

# **Draft Language for the Rural Regional Behavioral Health Policy Board's Bill Draft Request for the 2023 Legislative Session**

8.23.22

*(Changes are in italics and were made within the Rural Regional Behavioral Health Policy Board meeting 8.24.22)*

## **Background/pre-amble:**

*(Valerie instructed to add pre-amble that references successful models from other states and the nature of the problem in Nevada – long-standing problem in Nevada. Previous efforts have been siloed; idea behind the center is to coordinate efforts statewide to improve outcomes. Also include data/information about outcomes from other programs and some expected outcomes from this program in Nevada. This is truly a home-grown program to improve the number of providers who are Nevadans who will be serving the state's most underserved communities – rural, frontier, and urban. Include/craft one-line elevator description as the beginning of the pre-amble.)*

## **Infrastructure:**

The Center will be housed under the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE), and seated at one or more institutions of NSHE. The Center may be separated from NSHE as an appropriate nonprofit organization at a later date.

The administering institution(s) serve(s) as a hub in a multisite, statewide model, focusing on rural, frontier, and underserved urban communities. The Center's Hub(s) works with regional hubs to assess and serve the workforce needs of specific, well-defined regions of the *Regional Behavioral Health Policy Boards* (NRS 433.425 through NRS 433.4295, inclusive) and specialize in specific research and training areas, such as telehealth or mental health-criminal justice partnerships, for which the regional hub can serve as a statewide leader.

The administering institution provides infrastructure to organize regional behavioral health education and outreach related to behavioral health workforce development, research, and professional recruitment, retention, and outreach. As budgets allow, this may include: conference and training space, research and faculty staff time, telehealth, and distance learning equipment.

The Center is tasked with a convening and coordinating role for workforce research and planning, including monitoring progress toward Center goals, as outlined in its strategic plan.

Center shall coordinate with key State agencies involved in behavioral health, workforce development, and higher education in order to leverage disparate resources from health care, workforce, and economic development programs in state government.

The Center shall organize a consortium of NSHE institutions in partnerships with providers; school districts; Nevada Department of Education; law enforcement; consumers and their families; hospitals; State agencies including Nevada DHHS; internship sites; active-duty service members veterans, and their

families (SMVF); representatives from historically marginalized communities (including LGBTQ+ and BIPOC); and other stakeholders to implement workforce development concepts and strategies in every region of the State, focusing on rural, frontier, and underserved urban locations.

The Center is responsible for developing and implementing a strategic plan for the recruitment, education, and retention of a qualified, diverse, and evolving behavioral health workforce in the State of Nevada. Objectives of the Center's strategic plan will include convening and organizing vested stakeholders outlined above to focus, advise and participate in the implementation of efforts to support behavioral health workforce development across the spectrum of the behavioral health system. It is acknowledged that the Nevada behavioral health system that may be affected by these efforts spans across many sectors, including government agencies, clinics, behavioral health facilities, prevention programs, hospitals, schools, jails, prisons and juvenile justice, specialty courts, police and emergency medical services, consumers and their families, and other areas of need.

The Center will carry out its work in a manner that leverages existing programs and resources, and avoids duplication of efforts.

### **Recruitment**

The Center will build partnerships with school districts, public institutions of higher education, relevant occupational licensing boards, and workforce development agencies to create pipelines to behavioral health careers from K-12 education through professional practice.

Special focus for recruitment will be placed on both youth from underserved or marginalized communities, as well as those who are interested in pursuing careers that would fill Nevada's most critical service gaps, including providers for children, the elderly, and other underserved populations.

The Center will explore means to also recruit and support adult learners who are interested in pursuing careers in behavioral health. These Nevadans come with experience and real-world expertise that may advise their professional practice and improve outcomes for consumers.

### **Retention of New and Existing Workforce**

The Center will include strategies within its strategic plan to address retaining Nevada's existing behavioral health workforce, and ensuring that new providers who have participated in the pipeline programs stay in Nevada.

The Center will work with professional organizations, training and educational institutions, and others to ensure the availability of high-quality continuing education on emerging, evidence-based, and best practices to existing Nevada providers in various settings.

Additionally, the Center will either directly provide or work to secure through other agencies technical assistance to providers regarding non-academic and administrative issues related to providing services in Nevada, including business licensing, business planning, insurance billing, staff management and leadership, and others.

### **Training**

The Center will work expand the number of available intern supervisors and internship sites across Nevada. This will be done through the provision of technical assistance to support potential and existing

professional training program sites for post-graduate and graduate student training that provide effective training in evidence-based behavioral health practices to ensure capacity meets the need of incoming students. Additionally, the Center will work to provide training specifically for potential graduate and post-graduate supervisors to ensure the need for high-quality supervisors is being met. Priority will be placed on sites and/or supervisors that serve rural, frontier, or underserved urban communities.

The Center will also explore opportunities to either collaborate with existing entities or build new programs to assist adult learners in pursuing education and training required to become a behavioral health provider in Nevada.

### **Reporting**

The Center will report at least annually to all interim and legislative committees for Health and Human Services; to interim and legislative Commerce and Labor committees; to the Governor's Commission on Behavioral Health; and to all Regional Behavioral Health Policy Boards.

### **Data Collection, Analysis, and Program Evaluation**

The Center will coordinate with other entities who already collect Behavioral Health Workforce data to best utilize existing resources and reduce duplication. The Center will collect and analyze additional data as necessary to examine where Nevada's existing behavioral health workforce originated; to identify how participants of the pipeline move through the state's systems and where they land; and ultimately, to use this information for program evaluation to ensure the strength and success of the workforce pipeline.

The Center will also work with agencies involved in the pipeline and other resources to develop systems to identify how educational and training organizations are preparing students to correctly implement evidence-based practices, and which practices and therapeutic modalities are being taught to graduates. The Center will then work to explore means of tracking how these practices are implemented by graduates within their work, as feasible.

Furthermore, the Center will also collect data regarding specialties pursued by students of participating programs, and will identify whether or not the output of students with specialty skills (children, geriatrics, etc.) match the needs of Nevada residents statewide and by behavioral health region.

### **Funding** (potentially remove – would create fiscal note)

As behavioral health and physical health are neither mutually exclusive, nor can one be ignored in place of the other, educational programs for providers in both areas must be funded appropriately. The Center will operate on funds appropriated in a similar manner as those previously appropriated by the Governor's Office for General Medical Education and other programs. This funding source would create parity for education in health professions that aims to meet the growing needs of Nevada. *The funding would be used to support the development and yearly operations of the Center, as well as the programs and initiatives it launches.*