

Prevention workforce development

Program overview

Washington Health Care Authority's Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery (HCA/DBHR) promotes and contributes to expanding the reach and impact of prevention services throughout the state. DBHR gives opportunities for new and current prevention providers to continue their education, as well as gives opportunities for high school and college students to train into prevention via Fellowship and Internship programs.

DBHR supports prevention professionals in earning their Certified Prevention Professional (CPP) credential that is accepted within Washington State and recognized nationally in 50 states. CPPs require professionals to demonstrate competency through experience, education, supervision, and the passing of a rigorous examination.

Fellowship and apprenticeship

DBHR welcomed the first cohort of the Prevention Fellows in January of 2019. The program is supported by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and implemented in partnership with Washington State University (WSU) and Community Prevention and Wellness Initiative (CPWI) Coalitions and Educational Service Districts (ESDs).

The Fellowship/Apprenticeship Program expands the field of substance use disorder prevention and builds capacity in communities that could benefit from prevention services. The Fellowship emerged from a shared vision to build capacity for high-need communities to take advantage of CPWI "Getting Started" phase. This was built out of the SAMHSA Strategic Prevention Framework with an onus to develop the prevention workforce.

Fellowship goals and objectives

- Learn prevention science and best practices by participating in statewide prevention trainings.
- Gain experience in prevention strategic planning, program design, implementation, and contract and program management.

- Assist the state with policy and programmatic implementation of prevention services.
- Provide technical assistance to populations of focus.

As of August 2023, 29 Fellows have entered the program, with 26 completing. DBHR created a functioning prevention workforce pipeline from the Fellowship program, with fellows taking on full-time behavioral health/prevention positions within HCA/DBHR. Cohort 11 will begin October of 2023.

Reflections from past Fellowship participants:

"I value the fellowship experience for teaching me the importance of community engagement and using data to understand community perspectives, the need for health equity and cultural competency in supporting individuals, youth, and families, and the value of strategic planning in maintaining a sustainable coalition." (*Rachel Oliver, Cohort 4 Fellow, now with the Idaho Office of Drug Policy*)

"During phase one, we learn the theoretical how and why of prevention. During phase two we learn how prevention plays out in the dynamics of a Washington community... [and] phase three presented a wonderful opportunity to learn a new community, meet dedicated leaders, and support new prevention efforts... From the superintendent, student assistance professional, principals, and substance use providers, the community leaders in Selah were committed to changing the trajectory of youth's lives. Spending time with these leaders reinvigorated my passion for community organization and program delivery. While prevention is powerful, it is nothing without people behind it." (*Ridge Bynum, Cohort 5 Fellow*)

Internship

The Prevention Internship is a high school summer internship sponsored by the Washington State Department of Health and facilitated by the [Area Health Education Center in Eastern Washington](#). The program placed students within CPWI community coalitions. This internship provided students with an opportunity to explore behavioral health careers in prevention while supporting their local community.

The internship targets students who are under-represented in healthcare professions, from rural communities, from low-income families. In the year 2023 there were 6 CPWI participating locations. Cohort 3 of the High School Internship program will commence in the Spring of 2024. Going forward, the program aims to expand the internship across all 100 CPWI locations statewide.

High School internship program

The High School internship program is a work-based learning program that places high school students into professional work environments to supplement academic knowledge, provide exposure to those environments, and increases cooperation between businesses and schools. This program aims to integrate tactile learning with structured worksite experience while maintaining academic standards.

Benefits of this program include workforce experience for its participants, consideration of possible career options in the field, and a generally stronger sense of self.

Certification

Certification of prevention professionals in the field of substance use disorder-related behavioral health is the fastest growing certification in prevention fields. DBHR supports the certification of prevention professionals through its partnership with the Prevention Specialist Certification Board of Washington (PSCBW). As a member board of the International Certification & Reciprocity Consortium, PSCBW upholds the ethical standards of the prevention field by providing professional peer review credentialing in Washington State:

- Associate Prevention Professional (APP): an entry level certification for students and professionals new to the field
- Certified Prevention Professional (CPP): a credential for experienced and education professionals who demonstrate a thorough understanding of prevention.

DBHR supports the professional development of the field by providing certification of Continuing Education Hours (CEH's) to attendees of conference

trainings and webinars, which can be utilized in obtaining the above certifications.

Trainings

DBHR provides conference training and online learning resources to prevention professionals to improve understanding of prevention science and to engage coming generations of prevention professionals. These recurring trainings include:

- CPWI Coordinator Orientation and Leadership Institute
- New Coordinator Basic Training
- Substance Abuse Prevention Skills Training
- Communities that Care Trainings
- [Spring Youth Forum](#)
- [Opioid Summit](#)
- [WA State Prevention Summit](#)
- [General Prevention Trainings](#)
- Health Equity Prevention Services and Training.
- Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA) Boot Camp
- Additional trainings available via [The Athena Forum](#)

Budget

The Fellowship Program is supported through the State Opioid Response grant at approximately \$400,000 per year. This budget supports a variety of prevention trainings and conferences; state and federal discretionary grants at approximately \$350,000 per year support this end as well.

Partners

- Washington State University
- Prevention Technology Transfer Center (PTTC)
- University of Washington Social Development Research Group
- University of Reno
- Local community coalitions
- Prevention professionals within Washington state
- Eastern Washington Area Health Education Centers

Oversight

Internal: HCA/DBHR

External:

- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
- Center for Substance Abuse Prevention
- Washington State University (WSU)

For more information

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[The Athena Forum Fellowships](#)

[The Athena Forum training](#)