
**College & Workforce Development
Committee**

HB 1721

Brief Description: Establishing certificate programs to educate behavioral health care professionals.

Sponsors: Representatives Orwall, Goodman, Peterson, Dolan, Valdez, Tarleton, Slatter and Pollet.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the University of Washington (UW) to establish two certificate programs for behavioral health care professionals and graduate students in evidence-based Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) practices.
- Establishes a conditional scholarship for individuals enrolled in the UW evidence-based DBT certificate programs.
- Devotes 50 percent of the loan repayment awards under the Health Professional Loan Repayment Program to health care professionals providing behavioral health services.
- Requires the HPLRP planning committee to include in the selection criteria whether a health professional has a DBT certificate.

Hearing Date: 2/5/19

Staff: Megan Mulvihill (786-7304).

Background:

Health Professional Loan Repayment Program.

The Health Professional Loan Repayment Program (HPLRP) provides licensed health care professionals with student loan repayment if the professional agrees to serve in a rural or underserved urban area with a designated shortage. The HPLRP provides up to \$75,000 in loan

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repayment for a minimum three-year service obligation. The participants need to work a minimum of a 24-hour work week, and if the participant defaults on their service obligation, the penalty is double the amount received plus interest.

The 2019 eligible health care professionals include Doctors of Medicine, Doctors of Osteopathic Medicine, Naturopathic Doctors, Doctors of Dental Surgery, Doctors of Medicine in Dentistry, Registered Dental Hygienists, Nurse Practitioners, Registered Nurses, Licensed Practical Nurses, Certified Nurse Midwives, Licensed Midwives, Pharmacists, Licensed Clinical Psychologists, Licensed Independent Clinical Social Workers, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists, and Licensed Mental Health Counselors.

Federal-State Loan Repayment Program.

The Federal-State Loan Repayment Program (FSLRP) also provides student loan repayment awards to health care professionals who agree to serve at not-for-profit providers who have implemented sliding fee schedules and are located in federal Health Professional Shortage Areas. The FSLRP is funded with federal dollars and state match dollars. The FSLRP provides up to \$70,000 in loan repayment for a minimum two-year service obligation, with a minimum 40 hour work week. If a participant fails to complete the service obligation, the penalty is the number of months not served multiplied by \$7,500 per month, plus interest. The FSLRP includes the same eligible health professionals as the HPLRP, minus Naturopathic Doctors, Licensed Practical Nurses, and Licensed Midwives.

Selection Process.

The Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) administers the HPLRP in collaboration with the Department of Health (DOH). A planning committee consisting of the WSAC, the DOH, and a variety of health care representatives determines the eligible provider sites and eligible health care professions for each award cycle. First, the planning committee determines eligible sites by considering a variety of factors, weighting each factor by significance, and then scoring each site. Second, the planning committee determines which professions are in shortage and decides how much funding to allocate to each profession based on requests from eligible sites.

Health care professionals who apply for loan repayment complete a single application, and the WSAC determines awards for both the HPLRP and FSLRP simultaneously. During the 2018 award cycle, there were 392 applicants total. Of those applicants, 81 health care professionals received a HPLRP award and an additional 17 received an award through the FSLRP.

Dialectical Behavior Therapy.

Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) is an evidence-based psychotherapy that is used to treat individuals with severe mental disorders and out-of-control cognitive, emotional, and behavioral patterns. DBT was originally designed to treat Borderline Personality Disorder and suicidal thoughts, but its use has expanded to treat conditions such as anxiety and depression.

Summary of Bill:

Dialectical Behavior Therapy Certificates.

The University of Washington (UW) must establish two certificate programs to educate behavioral health care professionals in evidence-based practices. First, the UW School of Social

Work, in collaboration with the UW Department of psychology, must establish a certificate program in evidence-based DBT practices shown to be effective in treating patients with mental health disorders and those at risk of suicide. The program must be designed for graduate students pursuing a Masters of Social Work. Second, the UW Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences Division of Public Health and Justice Policy must establish a certificate program in DBT for licensed behavioral health care professionals.

Conditional Scholarships for Students Pursuing DBT Certificates.

Beginning with the 2020-21 academic year, the WSAC, in consultation with an organization that certifies health care professionals in DBT, must award conditional scholarships to graduate students and credentialed health care professionals enrolled in evidence-based DBT certificate programs at the UW. Participants who receive a conditional scholarship must serve for three years at a public behavioral health site. The WSAC must determine the conditional scholarship award amount and, in consultation with the DOH, the public behavioral health sites. If a participant fails to complete the service obligation, the participant incurs a penalty equal to the unsatisfied portion of the principal, plus interest.

Health Professional Loan Repayment Program.

The HPLRP planning committee must include in the criteria used to select participants for loan repayment awards whether the credentialed health care professional has a DBT certificate.

Beginning with the 2020 award cycle, the planning committee must devote 50 percent of the loan repayment awards to credentialed health care professionals who are employed in a designated health professional shortage area and are providing behavioral health services. If there are not enough qualified applicants providing behavioral health services, the planning committee may devote less than 50 percent.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 30, 2019.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.