



## Children and Youth Behavioral Health Work Group – Workforce & Rates (W&R) Subgroup

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September 11, 2025

### Glossary of Terms

W&R: Workforce & Rates Subgroup

BHC: Behavioral Health Catalyst

BHA: Behavioral Health Agency

CACREP: Council on Accreditation for Counseling and Education-Related Programs

CCBHC: Certified Community Behavioral Health Centers

CCA: Crisis Care Assistant (training)

CPSS: Certified Peer Support Specialist

CPC: Certified Peer Counselor

DOH: Department of Health

FAST: First Approach Skills Training

HCA: Health Care Authority

LMHC: Licensed Mental Health Counselor

LMS: Learning Management System

PAL: Partnership Access Line

WAC: Washington Administrative Code

### Meeting Topics

Welcome & Agenda

Exploring Legislative Session for 2026

Next Steps & Close

### Discussion Summary

#### Exploring Legislative Session for 2026

*Renee Fullerton and Hugh Ewart (Workforce and Rates Subgroup Leads) shared an update and led the discussion on this year's legislative session preparation.*

1. Washington Thriving Strategic Plan Update
  - a. A summarized version of the Strategic plan is now public, the Washington Thriving team welcomes feedback via a survey with a due date of September 15<sup>th</sup>
  - b. [Link to survey was shared in chat for additional input.](#)
2. Budget Context for this year's Legislative session
  - a. There is potentially a \$2 billion revenue shortfall anticipated for the state.
  - b. Legislative recommendations must be no to low budget impact in order to be considered
  - c. There is a focus on protecting existing programs rather than new funding requests



3. New concept presented: Regarding the UW Applied Child & Adolescent Psychology Graduate Program, a faculty member highlighted that not all graduate programs that qualify for licensure as a mental health counselor are accredited in the same way. The state should be flexible rather than relying solely on a single accreditor.
  - a. The UW Applied Child & Adolescent Psychology Graduate Program is not a part of CACREP (CACREP is the Council on Accreditation for Counseling and Education-Related Programs) because it was created to help individuals reach mental health counselor licensure (LMHC) in Washington quickly to speed workforce entry and reduce costs to students.
    - i. There is a disparity in the rules for the LMHC profession between CACREP and non-CACREP programs. CACREP programs receive 500-hour practicum credit toward LMHC post graduate supervision requirements; non-CACREP programs do not
  - b. Scholarship eligibility barriers for students in non-CACREP programs
  - c. Request to reduce distinctions that create barriers for qualified LMHCs.
4. Conditional Scholarship Program Updates
  - a. Washington State Behavioral Health Workforce Development Initiative (WDI) is transitioning administration from UW School of Social Work to Washington Student Achievement Council
  - b. \$25 million original funding plus \$4.5 million additional for Fall 2025
    - i. Focus shifting to advanced skills training and systems change
    - ii. 145 new scholarships allocated for school social work programs
    - iii. 31 WSAC scholarships awarded for Fall 2025
5. Legacy Item Status Updates
  - a. PAL (Partnership Access Line), FAST training program and Referral Assist team restoration is being considered as an overarching recommendation
    - i. Total restoration cost: Approximately \$1 million annually
    - ii. State general fund portion: Only 17% (~\$170,000)
    - iii. Current service reductions: Hours cut from 8-5 to 9-4
  - b. Conditional Scholarship Skills Training and Evaluation-
    - i. A recommendation is being developed by Vaughnnetta Barton with Workforce Development Initiative
  - c. Teaching Clinic Rate - Large fiscal note is anticipated for a recommendation, the leads are exploring socialization opportunities with Representative Callan.
  - d. CCBHC (Certified Community Behavioral Health Centers) Implementation - Ongoing efforts through Healthcare Authority and Behavioral Health Council and likely does not need a recommendation from W&R for this legislative session.
6. Possible Policy Priority: Licensing and Credentialing Delays
  - a. Department of Health licensing delays have been identified as top workforce barrier
  - b. Co-leads, Renee and Hugh, are planning a meeting with DOH leadership to learn how the W&R Subgroup may be able to provide a recommendation to help reduce the wait times for professional licenses and certifications.



## Next steps

1. W&R will be sharing emerging legislative recommendations at the next Children and Youth Behavioral Work Group (CYBHWG) meeting on September 18<sup>th</sup>. The Subgroup will make final decisions regarding recommendation submissions at the next Subgroup meeting on September 24<sup>th</sup>.
2. Final submissions of Legislative Recommendations to CYBHWG are due on October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025.
3. The subgroup will next be meeting on Wednesday, September 24<sup>th</sup> from 10:00am-11:30am. *If you are not already on the W&R mailing list and would like to be added, you can email [cybhwg@hca.wa.gov](mailto:cybhwg@hca.wa.gov) indicating your preference.*