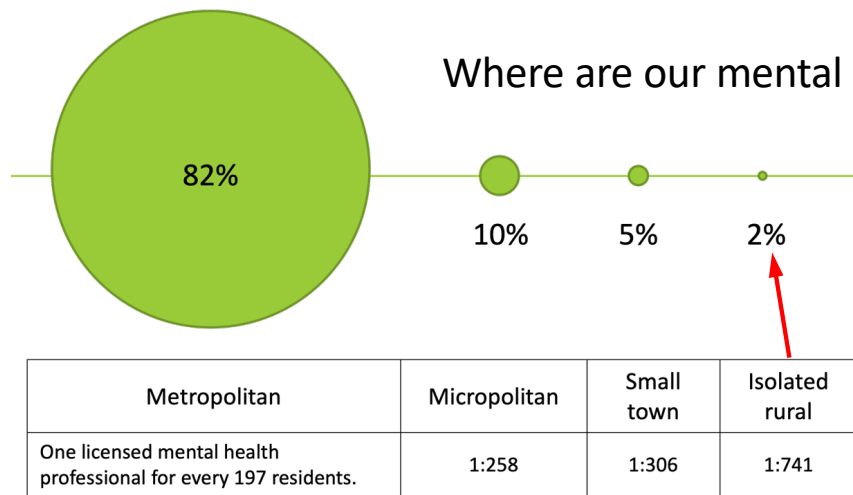


Identifying bottlenecks and roadblocks in the rural mental health career pipeline

CRPD and the Center for Rural Behavioral Health at Minnesota State University, Mankato, teamed up to ask those closest to the mental health workforce—the people who employ them and the programs that educate them—why we have a shortage of licensed mental health workers, especially in rural areas, and what can be done about it. The full report can be found on our web site at ruralmn.org.



In December 2022, 82% of licensed mental health providers lived and/or work in the Twin Cities or one of the state's larger cities. The licensed provider-to-client ratios vary considerably around the state, from 1 provider for every 197 residents in metropolitan areas to 1 provider for every 741 residents in isolated rural areas. MN Department of Health.

“We talk all day about how important mental health is, but then why can't people get the services they need?”

— Katie Rubesh, North Homes Children and Family Services, Grand Rapids, MN.

Suicide rates per 100,000 in 2000, 2019, and 2020.
Centers for Disease Control & Prevention

| | 2000 | 2019 | 2020 |
|-------------------------|------|------|------|
| Large Central Metro | 9.5 | 13.0 | 11.9 |
| Large Fringe Metro | 7.4 | 12.5 | 12.2 |
| Medium Metro | 14.2 | 20.0 | 19.2 |
| Small Metro | 6.7 | 13.0 | 14.3 |
| Micropolitan (Nonmetro) | 9.9 | 18.7 | 14.5 |
| Non-Core (Nonmetro) | 10.0 | 21.3 | 16.9 |

Identifying bottlenecks and roadblocks in the rural mental health career pipeline

Findings and recommendations from the report

Difficult to attract licensed workers to rural areas.

Increase the number of internships in rural places

- Students are more likely to stay and practice near where they interned.

Financial assistance to rural clinics to make more internship/training sites available

- Internships cost clinics money. Small private clinics especially struggle to host students.

Early introduction to the mental healthcare field, especially for rural kids

- High school and middle school is not too early.

Uneven reimbursement from Medicare and Medicaid.

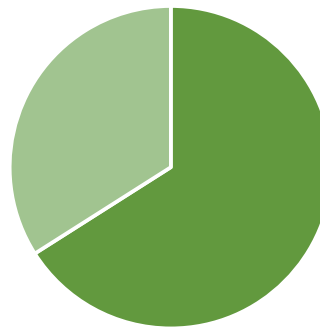
Pay parity

- Reimbursement rates are a federal issue, but the low pay disincentivizes students

Programs don't have enough faculty. Limits the number of graduates.

More support for educational programs

- Financial limits make some colleges and universities turn students away.



Two thirds of programs responding said they turn qualified students away every year; 90% cited lack of teaching faculty as a reason.

Low pay, more pay at private clinics is pushing and pulling students away.

Upfront tuition aid

- Tuition waivers, scholarships, grants that support students at the beginning of the educational process.