



KHA's Capitol Comments
November 28, 2022

Mental Health Beds Committee Meets, Makes Recommendations

Today, the Mental Health Beds Committee, chaired by Senator Carolyn McGinn (R-Sedgwick), heard testimony regarding the behavioral health workforce in rural America from The Center for Health and Research Transformation by Nancy Baum, director of health policy; and Jaque King, lead healthcare analyst.

The committee learned more about the 2019 recruitment and retention study for those working in behavioral health in rural America. The conferees highlighted findings including:

- Financial Incentives – Loan repayment programs, tax credit programs and scholarships
- Education and Training – Pipeline/pathway programs and increasing residency slots
- Practice-Oriented Tactics – Telehealth, licensure and certification for social workers, scope of practice changes, allowance for retired workers, visa waiver programs and online job databases

Conferees testified that more than 50 percent of behavioral health care is delivered through primary care. The committee learned how federally qualified health centers and integrated care settings, such as certified community behavioral health centers and schools, are key in getting to demand reduction. They also pointed out the requirement for social workers to work in the field in Kansas, spoke of opportunities to put professionals in the field earlier, suggested mentorship as alternate opportunities and addressed continuing education requirements. They highlighted the need for community health workers as extenders, and the broader use of medication-assisted treatment as an evidence-based intervention for opioid addiction treatments. Presenters highlighted an example that Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan has a provider incentive to access training.

Dr. Mike Dodson, State Hospital Commissioner from the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services presented to the committee about staff training and preparation at state hospitals. Dr. Dodson explained the educational and training requirements for mental health/developmental disability technicians and licensed mental health technicians. The committee asked Dr. Dodson about recruitment processes and pay levels for each.

Carol Moreland, an executive administrator from the Kansas State Board of Nursing:

- Provided an overview of educational and training requirements for nurses in Kansas.
- Explained the review process for nursing programs and quality as it relates to the work done at KSBN
- Discussed the survey process for national accreditation and non-national accreditation programs
- Highlighted the role in investigating nursing program complaints and the data being provided by the programs to KSBN
- Licensed Mental Health Technicians
 - 450 hours of theoretical instruction
 - 450 hours of clinical instruction
 - There are currently 57 LMHTs in Kansas
 - The pass rate for the state hospital programs are about 71 percent
- Licensed Practical Nurses
 - Must have 15 credit hours in nursing courses and clinical observation experience, with no more than 15 percent of the total hours of clinical course,
 - Simulation experiences shall constitute no more than 50 percent of the total hours for the clinical course
 - Must pass the NCLEX PN
 - Currently, there are 1,713 LPNs with multi-state licenses and 7,577 with single-state licenses.
- Associate Degree in Nursing and Baccalaureate Degree in Nursing
 - Must have 30 credit hours in a nursing major
 - In addition to prerequisites, clinical observational experiences shall be no more than 15 percent of the total hours for the clinical course
 - Simulation experiences shall constitute no more than 50 percent of the total hours for the clinical course
 - Must pass the NCLEX RN.
 - Currently, there are 14,014 multi-state RNs, and 38,555 single-state RNs licensed in Kansas.
- Advanced Practice Registered Nurses
 - Must have 45 semester credit hours in addition to pre-requisites
 - A minimum of 500 hours of clinical learning in each clinical track
 - Kansas currently has the following licensed APRNs in Kansas:
 - Clinical Nurse Specialist: 386
 - Nurse Midwife: 96
 - Nurse Practitioner: 6,682
 - Registered Nurse Anesthetist: 1,258

Moreland suggested there should be college credit associated with licensed mental health technicians through community colleges. She also suggested there be a continued focus on increasing faculty and clinical sites for nursing programs. Moreland requested additional resources for marketing and additional resources for scholarships and loan repayment programs. She also expressed continued interest in meeting with kids in the middle school age range.

The committee made the following recommendations be further considered during the 2023 legislative session.

- Allocation of funds by the Legislature during the next fiscal year for up to 50 state institutional beds in the Sedgwick County area with room for the expansion of more beds in the future on the premise of where the facility would be located, pending the related Strengthening People and Revitalizing Kansas funding request outcomes.
- State Finance Council grant approval of \$15 million as deemed necessary by the state and the county to begin a request for proposal process by next year.
- Spending the last meeting as a zoom chance to develop with stakeholders:
 - scholarships
 - re-entry after retirement
 - internships
 - a workforce course curriculum specific to the mental health community
- Appropriate up to \$5 million for each fiscal year for a two-year pilot program for hospitals for reimbursement for patients awaiting involuntary hospital admissions
- Include an annual report to social services budget committees annually and also KanCare oversight committee
- Have KDADS work with Sedgwick County to develop more information on which parts need to be state-owned but which parts could be privatized
- Investigate additional federal funds that could be used for additional reimbursement options
- Investigate technology applications that could assist in helping connect Kansans with services

The committee will meet again on Dec. 21 via zoom with stakeholders to finalize the workplace pipeline possibilities.