NE Behavioral Health Need

- 88 out of 93 counties in Nebraska meet federal criteria for Mental Health Professions Shortage Areas designation.
- Only 27 psychiatrists, 81 psychologists and 30 psychiatric nurse practitioners practice in rural Nebraska, covering 70,000 square miles.
- More than half of the behavioral health (BH) workforce is over age 50. Addiction counselors, psychiatrists and nurse practitioners are at the greatest risk of retirement.

About BHECN

- BHECN was created in 2009 to address the shortages of BH workforce and improve access to BH services in rural and underserved areas.
- BHECN is one of the only dedicated BH state agencies in the country with a BH workforce pipeline program (since 2012).
- Recognized regionally (Division of Behavioral Health) and nationally (National Council for Behavioral Health) for workforce development.
- BHECN established a “rural hub” in Kearney with focus on collaborations, education and integration strategies to grow NE rural BH workforce.

Interprofessional

- Ambassador Program
  - Career Presentations: 1,659 students
  - Conferences:
    - High School: 187 rural / 111 urban
    - College: 97 rural / 98 urban
    - FARM Camps: programs for Native American/frontier areas
- Collaborating with 17 training programs in counseling, psychology, psychiatry, social work, psychiatric nursing and marriage and family therapy with a goal to retain > 50% of all BH graduates in NE and track their retention.

By Profession

Behavioral Health Prescribers

Psychiatrists
- In 2015, 12 UNMC medical students matched in psychiatry — more than twice the national average.
- Supported 39 psychiatry residents in rural rotations in North Platte, Hastings and Kearney.

Psychiatric Nurse Practitioners
- In collaboration with UNMC and Creighton Psychiatric Nursing programs, BHECN is hosting the first statewide Psychiatric Nursing Workforce Summit.
- Conducted a Nursing Mental and Behavioral Health Care Webinar Series – 173 participants.

Psychiatric Physician Assistants
- Launched Psych PA Interest Group at UNMC and Union College.
- BHECN presented at the National PA Conference on the role of Psychiatric Physician Assistants.

Behavioral Health Nonprescribers

Psychologists:

Outcomes
• Supported 6 doctoral psychology interns trained in primary care practices in Hastings, Chadron/Alliance, Kearney, Columbus, Nebraska City and Grand Island.
  o 3 graduates have remained practicing in Nebraska City, Hastings and Omaha
• Psychological screenings of 5,189 children and adolescents have occurred over the past 30 months with 21% of youngsters screening positive for possible behavioral health disorders and 14.5% of parents indicating they would like help with their children.

Counselors
• Collaborated with UN-Kearney’s Mental Health Counseling program in establishing BHECN-Kearney, an extension intended to address rural BH problems in Central and Western Nebraska.
• With AmeriCorps, BHECN has provided support for 13 graduate Counseling trainees from UNK, Chadron State, Doane, Wayne State and UN-Omaha during 2014-16. Placements have been in primary care practices in Chadron, Valentine, Wahoo, Kearney, Crete, York, Columbus, Grand Island and Omaha.
  o 12 graduates have remained in Nebraska.

Social Workers
• BHECN has established a major collaborative agreement with the Grace Abbott School of Social Work at UNO. As a major partner with over 300 graduate and undergraduate students in Omaha and Kearney, our main focus currently is on increasing the behavioral health work force in both rural and underserved urban areas.

Marriage and Family Therapists (MFT)
• With funding from BHECN, the UN-L MFT program conducted a series of Community-based Participatory Research projects in rural Red Cloud, St. Paul and Albion, Nebraska.
• This year, with a combination of AmeriCorps and BHECN funding, three MFT interns will be supported in the UNMC Internal Medicine integrate care program.

Psychiatric Nurses (RN's)
• College of Nursing’s Psych Nursing program has partnered with BHECN to enhance the number of nurses working in mental health

Licensed Alcohol/Drug Abuse Certification (LADC)
• Partnering with DHHS and Attorney General’s office to host a statewide Opioid Summit, Oct. 2016
• From 2018 - 2020, BHECN’s Annual Conference will focus on Addictions

Other Workforce
Primary Care Providers
• Hosted the Integrated Behavioral Health Care Conference – 170 attendees
• Collaborate with 21 rural integrated BH training sites

School Personnel
• Hosted two School Mental Health Conferences addressing BH needs in schools - 587 attendees

Other providers
• Trained 2,936 in Trauma Informed Care

Unlicensed Workforce
• Collaborated with statewide behavioral health administrators and service providers to develop Direct Service Workforce Core Competencies

GAPS

By provider type:
• Prescribers: Shortage of psychiatric prescribers, primarily in rural, but also urban
• Nonprescribers: Aging of LADC population (greatest percentage over age 50), psychiatric nurses (RN’s)

By clinical needs:
• Rural
• Integrated BH
• CLAS – Culturally Linguistically Appropriate Services (i.e. Spanish-speaking, diverse providers, veterans)
• Addictions
• Corrections
• Child & Adolescent Services
• Geriatric
• Telehealth

opportunities

1. Recruitment
• Prescribers: Particularly psychiatric nursing and psychiatric PA’s
• Nonprescribers: Training in integrated BH, RN’s
• CLAS Providers: Underserved and diverse communities

2. Retention
• Incentives for graduates to practice in underserved communities including loan-forgiveness, scholarships, continuing education, etc.

3. Training
• Collaboration among all 50 states to share workforce solutions
• Expansion of programming to meet urgent clinical needs for BH and primary care workforce