

#Out4MentalHealth

Who Can Provide What Specific Mental Health Services

The chart indicates which providers are generally permitted to provide a service. Individual providers do not always offer every service their profession allows. The scope of services offered by individual providers is generally determined by education and experience level, employer type, specific job descriptions at the organization, whether they are contracted or receive grant funds to provide specific services, and the types of payments they are able to accept.

Mental Health Service	Types of Providers			
Clinical Assessment and Diagnosis	Primary Care Provider	Psychiatrist	Nurse Practitioner	Physician's Assistant
	Psychologist	Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT)		
	Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW)	Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor (LPCC)		
Medication Support	Primary Care Provider	Psychiatrist	Nurse Practitioner	Physician Assistant
Therapeutic Individual and Group Counseling	Psychologist	Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT)		
	Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW)	Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor (LPCC)		
	Associate Professional Clinical Counselor (APCC)	Associate Clinical Social Worker (ACSW)		
	Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist Intern (LMFTI)			
Case Management and Advocacy	Associate Clinical Social Worker (ACSW)	Associate Professional Clinical Counselor (APCC)		
	Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist Intern (LMFTI)	Master of Social Work (MSW)		
	Personal Services Coordinator (PSC)	Peer Advocate		
Peer Support	Personal Services Coordinator (PSC)	Peer Advocate	Community Group Facilitator	
Life Skills and Coaching	Master of Social Work (MSW)	Personal Services Coordinator (PSC)	Peer Advocate	
	Life Coach	Pastor/Spiritual Leader		

*A Physician Assistant has prescribing authority but prescribes medication as an "agent" of the supervising physician

*Psychologists have doctorates but are not medical doctors and must be licensed before providing mental health care

*LMFTI, ACSW, and APCC must be supervised by a licensed mental health clinician (LMFT, LCSW, or LPCC)

*APCC and LPCC are not permitted to provide couples or family counseling without obtaining additional training, supervision, and written confirmation from the California Board of Behavioral Sciences

*MSW are also able to facilitate group counseling

Color Key: LESS Experience/Training/Education/Licensure MORE

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Where and How of Accessing Mental Health Services

The following is a list of places and ways that you can access mental health services in your community using different financial sources, provider types, and points of entry.

College Campuses: Students frequently pay for mental health services as a part of their “student fees” each semester. Support can generally be accessed via the campus health center for no additional cost to the student.

Community Based Organizations (CBO): Services are frequently *free, low-cost, or sliding scale* for the client. Services can range from highly specialized to a broad continuum of care. CBOs with mental health services are sometimes contracted with counties, receive grants, or fundraise in order to provide support in their local communities.

County Behavioral/Mental Health Services: The majority of public mental health services in California are implemented at the county level, either directly or by contracting with CBOs. Some services are Medi-Cal specific but many are available to anyone who qualifies for a particular program. Your county’s website will have more information.

Employee Assistance Plans (EAP): Depending on the plan coverage, some EAPs provide direct mental health support via phone or local contracted providers or can help you locate services in your area.

Health Centers and Medical Groups: Many health centers and medical groups, particularly Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC) offer a full range of comprehensive services. You can find out what mental health services your health center or medical group provide by checking their website or contacting their general inquiry phone line.

Health Insurance Plans: Per federal health guidelines in the Affordable Care Act, all health insurance plans *must cover mental health* services at parity with medical and surgical benefits. This includes privately purchased insurance, employer insurance, all plans through Covered California, and Medi-Cal. You can contact your insurance plan to find out what types of care are covered and access a network provider list. California parity requirements may also allow you to receive *reimbursement for out of network providers* in order to preserve continuity of care.

Hospitals and Emergency Room: If you are experiencing a *mental health crisis and need immediate intervention*, medical providers at your local emergency room can assess you for risk of harm and help you get access to care through a 72 hour hold at the hospital for stabilization, followed by a transfer to inpatient psychiatric care if needed. If you disclose that you may harm yourself or another person, medical doctors in most hospital departments have the capacity to assess for harm and a responsibility to get you access to appropriate care.

K-12 Schools: Many schools offer prevention and early intervention support to youth. Additionally, students with specific diagnoses can access individualized services on campus with a 504 Plan or Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Private Practitioners: Many mental health providers in private practice will accept specific insurance plans. They are often also open to accepting sliding scale payments based on need. When you find a provider you like, it is appropriate to ask about negotiating payment in advance based on your financial capacity.

Psychiatric Facilities: Based on the need assessed during intake, psychiatric facilities can often offer different levels of care, including inpatient care, partial hospitalization, and full-time or part-time intensive outpatient programs. Some psychiatric facilities only accept patients from their particular medical group (i.e. Kaiser, Sutter) based on emergency room or physician referrals. Some psychiatric facilities are private and accept insurance and private payments. There are no longer state-run psychiatric facilities but many counties run public psychiatric facilities. Each psychiatric facility has their own intake and assessment process, availability, and range of services.

