

# Executive Summary

## Community Behavioral Health Academy



To: Community Health Network  
From: Ascend Indiana



## Introduction

Community Health Network (CHNw), one of Indiana’s largest healthcare systems, has collaborated with the Indiana University School of Social Work (IUSSW) and the University of Indianapolis Phylis Lan Lin Department of Social Work (UIndy) to launch an innovative behavioral health talent pathway. With the support of the Richard M. Fairbanks Foundation (Fairbanks) and Ascend Indiana (Ascend), stakeholders from Community Behavioral Health (CBH), IUSSW, and UIndy completed an 18-month process to build the Community Behavioral Health Academy (CBH Academy), a talent pipeline yielding 15 – 30 licensed clinical social workers (LCSW) annually who are dually licensed as licensed clinical addiction counselors (LCACs) and specially trained in treating substance use disorders (SUDs).

The CBH Academy creates significant benefits for CBH, students, and IUSSW and UIndy as education partners. As an employer, CBH has a steady supply of high-caliber talent trained in CBH-specific behavioral health practices, resulting in decreased orientation costs and time to productivity for new hires. The students participating in the CBH Academy receive specialized training in evidence-based practices, an opportunity for employment upon graduation, and a financial incentive to defray the cost of their education. IUSSW and UIndy can leverage the CBH Academy as a unique opportunity to attract top-tier students. The schools also benefit from close collaboration with industry experts to align curriculum with industry best practices.

The CBH Academy is a scalable and replicable solution to address CBH’s workforce needs. The strategic plan that CBH and Ascend developed to support the CBH Academy provides a guide for other institutions to launch similar projects to address the need for an increased behavioral health workforce. By filling the workforce gap, additional opportunities will be available to address the critical need for SUDs treatment services.



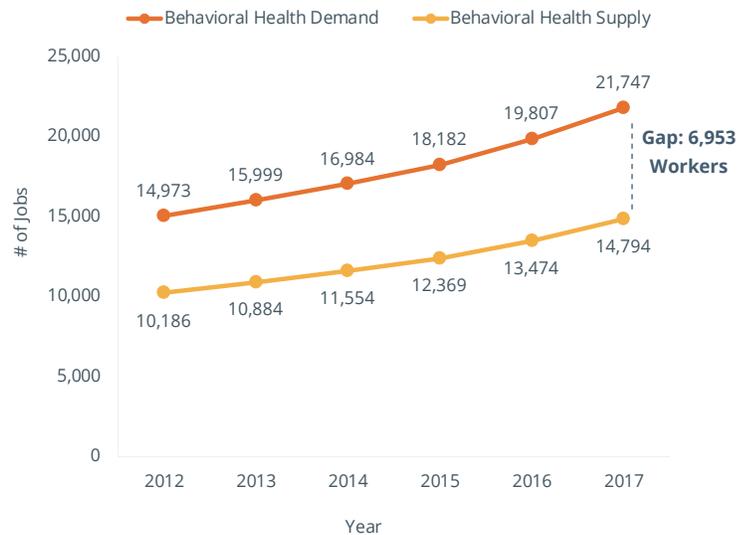
## The Talent Gap

There is a significant shortage of behavioral health professionals both nationally and throughout Indiana. The gap between employer demand for behavioral health professionals and the supply of talent to fill those positions is estimated to reach nearly 250,000 workers at a national level by 2025,<sup>1</sup> and a shortage of approximately 7,000 workers already exists at a state level in Indiana.<sup>2</sup> As this gap is widening, both the U.S. and Indiana are experiencing a concurrent increase in need for behavioral health services in general and a specific need for services related to SUDs treatment resulting from the growing opioid epidemic.

The current shortage of behavioral health professionals has significant economic and social consequences. Nationally, opioid overdose deaths increased by over 300% between 1999 and 2015.<sup>3</sup> At approximately the same time, Indiana saw an increase of over 500% in drug poisoning deaths, costing Indiana \$752 million dollars in potential lost wages in 2016. Further, increases in parental opioid abuse contributed to a 600% increase in the number of Indiana children in foster care between 2003-2016.<sup>4</sup> The need for increased treatment opportunities and specially trained behavioral health professionals is, therefore, a critical piece of the approach to addressing the opioid epidemic.

**Behavioral Health Workforce Misalignment**

Indiana, 2012-2017



## Establishing the Behavioral Health Academy

Leadership from CBH, IUSSW, and UIndy, with support from Ascend, dedicated significant time and effort to building the CBH Academy model and developing the vision, mission, and program components outlined below.

### Vision

The vision of the CBH Academy is that Indiana residents impacted by the opioid epidemic and other SUDs will have the opportunity to benefit from timely, high-quality recovery services.

### Mission

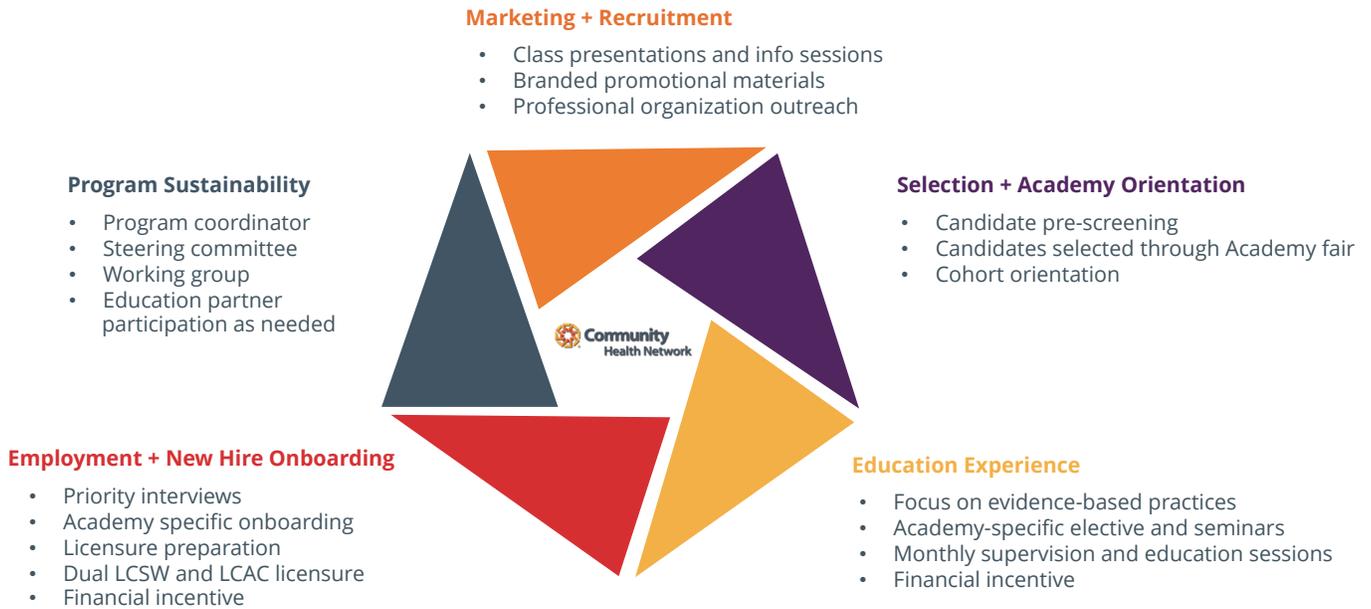
The mission of the CBH Academy is to recruit, prepare, employ, and retain masters-prepared, SUD-specialized licensed behavioral health professionals through an innovative education model grounded in evidence-based approaches.

<sup>1</sup> National Projections of Supply and Demand for Selected Behavioral Health Practitioners: 2013-2025 (Rep.). (2016, November). Retrieved <https://bhw.hrsa.gov/sites/default/files/bhw/health-workforce-analysis/research/projections/behavioral-health2013-2025.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Indiana Council of Community Mental Health Centers. (2016). 2016 Compensation and Benefits Survey of the Indiana Council of Community Mental Health Centers (Rep.). Indiana.

<sup>3</sup> Secretary, H. O., & Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA). (2017, June 15). About the Epidemic. Retrieved July 12, 2017, from <https://www.hhs.gov/opioids/about-the-epidemic/index.html>

<sup>4</sup> Opioids Rising: The Wide and Tragic Reach of Indiana's Growing Addiction Epidemic (Rep.). (2016, September). Retrieved <https://www.inphilanthropy.org/sites/default/files/Opioid%20Executive%20Summary%20September%202016.pdf>



## Community Behavioral Health Academy Components

The following priorities have been identified for implementation of the CBH Academy.

### 1) Marketing and Recruitment

The CBH Academy leverages the marketing and recruitment capabilities of CBH, IUSSW, and UIndy to reach a broad range of audiences, including the public, undergraduate students, current IUSSW and UIndy first-year MSW students, student organizations, and professional organizations. These comprehensive strategies focus on recruiting existing students at IUSSW and CBH into the CBH Academy and, ultimately, attracting new students to these schools and into the field of addictions, by distributing print and media materials, creating an online presence, and engaging with key influencers.

### 2) Selection and CBH Academy Orientation

CBH partners with UIndy and with IUSSW to screen and select students from each school for entry into the CBH Academy based on a set of mutually defined requirements. Students must be eligible to start their two-semester practicum at either IUSSW's MSW program or UIndy's MSW program. The process for selection includes screening by field placement coordinators on each campus, an interview process at CBH, and selecting and making offers to students. On their application, students may indicate interest in the CBH Academy. Selected students participate in a full-cohort orientation prior to the fall semester.

Additionally, CBH Academy participants may receive up to \$10,000 in financial incentives throughout their experience. In their last semester of the MSW program, participants receive \$5,000. If hired, upon obtaining LCSW and LCAC licensure, they receive an additional \$5,000.

### 3) Education Experience

The education experience includes the curricular piece of program design, as well as the practicum. A thorough review was completed of knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) required by CBH for CBH Academy participants. These KSAs form the foundation of the student's learning experience and reflect an approach grounded in evidence-based practices with opportunities to gain skills in both knowledge and practice. To meet the standards for successful practice set by CBH, the education partners deliver additional educational experiences through seminars at UIndy and enhanced MSW curricula at IUSSW. In addition, students participate in a practicum experience with CBH, which provides students with the opportunity to apply classroom learning in the clinical setting with mentorship from CBH supervisors. Students participate in monthly supervision and education sessions at CBH as well.

### 4) Employment and New Hire Onboarding

Following graduation from the MSW program and successful completion of CBH Academy requirements, students will have priority interviews and may have an opportunity for employment with CBH. This employment opportunity includes pre-licensure supervision and licensure exam preparation support. CBH will also conduct new hire onboarding to assist CBH Academy participants in transitioning into their full-time roles.

### 5) Program Sustainability

CBH governs the Academy on an ongoing basis using a combination of a program coordinator, a steering committee, and a working group. These stakeholder groups will meet with a regular cadence to ensure the smooth implementation and continued sustainability of the Academy.



**Behavioral Health Pathway**

## Conclusion

The Behavioral Health CBH Academy is a scalable, replicable model that prepares new behavioral health professionals for licensure as LCSWs and LCACs capable of treating mental health and SUDs. Together, CBH, IUSSW, and UIndy provide a professional pathway that benefits students, education providers, employers, and the community. Ultimately, the CBH Academy makes a critical impact on the opioid epidemic by expanding access to treatment and highly-skilled practitioners to address the community's needs.