Behavioral Health Support Specialist (BHSS)

A BHSS is a state certified bachelor-level mental and behavioral health provider who completed a minimum 240-hour practicum or registered apprenticeship, and graduated from a state approved BHSS education program in psychology, social work, or behavioral healthcare.

BHSS Competency Framework

- Health Equity
- Helping Relationships
- Cultural Responsiveness
- Team-Based Care & Collaboration
- Care Management & Coordination
- Screening & Assessment
- Evidence-Based Interventions
- Legal, Ethical & Professional Issues

A BHSS can...

- Facilitate mental and behavioral health symptom screening and explain results.
- Complete a client psychosocial history.
- Deliver brief evidence-based mental and behavioral health interventions for acute stress, depression, anxiety, and other common mental and behavioral health conditions under supervision.
- Use measurement-based care to tailor treatment goals to a patient's or client's needs.
- Facilitate structured suicide screening, assessment, and management.
- And much more!

A BHSS cannot...

- Diagnose mental and behavioral health conditions.

UW Medicine
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHIATRY AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

UW BHSS Workforce Development Project

The UW BHSS Workforce Development Project serves as a catalyst to scale the BHSS role for Washington State. UW is invested in supporting education partners and advocating for policies that help prepare the BHSS for team-based care.

Current Education Partners

1. Big Bend Community College
2. Centralia College
3. Central Washington University
4. Eastern Washington University
5. Edmonds College
6. Evergreen College
7. Lake Washington Institute of Technology
8. Olympic College
9. Spokane Falls Community College
10. Wenatchee Valley College

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Employment and practicum settings may include:

- Mental & Behavioral Health Agencies
- Crisis Services
- Integrated Primary Care
- Colleges & Schools
- Therapeutic Diversion Programs
- Not-for-Profit and Community-Based Organizations

Summary

- Bachelor-level provider with services billable to State Medicaid
- Trained to deliver brief evidence-based interventions suitable for a variety of settings
- Supervised by a master's or doctoral level licensed provider
- Team-based and community-centered preparation to optimize client or patient outcomes

Learn More

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