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## **Division of Public and Behavioral Health NEWS RELEASE**

### **Nevada's DBPH Psychology Internship Consortium Announced**

Health professional shortages have been a challenge in Nevada for decades. The expansion of Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act has increased health care access to hundreds of thousands of Nevadans, creating even higher demand for health care professionals. In anticipation of this increase, the NV Division of Public and Behavioral Health (DPBH) facilitated a pipeline mapping project to identify challenges across multiple sectors, and to make recommendations for bringing more health professionals to Nevada.

Partners from the Nevada System of Higher Education, multiple professional licensing boards, and multiple professional associations brought a range of insights and expertise to the project. Among the many recommendations, the need for more internship or residency slots was identified across a number of professions, which created a window of opportunity to move forward with specific projects under DPBH. DPBH provides direct behavioral health care services through a network of clinics and hospitals in northern, southern and rural Nevada, as well as the state forensic hospital in Sparks.

DBPH, in partnership with the state and regional Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education (WICHE), has created a pre-doctoral internship program for psychologists: Nevada Psychology Internship Consortium (NV-PIC). NV-PIC will matriculate its first cohort of interns in the fall of 2015. Following months of planning and coordination NV-PIC was able to participate in the national matching service for pre-doctoral psychology interns. On Friday, Dr. Sean Dodge, Psychology Intern Training Director for DPBH, was pleased to announce that, "NV-PIC successfully matched with interns at all four of its training sites. All four incoming interns are highly qualified and will be coming to Nevada with an expressed passion to help support behavioral health care in our state. The ability to successfully match with four highly qualified interns is a great match day for any program, let alone one in its inaugural year!"

Because Nevada's most severe shortages are in the area of behavioral health, this has been the primary focus of pipeline project. Plans to replicate this process in all areas of primary care are currently under review by the state Legislature.

For more information about the Division of Public and Behavioral Health, go to: <http://health.nv.gov>.

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Richard Whitley, Administrator