



## Psychiatric-Mental Health Team Members

**Psychologists** are doctoral-level professionals who study human behavior, thoughts, and emotions. They are trained to evaluate a person's mental health using clinical interviews, psychological evaluations and testing. They are licensed to provide therapy, assessing and diagnosing mental health problems, and conducting research. But some also teach, write, provide training, or consult. Degree requirements: Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in a field of psychology or Doctor of Psychology (Psy.D.).

**Psychiatrists** are physicians who specialize in the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of mental illnesses and emotional disorders. They have extensive training in both medicine and psychology, which allows them to offer a wide range of treatment options to their patients. Some have completed additional training in child and adolescent mental health, substance use disorders or geriatric psychiatry. Degree requirements: Doctor of Medicine (MD) or Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO), plus completion of residency training in psychiatry.

**Counselors** are masters-level health care professionals who operate under a variety of job titles—counselor, clinician, therapist—based on the treatment setting. They are licensed to provide support, guidance, and therapy, focused on developing coping skills, improving communication and problem-solving abilities, developing treatment plans, and referring clients to other services. Degree requirements: master's degree (M.S. or M.A.) in a mental health-related field such as psychology, counseling psychology, marriage or family therapy, among others. Examples of licensure include Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC), Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT), and Licensed Clinical Alcohol & Drug Abuse Counselor (LCADAC)

**Social workers** provide a wide range of services to help individuals, families, and communities overcome challenges and achieve better outcomes. They focus on building relationships and helping people access resources, solve problems, and improve their lives. Social workers may help people cope with social determinants of health such as poverty, unemployment, abuse, addiction, mental health problems, and any other issues that impact a person's ability to function effectively and live to their fullest potential. Degree requirements: master's degree in social work (MSW).

**Clinical social workers** are trained to evaluate a person's mental health and use therapeutic techniques based on specific training programs. They are also trained in case management and advocacy services. A master's degree is required and licensure is as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW),



**Certified Peer Specialists** are trained specialists who have lived the experience with a mental health condition or substance use disorder. They are certified and prepared to assist with recovery by helping a person set goals and develop strengths. They provide support, mentoring and guidance.

**Pastoral Counselors** are clergy members with special training in providing pastoral counseling.

**Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurses** work with individuals, families, groups, and communities to assess mental health, and contribute to the development of a diagnosis and a plan of care. PMH nurses maintain current knowledge of advances in genetics and neuroscience and their impact on psychopharmacology and other treatment modalities.

According to the APNA, Psychiatric-Mental Health (PMH) registered nurses (RN) and advanced practice registered nurses (APRN) represent the second largest group of behavioral health professionals in the U.S. Both PMH RNs and APRNs play a pivotal role in providing professional mental health services to patients across the nation. PMH nursing intervention is both an art and a science – employing a wide range of nursing, psychosocial, and neurobiological expertise to produce effective interventions and positive outcomes for patients facing mental health or substance use disorders. PMH nurses are trained mental health care professionals that practice according to high quality licensing and credentialing standards. Psychiatric nurses form strong therapeutic relationships with people experiencing mental illnesses and/or substance use disorders, and often with their families as well. PMH nurses also work to educate patients, families, health care peers, and communities to understand that whole health begins with mental health – actively working to shatter the stigma associated with mental health care and treatment.



Services provided by Psychiatric Mental Health Registered Nurses (PMHRN) can include:

1. Health promotion and maintenance
2. Intake screening, evaluation and triage
3. Case management
4. Teaching self-care activities
5. Administration and monitoring of psychobiological treatment regimens
6. Crisis intervention and stabilization efforts
7. Psychiatric rehabilitation and intervention
8. Educating patients, families and communities
9. Coordinating care

The **psychiatric-mental health advance practice nurse or nurse practitioner (PMHNP)** holds a specialized master's or doctoral degree with training and licensing that includes prescriptive authority. Their role will overlap with that of a psychologist, psychiatrist, and psychiatric RN.