

Behavioral Health Staffing and Productivity Guidelines



**PROGRAM DIRECTORS' MEETING
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Staffing



- Existing distribution of mental health providers is 69 per 100,000 average in the U.S. (Ellis et. al., 2007, APHA)
- With the increased mental health disease burden in Indian country, there is greater need
- Recommended ratio of substance abuse providers for IHS is 1 per 1200 service population

Prevention business case



- **Mental health and substance abuse disorders complicate the management of other chronic health conditions**
- **Healthcare cost effectiveness studies have shown savings of from \$1 averted for each \$1 spent to \$7 averted for each \$1 spent (\$4 saved per \$1 spent most freq cited)**

Productivity benchmarks for substance abuse



- **Recent substance abuse studies:**
 - 48% of 40 hour work week spent in direct patient contact (individual, family, group interventions)
 - Avg caseload 15-20 active per counselor
 - Larger caseloads caused greater turnover, avg turnover rate 18% (L. Ducharme et al, presented 2005 Am Soc Assn)

More SA productivity studies



- **Clients tend to have better treatment outcomes when more counseling sessions and case management services are provided and when counselor caseloads are low (Knight D, Hlth Svcs Research, Apr 08)**
- **Same study showed avg about same # cases per counselor, 15-20**
- **2-3 hours counseling/client/wk (individ, fam, group)**

Mental health productivity



- **Industry standard for mental health client contact hours are about 25 hours/ week for non-prescribing**
- **Most non-prescribing MH providers see clients in range of 0.5-2 x/ week**

Variability factors



- Amount of office support
- Amount case management support
- Amount of outreach and liaison activities performed
- The mixture of treatment modalities (usually see more patients with group therapy)

Sustainability factors



- **Needs and desires of the community for outreach and accessibility**
- **Provider mix, service mix and billing structure**

Medi-Cal Billing under MOA



- # of visits which can be billed under Medi-Cal:
 - **LCSW:** Unlimited 23 (other health), unlimited CPSP (pre-natal and perinatal program)
 - > **Psychologist:** 2 “23” visits per month for adults, unlimited for EPSDT (under age 21)
 - > **MFT:** Can bill only under EPSDT and CPSP (must be listed as social worker as MFT not technically recognized)
 - > **Substance abuse counselor:** Visits not recognized except under Drug Medi-Cal program