



Greater Columbia Accountable Community of Health (GCACH)

SUBJECT: Behavioral Health Internship and Training Fund

Policy #: 2019 - 002

Version Date: November 20, 2019

PURPOSE:

Greater Columbia Accountable Community of Health (GCACH) seeks to support organizations willing to precept, supervise, or train professionals seeking careers in behavioral health or having a behavioral health component who need clinical experience in order to complete their education and certification requirements.

This policy provides guidelines for organizations seeking financial support to mentor, supervise, provide internships, or train students/learners pursuing an education/career in behavioral health. These funds would be used to support expansion of a care team to include behavioral health specialists, community health workers, and peer counselors. This policy is meant to complement existing certification and training guidelines.

PROBLEM STATEMENT:

The Greater Columbia Region lacks behavioral health professionals and clinical providers who are able to mentor, supervise, provide internships or train professionals seeking degrees, certifications, and/or training in behavioral health. This shortage is especially acute in rural areas, as rural organizations frequently have limited capacity and resources to provide clinical supervision, precepting, or training instruction.

DEFINITIONS:

"Applicant": Organization submitting a request for funding from GCACH. Such organizations may be primary care, behavioral health, substance use disorder, or an organization involved in the delivery of behavioral health.

"Behavioral Health": **SAMHSA definition:** The term "behavioral health" in this context means the promotion of mental health, resilience and wellbeing; the treatment of mental and substance use disorders; and the support of those who experience and/or are in recovery from these conditions, along with their families and communities. the promotion of mental health, resilience and wellbeing.

"Intern": A student or a graduate undergoing supervised practical training. A student or trainee who works, sometimes without pay, professionally to gain real-life work experience or a graduate of an education program obtaining supervised postgraduate experience required for independent practice.

"Internship": An internship is a professional learning experience that offers meaningful, practical work related to a student's/learner's field of study or career interest. An internship can be either paid or voluntary. The purpose of an internship is to provide clinical, real-world experience that enables interns to put classroom knowledge into action.

“Interprofessional Learning”: “Learning arising from interaction between members (or students) of two or more professions. This may be a product of interprofessional education or happen intentionally or spontaneously in the workplace or in education settings.” (Freeth, Hammick, Reeves, Koppel, & Barr, 2005)

“Preceptor”: The preceptor is an experienced professional who provides the intern a structured learning experience, training and observation that identify best practices and problem-solving situations. The preceptor structures the learning process to achieve a set of formally identified learning outcomes, e.g. a licensed nurse who is employed by the facility in which the clinical experience takes place, and who agrees to provide supervision to a student for a specified period of time during the preceptor’s scheduled work hours in order to assist the student to meet identified learning objectives.

“Preceptorship”: A period of time for practical experience for an intern under the supervision of a preceptor.

“Target Workforce State”: A target workforce state involves the identification of workforce gaps in the program areas chosen by GCACH for the Medicaid Transformation project. It also includes a transitions roadmap to obtain the needed workforce and workforce skills, and a training strategy to achieve the desired level of proficiencies. It includes an understanding of the compensation and benefits of the current state, including consideration of skills and licensure requirements.

“Team-based Care”: Team-based care is defined by the National Academy of Medicine (formerly known as the Institute of Medicine) as “...the provision of health services to individuals, families, and/or their communities by at least two health providers who work collaboratively with patients and their caregivers—to the extent preferred by each patient - to accomplish shared goals within and across settings to achieve coordinated, high-quality care.”

BACKGROUND:

Workforce development, expansion, and retention is part of Domain 1, Health Systems Capacity Building, of the Medicaid Transformation Project. Health Systems Capacity Building encompasses projects designed to build providers’ capabilities to succeed and effectively operate in a transformed healthcare system. It includes projects designed to develop current workforce capacity, support the expansion and redefinition of workforce, and support work flow redesign to optimally meet the needs of Medicaid beneficiaries. Transformation of the healthcare system cannot happen without addressing new models of care, and the skills necessary to better serve our patient population. GCACH has gone through a thoughtful process to understand health workforce needs in the region. The result of this process, the Target Workforce State, determined that:

- There are significant shortages and maldistribution of behavioral health providers in our region, and the rural issue is not typically solved by just producing more of an occupation. Intentional recruitment and retention strategies are needed to encourage providers who will want to practice in rural and other underserved areas.
- Shortages in behavioral health professions are an impediment to an integrated healthcare delivery system.
- Shortages in behavioral health professionals are an impediment to delivering whole person care.

Access to care, care coordination, recognition and treatment of behavioral health conditions, team-based care, and social stigma around behavioral health issues are gaps in GCACH's target workforce state. GCACH seeks to fill workforce gaps and address the distribution of the behavioral health workforce by providing monetary support for organizations offering clinical experience to interns pursuing a career in behavioral health.

REQUIREMENTS FOR APPLICANTS:

- Preference for funding will be awarded to Applicants participating in the GCACH Practice Transformation program, although other Applicants may apply for the funding.
- The Applicant and its preceptors must demonstrate the capacity, competency, and willingness to provide behavioral health training and clinical experience.
- The Applicant will work with the intern to develop mutually beneficial objectives that meet the needs of both parties.
- The Applicant will provide an evaluation of the intern and program of work to demonstrate efficacy of the process. Such evaluation may be conducted by an educational institution or the Applicant and provided to GCACH within three months of the completed internship.
- Applicants will provide a written plan documenting how and what activities in which the intern will participate e.g., practical experience through projects and/or patient care, special assignments, or research that supports federal, state, and community-based programs, policies, and best practices in the prevention and treatment of behavioral health issues.
- Preference will be given to Applicants offering rural practice experience, interprofessional learning, and/or team-based care.
- The intern will participate in one GCACH Learning Collaborative throughout their internship which will, if appropriate, count toward their required training.

REQUIREMENTS FOR INTERNS:

- Intern must be a U.S. citizen, permanent resident (I-151 or I-551), or Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) students. Individuals on temporary visas are not eligible. Additionally, individuals must be authorized or eligible to work in the United States by law.
- The intern must be enrolled in a degree-seeking program at an accredited higher education institution or seeking training/certification required for employment and/or licensure in a behavioral health field.
- Interns must have a minimum GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale, or have graduated from a behavioral health professions program (for those obtaining supervised postgraduate experience), or enrolled in or have completed their education from an approved education program whose curriculum is accepted by the Washington State Department of Health for appropriate credentialing
- Internships would not apply to students receiving online coursework from a non-accredited school without classroom training or instruction
- The intern will participate in one GCACH Learning Collaborative during the internship.

DESCRIPTION OF APPLICANT PROCESS:

- Applicants may apply for a one-year award (4 quarters/3 semesters) with the possibility of renewal for an additional year.
- Funding awards are available in amounts of \$5,000 up to \$40,000 per year per award.
- Funds used as a stipend to support travel and lodging/per diem expenses for interns are permissible uses of the fund.
- Applicants may apply for up to three internships/preceptorships/trainees per year or a total not to exceed \$120,000.
- A preceptor may supervise up to two interns at the same time as long as it meets the requirements of the educational institution to which the clinical training program applies, or the licensing requirements for supervised postgraduate experience is met.
- Applicants must have an existing application process for interns or develop an application process in order to qualify for the Behavioral Health Internship and Training Fund. Such application process must be approved by GCACH prior to the award of funds.
- Applicants will demonstrate their desire, willingness or need for interns/students/learners.
- Applicants will demonstrate the efficacy of their internship, assign a preceptor for the duration of the award period, and provide a post-evaluation of the program.
- Funding will be paid to the Applicant in increments or in total depending on the amount of the award. Awards that are \$5,000-\$10,000 will be paid in full upfront. Awards exceeding \$10,000 will be paid: 50% upfront and 50% at the end of the internship, preceptorship or training period. Should the intern be unable to complete the internship program, or should Applicant discontinue the program, GCACH reserves the right to recover moneys that have been disbursed to the Applicant.

The intern will apply for the internship through the Applicant.

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Rhonda Hauff
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Rhonda Hauff, Board of Directors President
Greater Columbia Accountable Community of Health

12/3/2019

Date