




## Senate Committee on Early Childhood and Behavioral Health

## Oregon Behavioral Health Talent Assessment

**Jennifer Purcell, Director, Future Ready Oregon,  
Higher Education Coordinating Commission**

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# The HECC's Vision and Scope – *Advancing Equitable Access to Postsecondary Education for Oregonians*



*“The Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) envisions a future where all people benefit from the economic, civic, and cultural impact of high-quality postsecondary education, training, and workforce development.”*

The HECC supports state goals for postsecondary education and training through a wide range of policy and funding strategies.

We also directly serve Oregonians by awarding grant and scholarship aid to students and connecting Oregonians with workforce and training resources.

Learn more about the HECC: [www.oregon.gov/highered.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/highered.aspx)

# Oregon Behavioral Health (BH) Talent Assessment *(January 2025)*

## *Objective*

Understand BH workforce needs in order to:

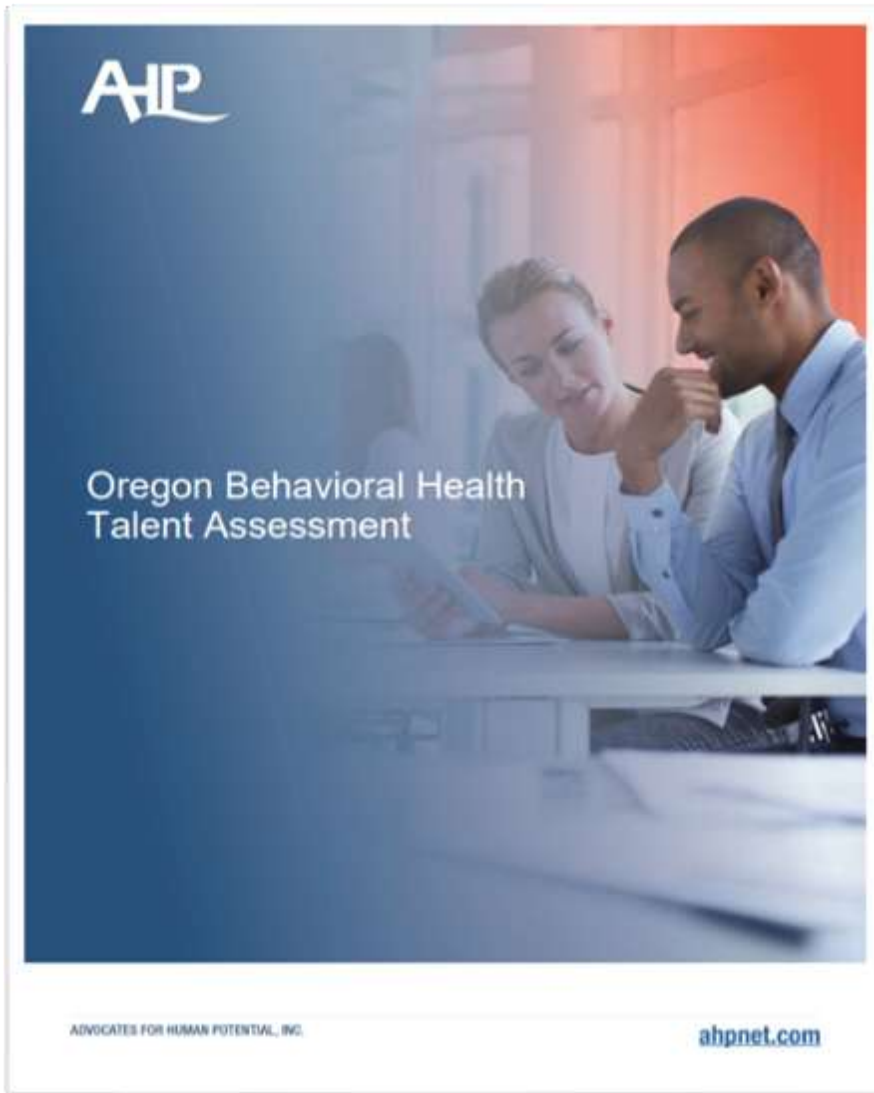
- inform program options that prioritize critical-shortage occupations
- grow and diversify the supply and distribution of the behavioral health workforce.

## *Scope*

Identify pathways to BH careers; evaluate barriers and opportunities for recruiting, training, and retaining a diverse BH workforce; project future education, training, and workforce demands.

## *Research Questions*

- How can Oregon best offer a range of equitable opportunities, access, and support to learners pursuing a career in BH?
- How can Oregon improve ROI for employers, practitioners, and the communities they serve?



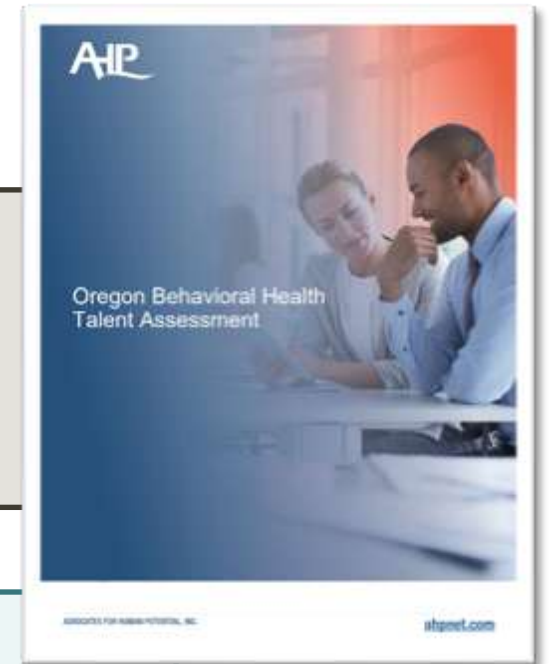
# Oregon Behavioral Health (BH) Talent Assessment – *Process*

## Advocates for Human Potential:

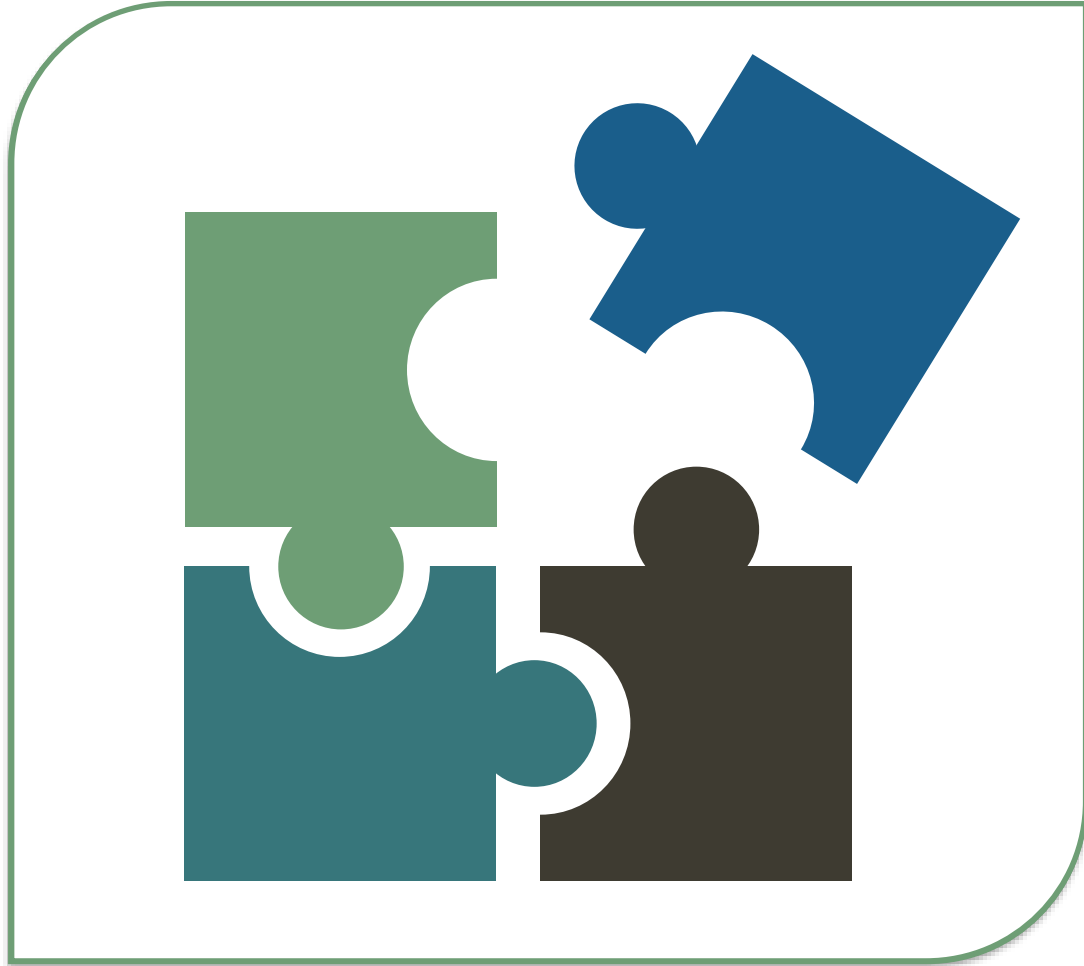
- Completed a review of existing reports on Oregon's BH workforce.
- Convened steering committee.
- Conducted focus groups, interviews, surveys.

## Talent Assessment:

- Analyzes current talent development strategies, and supply and demand.
- Provides a skills inventory and maps current career pathways in Oregon.
- Includes inventory of postsecondary BH education and training programs.
- Makes recommendations for research, education programs, workforce development.

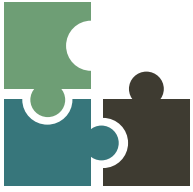


# Workforce Shortages – A Multifaceted “Puzzle” of Interrelated and Complex Challenges



- ✖ Wages
- ✖ Cost of education
- ✖ Clinical supervision capacity
- ✖ Burnout and retention
  - ✖ Workplace dynamics
  - ✖ Limited advancement opportunities
  - ✖ Increasing shift to private practice
- ✖ Structural, social, and systemic challenges





# Interrelated and Complex Challenges – *Highlights from the Talent Assessment Key Findings*

## Graduation Rates

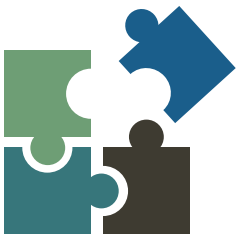
- There are effective and affordable pathways in Oregon from community colleges, to bachelor's programs, to the workforce.
- BH majors in Oregon are less likely to graduate compared to the national average.

## Worker Burnout and Retention

- 61% of 30- to 39-year-olds surveyed intend to leave their job in the next month, followed by 44% of 18- to 29-year-olds.

## Entering and Leaving the Workforce

- Individuals with a family member or key family friend working in BH were 12 times more likely to enter the BH profession.
- Individuals are choosing BH pathways later in college.
- Individuals who wait to year 5 or later to choose their bachelor's major are 15 times more likely to indicate their intent to leave the BH workforce.



# Interrelated and Complex Challenges – *Highlights from the Talent Assessment Key Findings*

## Leaks in the BH Education System

- Turnover and retention issues
- Perceptions impacting career choice
- Low graduation rates
- Tendency to select the behavioral health major later in one's bachelor's experience



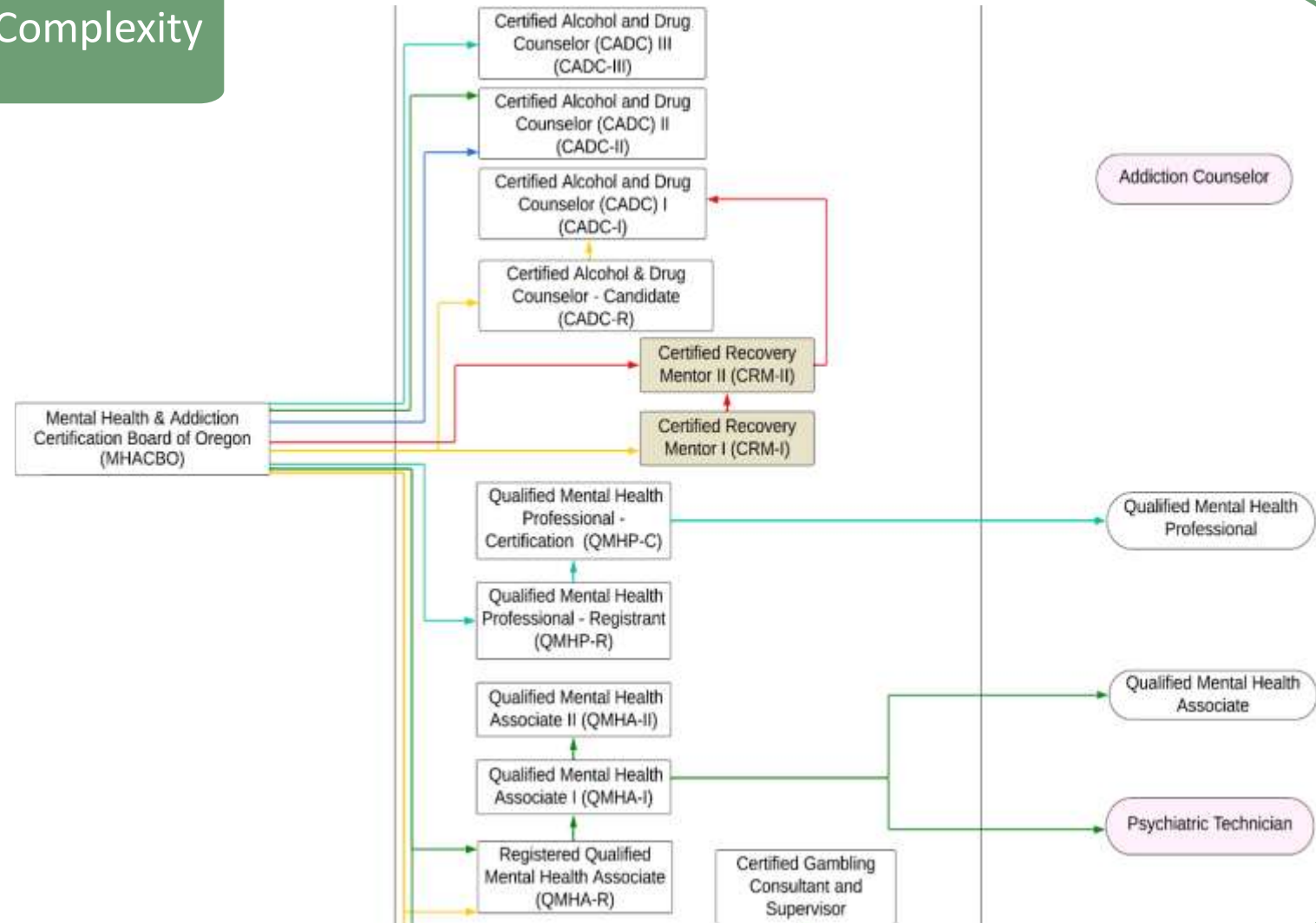
*32 of Oregon's 36 counties lack even one provider per 1,000 residents*



# Interrelated and Complex Challenges – Highlights from the Talent Assessment Key Findings

## Licensing and Training Complexity

- Doctoral degree
- Master's degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Associate degree
- High school or GED
- No required degree
- peer role
- apprenticeship
- Occupations with varying career paths





# Behavioral Health Talent Assessment – *Key Recommendations*

## Increase equitable access and financial supports for education

- Expand support for rural and frontier students, and culturally and linguistically diverse groups.

## Improve learner recruitment and retention

- Expand collaborations with employers to create a more streamlined career pathway and support structure for individuals entering the field.

## Improve worker retention and advancement

- Develop roles that are supported for advancement potential, while staying within the defined scope of care.

## Conduct further research

- Research discrepancies between those completing education inside and outside Oregon; how behavioral health majors are chosen; and what's driving burnout and turnover.

# HECC's Healthcare Industry Consortium – *Informing Policy and Program Development, Advancing Strategies, Building Ecosystem Alignment*



# Contact



**Questions?**

**Jennifer Purcell**, Director, Future Ready Oregon, HECC  
[Jennifer.Purcell@HECC.oregon.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Purcell@HECC.oregon.gov)

Visit the HECC's Legislative and Policy Reports webpage at [oregon.gov/highered/strategy-research/pages/reports.aspx](https://oregon.gov/highered/strategy-research/pages/reports.aspx) to view the [Oregon Behavioral Health Talent Assessment](#) and the [Oregon Behavioral Health Career Pathways map](#).

Learn more about HECC's Healthcare Industry Consortium here: [oregon.gov/highered/about/pages/future-ready-industry-consortia.aspx](https://oregon.gov/highered/about/pages/future-ready-industry-consortia.aspx)