



National Association for Rural Mental Health

NARMH • 660 North Capitol Street, NW • Suite #400 • Washington, DC 20001

Phone: 202-942-4276 • Fax: 202-478-1659 • www.narmh.org

NACBHDD and NARMH Joint Press Release

Embargoed Until 12 Noon EDT, May 17, 2018

Special Supplement on “The Behavioral Health Workforce: Planning, Practice, and Preparation” Released Today by the American Journal of Preventive Medicine

NACBHDD and NARMH are delighted to announce the release of a Special Supplement to the [*American Journal of Preventive Medicine*](#), in which experts focus on the key issue of behavioral health human resources. Articles in this special issue cover research on workforce planning, service delivery and practice, and workforce preparation, and advocate for intelligent allocation of resources to ensure all clients have access to behavioral healthcare.

A 2016 report by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) on the projected supply and demand for behavioral health practitioners through 2025 indicated significant shortages of psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, mental health counselors, and marriage and family therapists. The magnitude of provider shortages, however, is not the only issue when considering access to behavioral health services. Another major concern is maldistribution, since parts of the US have few or no behavioral health providers available, and access to mental health services is especially critical in areas of poverty.

More than 44 million American adults have a diagnosable mental health condition, and rates of severe depression are worsening among young people. Mental health and disability are well-established drivers of substance use, and

drug overdose deaths fueled by opioid misuse have more than tripled from 1999 to 2016.

“There is no more important topic surrounding behavioral healthcare than the current and growing crisis in the availability of well-trained providers,” indicated Ron Manderscheid, Executive Director of NACBHDD and NARMH, and Co- Editor of the Special Supplement. “Our Baby Boomers are retiring, and too few Millennials are joining us. This Special Supplement could not come at a more opportune time. It will focus a spotlight on our human resource issues and provide an important glimpse into new developments that can allay this problem.”

“The barriers to strengthening behavioral health workforce capacity and improving service delivery will not be easily overcome,” caution the Guest Editors, Angela J. Beck, PhD, MPH, Ronald W. Manderscheid, PhD, The National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Directors, Washington, DC, USA, and Peter Buerhaus, PhD, RN, Center for Interdisciplinary Health Workforce Studies, Montana State University, Bozeman, MT, USA. “But with challenge comes opportunity. The increased national and state focus on mental health and addiction services has mobilized the field. The portfolio of efforts highlighted throughout this publication are strong evidence of this energy and enthusiasm. The vision for the future of the behavioral health workforce is one of real hope!”

The table of contents for the Special Supplement is attached below.

For additional information, please contact Dr. Manderscheid at rmanderscheid@nacbhd.org or 202-942-4296.

The Behavioral Health Workforce: Planning, Practice, and Preparation

Guest Editors:

**Angela J. Beck, PhD, MPH
University of Michigan School of Public Health, Behavioral Health Workforce
Research Center, Ann Arbor, MI, USA**

Ronald W. Manderscheid, PhD
**The National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental
Disability Directors, Washington, DC, USA**

Peter Buerhaus, PhD, RN
**Center for Interdisciplinary Health Workforce Studies, Montana State
University, Bozeman, MT, USA**

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These articles appear in the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, volume 54, issue 6, supplement 3 (June 2018), published by Elsevier. It will be openly available at [http://www.ajpmonline.org/issue/S0749-3797\(18\)X0003-8](http://www.ajpmonline.org/issue/S0749-3797(18)X0003-8). Please

visit this site to view the table of contents and access full text of the contributions.

Full text of the articles is available to credentialed journalists prior to the embargo date; contact Jillian B. Morgan at +1 734 936 1590 or ajpmmedia@elsevier.com. Journalists wishing to interview the Guest Editors or authors should contact Angela J. Beck at ajbeck@umich.edu.

This supplement issue of the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* was supported by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under U81HP29300-03-02, Behavioral Health Workforce Research Center. This information or content and conclusions are those of the authors and should not be construed as the official position or policy of, nor should any endorsements be inferred by SAMHSA, HRSA, HHS, or the U.S. Government.

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