



Scopes of Practice

In an effort to document the authority of the behavioral health workforce in the United States, the BHWRC is collecting scopes of practice (SOPs) to analyze various professionals' official authority and to expose gaps or overlaps in professional authority. Specifically, researchers are gathering SOPs for psychiatrists, psychologists, clinical social workers, advance practice nurses, marriage and family therapists, certified prevention specialists, addiction counselors, mental health counselors, psychiatric rehabilitation specialists, and psychiatric aides on a state by state basis. In states that lack a formal description of the SOP for the ten behavioral health professions listed above, SOPs will be informally defined by other mechanisms such as worker certification from each state's licensing information webpage. The goal of this portion of the project is to expose the overlaps and gaps in behavioral health service delivery, and ultimately to propose policy solutions that will render behavioral health care more accessible. At a later point in the project, the BHWRC will create a more user-friendly and accessible SOP resource for behavioral health professionals.

While this project is still in its infancy, significant progress has been made. At the same time, because there is no centralized documentation of SOPs, the process - consisting of intensive internet searches and scholarly article reviews - has been arduous. We aim to have the rough document database completed mid-April.

If you have any feedback on this segment of the project or know of any resources that may be helpful to the BHWRC, please reach out to our research assistant, Courtney Crawford, at courtlee@umich.edu.
