

Behavioral Health Support Specialist (BHSS)



A BHSS is a person who holds a bachelor's degree in psychology, social work, behavioral healthcare, or related degree from a DOH approved program, and provides brief, evidence-informed behavioral health treatment under supervision.

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

What Can a BHSS Do?

- Provides brief psychosocial interventions for acute stress, depression, anxiety, and other common mental and behavioral health conditions.
- Facilitate symptom screening and explain results.
- Deliver structured suicide screening, assessment and management.
- Provide psychoeducation to individuals and groups.
- Use measurement based care to tailor interventions to patient or client needs
- And much more!

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 Technical Institute
8. Olympic College
9. Spokane Falls Community College
10. Wenatchee Valley College

Developing Practicum and Employment Partnerships

- 240-hour minimum supervised practicum requirement
- Please contact UW BHSS or a current education partner to discuss BHSS placement. Examples of appropriate settings are:
 - Community Mental Health
 - Crisis Services
 - Integrated Care
 - Human Services
 - Higher and Secondary Education Settings
 - Therapeutic Diversion Programs
 - Supported Housing Services

Learn More



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