



Careers in the field of Mental Health

If you would like a career that can change lives and make a positive impact, you should consider the field of mental health. There is a growing demand for people to go into this field and a wide variety of opportunities in our region!

High school diploma

Direct Care Workers work directly with individuals and roles may include supporting daily living skills, education, and managing behavior and emotions.

Settings: outpatient, inpatient, residential facilities and specialized educational settings

Indirect Care Workers can make a positive impact and may include food service, drivers, and facilities care and maintenance

Settings: outpatient, inpatient, residential facilities and specialized educational settings

Bachelor's degree

Educational requirement: Four years of college in the field of social work, psychology, human services, or another related field

Case Managers support people reaching their personal mental health goals in a variety of ways. Examples include linking clients with needed resources, teaching new skills, and other strategies that empower individual growth.

Settings: outpatient, inpatient, and residential facilities

Master's degree

Specialized opportunities are available with a master's degree
Educational requirement: bachelor's degree plus typically 40 additional graduate hours in a specialized discipline

Art and Music Therapists guide individuals to explore and express emotions and feelings through art or music.

Settings: outpatient, inpatient, and residential facilities

Therapist: Social Worker or Counselor Degree meet with individuals and small groups to support the development and maintenance of positive mental health strategies and to link individuals to other agencies, services and supports. While the roles are similar, degree paths differ. Counseling places more of an emphasis on diagnosing and treating mental health disorders or specific sets of problems. Social work, on the other hand, can involve counseling but also has a focus on helping patients or others in need to navigate the system and get the help they need.

Settings: outpatient, inpatient, residential, and medical facilities and educational settings

MD/PhD (Doctorate)

Psychiatrists are medical doctors who diagnose, treat, and prevent mental, emotional, and behavioral disorders with the use of medication and psychotherapy.

Educational requirements: bachelor's degree, four years of medical school, four years residency (12 years)

Psychologists examine the cognitive and social factors that influence people's actions and reactions. Psychologists employ a variety of therapeutic techniques to help patients heal from trauma and improve their mental health.

Educational requirements: bachelor's degree, master's degree, and doctoral degree. (approx. 8 - 10 years)

Doctorate level degrees are also available in other areas of mental health, such as social work.

Nursing

Nurses at every level of the profession have opportunities in mental health, including LPNs, RNs, and Nurse Practitioners

Settings: outpatient, inpatient, and residential facilities

Peer Support Roles

People who have lived experience with mental health challenges and are in recovery can also be employed in the mental health field to assist others in their journey toward better well-being. Roles and educational requirements vary by organization; many times, peer workers with no formal mental health training can receive job training for this role through their employer.

Financial assistance

Many local organizations seeking mental health professionals have scholarship opportunities and financial assistance for education in exchange for a commitment to continue working with them for a specific time period.

Area colleges and universities offering majors in the mental health field:

Bethel University
betheluniversity.edu
1001 Bethel Circle
Mishawaka, IN 46545
800-422-4101

IVY Tech
ivytech.edu
220 Dean Johnson Blvd.
South Bend, IN 46601
574-289-7001

Goshen College
goshen.edu
1700S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526
574-535-7000

Southwestern Michigan
swmich.edu
58900 Cherry Grove Rd.
Dowagiac, MI 49047
800-456-8675

Indiana University
South Bend
iusb.edu
1700 Mishawaka Ave.
South Bend, In 46615
574-520-4872

Saint Mary's College
stmarys.edu
LeMans Hall
Notre Dame, IN 46556
574-284-4000