



mhca's e-Newsletter

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Helping You Address Workforce Challenges

A Guest Article by Heidi Arthur, Principal with Health Management Associates

Nearly 1 in 5 children and 1 in 5 adults have a mental, emotional, or behavioral disorder, yet only about 20% of children who need services receive care from a specialized mental health care provider and only 65% of adults who have a serious mental illness receive mental health services. Black and Brown populations face the most extreme barriers: Over 50% of Latinx young adults ages 18-25 who have a serious mental illness do not receive treatment. In addition, a staggering 90% of Black and African Americans with a substance use disorder do not get care at all.

Despite the demand and these profound disparities, we're ALSO simultaneously facing a behavioral health workforce crisis. Burnout among health care providers is has been found to be driven by high job stress, time pressure, an over-capacity workload, and poor organizational support. Recent surveys conducted by **mhca** and by the National Council for Mental Wellbeing indicate that nearly every member organization is experiencing difficulty with recruitment and retention due to occupational burnout from COVID-19, administrative barriers, and historically low compensation rates. The workforce crisis requires immediate action to ensure individuals in need of care receive timely access to quality services.

Our upcoming **mhca** preconference session in Louisville on May 10th will focus on **Proactive Strategies to Address the BH Workforce Crisis**. Findings from **mhca's** recent leadership lunch will be shared, along with guidance compiled in a recent three-part series of Issue Briefs offering immediate steps that states and providers can take to increase capacity and build a more stable workforce. The Briefs were developed by a partnership between Health Management Associates and The National Council for Mental Wellbeing. The briefs address:

- Policy, Financial Strategies and Regulatory Waivers that can be implemented quickly to reduce administrative burden and maximize existing provider resources
- Clinical Care Delivery Models and Digital Solutions with an Emphasis on Leveraging the Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic Model
- Strategies to Address Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

The session will also include a planning exercise to assist attendees in developing their own set of immediately actionable workforce strategies.

Read the first two briefs, then bring your best ideas to the pre-conference!

[Issue Brief #1: Immediate Policy Actions for States](#)

[Issue Brief #2: Immediate Policy Actions to Address the National Workforce Shortage and Improve Care](#)

Heidi Arthur is a Principal with Health Management Associates. She brings over 20 years of experience in delivery system redesign to promote health equity and build access to community-based health and human services. During her past 7 years with HMA she has worked with clients of all types, including states, counties, and cities, managed care organizations, and health and behavioral health providers. She has helped providers integrate primary care, establish health home care coordination and other new Waiver-funded services, become Certified Community Behavioral Health Centers, and prepare for value-based payment, including establishing clinically integrated networks.



The banner features the Iris Telehealth logo on the left, consisting of a stylized heart icon and the text "iris telehealth". On the right, the website "iristelehealth.com" and email "info@iristelehealth.com" are listed. The main headline reads "Give your community the psychiatric care it needs." Below this, three key benefits are highlighted: "The right provider for your community", "In-depth behavioral health expertise", and "The support you need for long-term success". The bottom of the banner shows a stylized illustration of a community scene with people walking and buildings.

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