



MEMORANDUM

April 8, 2019

To: Management-Labor Advisory Committee (MLAC)

From: Julia Hier, Claims Policy Analyst

Subject: Requested Data on Psychiatrists, Psychologists, and Mental Health Nurse Practitioners (HB 2418/SB 507)

During the March 29, 2019, MLAC meeting, a request was made for data relating to the number of licensed psychologists, psychiatrists, and psychiatric mental health nurse practitioners in the State of Oregon, along with additional information on the qualifications and training of psychiatric mental health nurse practitioners. The purpose of this memo is to respond to that request.

Requested Data

We contacted the licensing boards¹ to obtain the current number of licensed psychologists, psychiatrists, and psychiatric mental health nurse practitioners in Oregon.

- The number of active psychologists licensed as of April 1, 2019: **1,821**
- The number of psychiatrists licensed as of April 2, 2019: **848²**
- The number of active psychiatric mental health nurse practitioners licensed as of April 2, 2019: **674**

Please take note that not all of these providers will treat workers' compensation patients. For example, some may specialize in areas not relevant to workers' compensation (e.g., child psychology/psychiatry), or have their primary practice outside of the state .

¹ Contacts were made via the internet or by phone to the Oregon Board of Psychologist Examiners, Oregon Medical Board, and Oregon State Board of Nursing.

² The reported specialty in psychiatry is self-reported by the licensee. It does not necessarily indicate a specialty board certification.

If a provider is qualified and willing to treat a workers' compensation patient, the workers' compensation law may limit their authorities. Though they may provide compensable services, psychologists may not be an attending physician. Nurse practitioners also have limitations on their attending physician status. See [ORS 656.005\(12\)](#) and [ORS 656.245\(2\)](#) for further details.

What is a psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner qualified to do?

In Oregon, a psychiatric/mental health nurse practitioner independently provides health care to clients with mental and emotional needs or disorders. This may include assessment, diagnosis, psychotherapy, medication management, prescribing drugs, ordering tests, treatment modalities, interventions, consultation and referrals, admission to inpatient treatment, and other management of the patient's healthcare. The nurse practitioner can only provide health care services within their scope of practice for which he or she is educationally prepared and for which competency has been established and maintained. See [OAR 851-050-0005](#) for more information about a nurse practitioner's scope of practice in the State of Oregon.

What level of training is required for a psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner?

In Oregon, the standards for nurse practitioner programs are dependent upon the year in which the licensee completed the program. Details are outlined in [OAR Chapter 851 Division 050](#).

Requirements for initial applicants include:

1. Holding a current unencumbered registered nurse (RN) license in the State of Oregon.
2. Having an appropriate Master's Degree in Nursing or Doctorate in Nursing along with completion of an appropriate nurse practitioner program. The nurse practitioner program must be a minimum of one academic year in length unless completed before 1986 and it might need at least 500 hours of supervised clinical hours for each role or population focus. (see [OAR 851-050-0001](#) and [OAR 851-050-0002](#)).
3. Meeting the practice requirements, which means either completing the nurse practitioner program within the past year, completing the nurse practitioner program within the past two years and at least 192 hours of practice as a nurse practitioner, 960 hours of nurse practitioner practice within the five years preceding certification application or renewal, or completion of the re-entry program within two years. (see [OAR 851-050-0004](#)).
4. Verification of current accredited national board certification from a nurse practitioner national certification examination which meets criteria in [OAR 851-050-0008](#), congruent with a board recognized nurse practitioner role and population focus.

The [American Nursing Credentialing Center](#) (ANCC) provides national board certification for psychiatric mental health nurse practitioners. Their website reports that, to be eligible to take the exam for this certification, an applicant must meet the following requirements:

1. Hold a current and active RN license in a state or territory of the United States, or its professional and legally equivalent version in another country.
2. Hold a specifically accredited master's, postgraduate, or doctoral degree from a psychiatric-mental health nurse practitioner program.

3. Completion of at least 500 faculty-supervised clinical hours in the psychiatric-mental health nurse practitioner program.
4. Completion of three comprehensive graduate-level courses in:
 - a. Advanced physiology/pathophysiology, which must include general principles that apply across the life span;
 - b. Advanced health assessment, which must include assessment of all human systems, advanced assessment techniques, concepts, and approaches; and
 - c. Advanced pharmacology, which must include pharmacodynamics, pharmacokinetics, and pharmacotherapeutics of all broad categories of agents.
5. Completion of content in:
 - a. Health promotion or maintenance; and
 - b. Differential diagnosis and management of diseases, which must include the use and prescription of pharmacologic and nonpharmacologic interventions
6. Completion of clinical training in at least two psychotherapeutic treatment modalities.

Test results for the certification are pass or fail. In 2017, there were 1,777 candidates who tested for the psychiatric-mental health nurse practitioner ANCC certification. Of those, 1,563 passed. If a candidate does not pass the exam, they are eligible to retest after 60 days.

Once a psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner has received their certification, that certification must be renewed every five years. Renewal of the nurse practitioner state certification is governed by [OAR 851-050-0138](#), and it includes continuing education and practice requirements.

List of Website Resources

American Nurses Credentialing Center, 2017 ANCC Certification Data, <https://www.nursingworld.org/~499e5e/globalassets/docs/ancc/2017-certification-data-for-website.pdf>.

American Nurses Credentialing Center, Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (Across the Lifespan Certification (PMHNP-BC), <https://www.nursingworld.org/our-certifications/psychiatric-mental-health-nurse-practitioner/>.

Oregon Legislature, Chapter 656, https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/bills_laws/ors/ors656.html.

Oregon Secretary of State, Chapter 851, Division 050, <https://secure.sos.state.or.us/oard/displayDivisionRules.action?selectedDivision=3933>.