

Creating a new credential for a
Prescribing Psychologist

A smart and sensible approach to increasing access to comprehensive behavioral health services, while protecting patient safety

Why do we need a Prescribing Psychologist?

According to the 2017 Behavioral Health Workforce Assessment Report, Washington lacks enough prescribers comfortable with prescribing psychiatric medications to support the behavioral health needs of the state. **Creating a new credential for a Prescribing Psychologist helps meet the need for those prescribers while protecting patient safety.**

What is a Prescribing Psychologist?

A Prescribing Psychologist is a fully independent, licensed psychologist who has received specific training and been credentialed to prescribe psychotropic medication.

Targeted Education and Training

Qualified psychologists must complete a post-doctoral Masters in clinical psychopharmacology from an accredited program, pass a national exam, and complete 400 hours of supervised practice.

The combined total is comparable in education and training than other licensed prescribers.

Maintains Patient Safety

Prescribing Psychologists have been practicing in other jurisdictions for 25 years and there have been no reported instances of significant adverse events as the result of harmful prescribing by psychologists.

Increased Access

Washington does not have enough prescribers comfortable with prescribing psychiatric medications.

This new credential will increase the total number of prescribers, making it easier for consumers to find care.

Improved Service for Consumers

Prescribing Psychologists will be able to combine traditional talk therapies and medication. This will result in more integrated care, and a patient will need fewer appointments because one provider provides both therapy and medication management, reducing out of pocket expenses for consumers

Proven Success in other States

Five other states have credentialed Prescribing Psychologists including: New Mexico, Louisiana, Illinois Iowa, and Idaho.

Additionally three Federal Agencies allow this credential: Department of Defense, US Public Health Service Corp, and Indian Health Services

Maximizes our Workforce

Creating safe and sustainable career pathways for Washington's behavioral health workforce will maximize the skills of the workforce we have.

Adding a pathway for psychologists to obtain prescribing authority is a proven pathway other states have used to improve access.