consult, research and teach. They spend most of their time seeing patients in outpatient settings, although demand is increasing for hospital and community-based care/ social needs coordination.

OUTLOOK

A national behavioral health workforce shortage may grow as the expanded focus on total health and impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic require increased mental health services. The opioid epidemic is creating new demand for addiction services, complicating the workforce shortage. Kaiser Permanente is addressing this shortage by advocating for changes in state and national policy, implementing telehealth, and prioritizing training and education for employees.

RISING DEMAND: Kaiser Permanente's behavioral health jobs have grown 30% since 2015



EDUCATION AND ADVANCED TRAINING

Building the behavioral health workforce involves extensive training.

Foundational education

- » Bachelor's degree (psychology, human services)

Advanced education

- » Master's degree or higher

- » State licensure required for therapy providers
- » Must have a National Provider Identifier

In-demand specialty certification or training

- » Addiction support/counseling
- » Integrated behavioral health within primary care
- » Trauma-informed care

- » Eating disorder
- » Child therapist
- » Autism spectrum disorder
- » Behavior analysis
- » Neuropsychology
- » Cognitive behavior therapy
- » Motivational interviewing

CREDENTIALS AND ASSOCIATIONS

Most health care-based behavioral health positions require a master's degree or higher and, for therapy providers, state licensure.

Social worker (MA, MS): Trained in social behaviors to restore or enhance social functioning

Marriage, family and child counselor* (MA, MS): Trained in psychology or social work

Clinical psychologist (PhD, EdD, PsyD): Trained in psychological theories and methods

Psychiatric nurse practitioner

(PMHNP): Registered nurse who has received additional clinical training in behavioral health

Physician assistant (PA): Certified PA who has received certificate of added qualifications in psychiatry

Psychiatrist (MD): Medical doctor who has specialized in psychiatry

Psychoanalyst (MD, PhD): Trained in psychoanalysis

Peer support:** High school graduate who has personal experience with mental health issues; credentials vary by state

(e.g., certified recovery support specialist, certified addiction specialist, certified addiction counselor)

Professional associations

- » National Association of Social Workers
- » National Board for Certified Counselors
- » American Psychiatric Association
- » American Nurses Credentialing Center
- » National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants

* Currently not eligible for Medicare reimbursement

** Role not consistently used in Kaiser Permanente

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WORK ENVIRONMENT
Care settings

- » **Inpatient:** hospital, hospice, nursing homes
- » **Outpatient:** ambulatory, home health, clinics, private practice
- » **Virtual:** remote monitoring, telehealth

Care anywhere

- » Telehealth: video/phone visits, chat sessions, email requests
- » Self-management or wellness

apps to empower the patient (mindfulness, self-awareness)

- » Wearables to monitor patient; can be used to predict behavior or episodes
- » Home care to support behavior changes by building the right environment
- » Use of augmented or virtual reality to treat anxiety, trauma, phobia, depression
- » Focus on social needs (housing, food, utilities, transportation) to improve health outcomes


TAKE ACTION

Employees: Explore career paths at kpcareerplanning.org/paths. Partnership union members can talk with an education trust career counselor: Ben Hudnall Memorial Trust (bhmt.org/career-coaching) or SEIU UHW-West and Joint Employer Education Fund (theadfund.org/cc). For California employees interested in careers as mental health professionals, Kaiser Permanente has launched a Mental Health Scholars Academy (kp.org/mentalhealthscholars).

Managers: Adapt to emerging trends. Talk with a Workforce of the Future implementation specialist to discuss training and education opportunities (kpcareerplanning.org/prd/contact_us.php).

CURRENT CORE JOB SKILLS	FUTURE CORE SKILLS	EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Collaboration » Strong communication » Instruct and counsel patients within individual, family or group settings » Assess medication adherence » Assess, diagnose and treat patients » Crisis intervention » Chart accuracy » Detail oriented » Familiar with DSM-5 » Empathy » Know and apply standards related to patient treatment, rights and confidentiality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Integration with primary care » Address social/community needs » Interdisciplinary team case management » Multilingual (Spanish, Mandarin, etc.) » Combine soft and hard sciences by looking at biological factors that may lead to mental health issues (such as vitamin D deficiency) » Adaptable » Provide virtual care » Digital fluency to support patients and apply digital tools to build clinical efficiencies » Data fluency to combine patient self-reported data and physical and mental health information to build trend reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Overall mental health workforce shortage » New opportunities in community-based care coordination » Increased focus on total health requires blending biological, psychological and social data to treat the whole patient » Peer-to-peer care with nonlicensed positions » Expect 20% growth in addiction services » Existing nurses receiving mental health training » More therapists expected to obtain PhDs

UPDATED SEPTEMBER 2020