

Compensation Equity for the Mental Health Workforce

February 28, 2023 | 3-4 PM ET

This project is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of an award totaling \$707,964 with 0 percentage financed with non-governmental sources. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by HRSA, HHS, or the U.S. Government. For more information, please visit [HRSA.gov](https://www.hrsa.gov)



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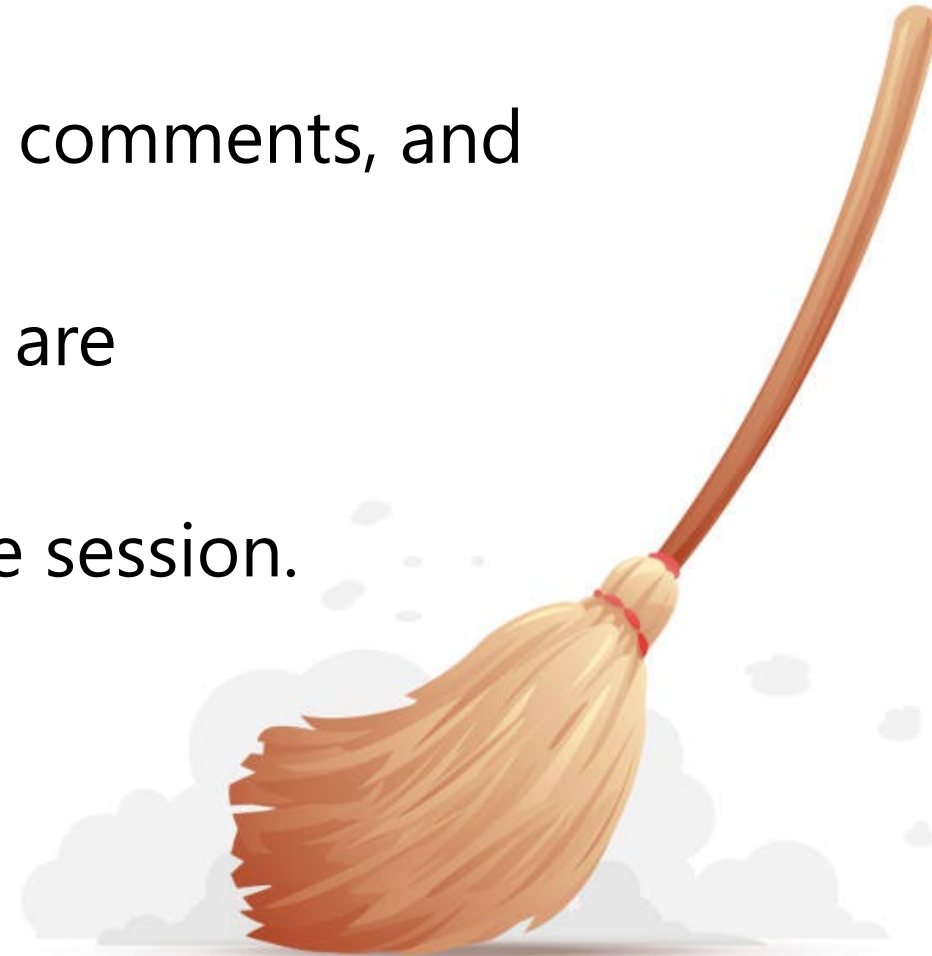
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WEBINAR HOUSEKEEPING



- This session is being recorded. The recording and slide deck will be shared with registrants via email.
- Use the **chat** box to ask questions, share comments, and thoughts.
- Send a message to **Mariah Blake**, if you are experiencing technical difficulties.
- Please complete the **evaluation** after the session.



LEARNING OBJECTIVES



- Identify the inherent connection between compensation and justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI)
- Understand the key concepts of compensation equity and the crucial role it plays in the retention and recruitment of the mental health workforce
- Learn to prioritize transparency when assessing and implementing a health center's compensation model

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**Does your organization
have a compensation
philosophy?**



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**How is your
organization addressing
compensation equity?**



WHAT IS JEDI?



DEFINITIONS



(Social) Justice: An analysis of **how power, privilege, and oppression impact the experience of our social identities.**

Equity: The notion of being fair and impartial as an individual engages with an organization or system. Acknowledgement that **not everyone has been afforded the same resources and treatment while also working to remedy this fact.**

Diversity: Having a **variety of social identities** (sex, race, gender, class, religion, ability, health, ethnicity, migration history and many others) that spend time in shared spaces, communities, institutions or society.

Inclusion: The notion that an organization or system is welcoming to new populations and/or identities. This new **presence is not merely tolerated but expected to contribute meaningfully.**

IN THE WORKPLACE



(Social) Justice: Working to recover from historical harms through efforts such as pay equity, employee development opportunities, and career paths. Health centers were built on the principles of health justice and accessibility for all.

Equity: Distribution of resources and opportunities to ensure that staff have what they need to succeed. Could include recognizing and addressing systemic barriers and biases that would prevent certain groups of employees from advancing in their career or receiving fair and equitable compensation similar to their peers.

Diversity: Valuing and leveraging the unique perspectives and experiences of all employees. Building a supportive and welcoming workplace for all staff.

Inclusion: Building a workplace that recognizes and celebrates diversity so everyone can contribute, thrive, and show up authentically free of prejudice and discrimination.

WHAT IS EQUITY?

EQUALITY:

Everyone gets the same – regardless if it’s needed or right for them.



EQUITY:

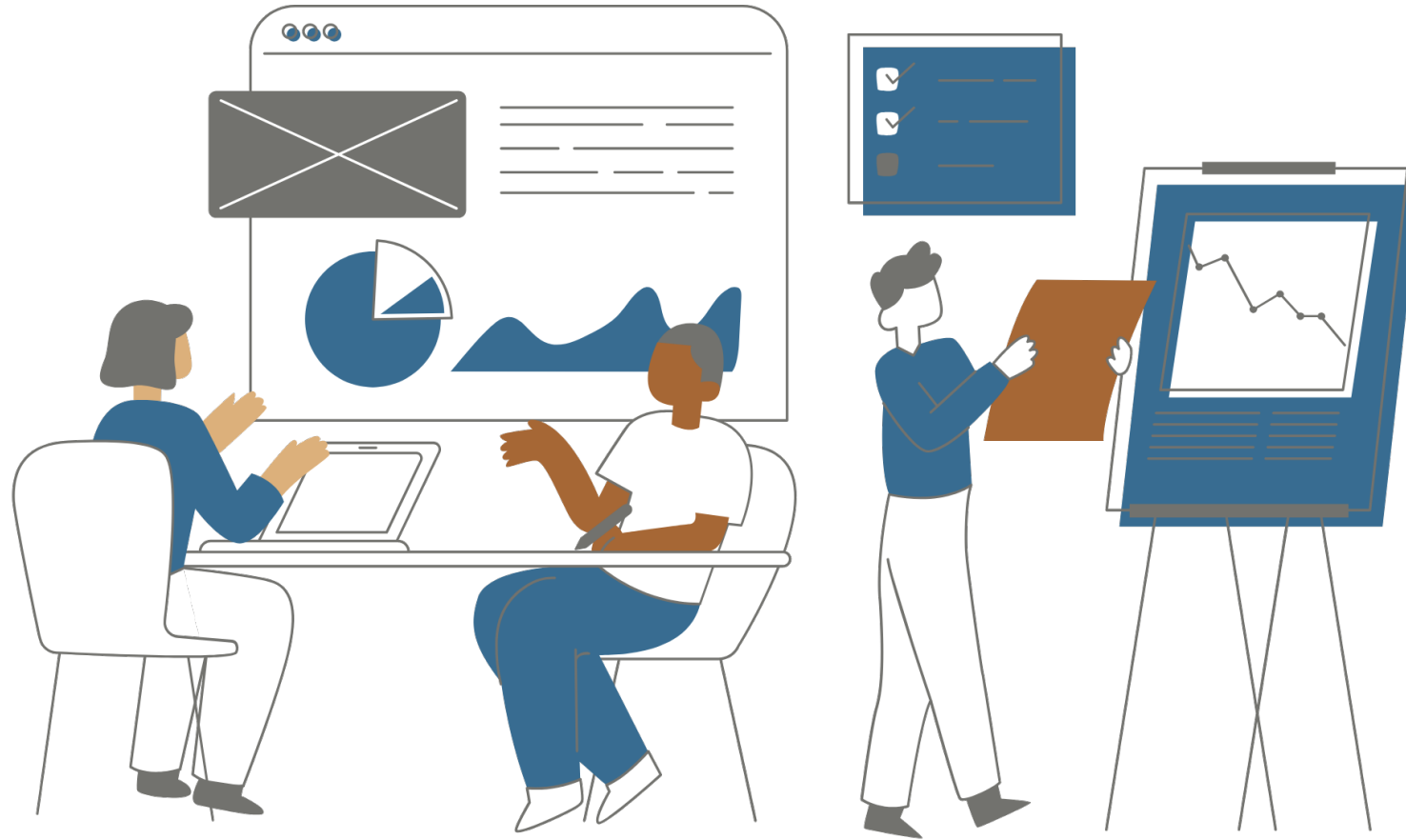
Everyone gets what they need – understanding the barriers, circumstances, and conditions.



WHAT IS PAY EQUITY?



Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value





WHAT DOES THE DATA SAY?

U.S. Wage Disparities All Professional Occupations



National's Earnings Disparity Relative to White Workers

| Race or Ethnicity | Number of Workers | Share of Workers | Average Weekly Earnings | Earnings per Dollar |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| White | 97,484,953 | 62.67% | \$1,046.52 | \$1.00 |
| Black | 17,781,185 | 11.43% | \$791.02 | \$0.76 |
| Native American/American Indian | 1,037,819 | 0.67% | \$801.99 | \$0.77 |
| Asian-Pacific Islander | 10,071,279 | 6.47% | \$1,168.82 | \$1.12 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 26,849,181 | 17.26% | \$762.80 | \$0.73 |
| Multiracial | 2,318,129 | 1.49% | \$852.18 | \$0.81 |

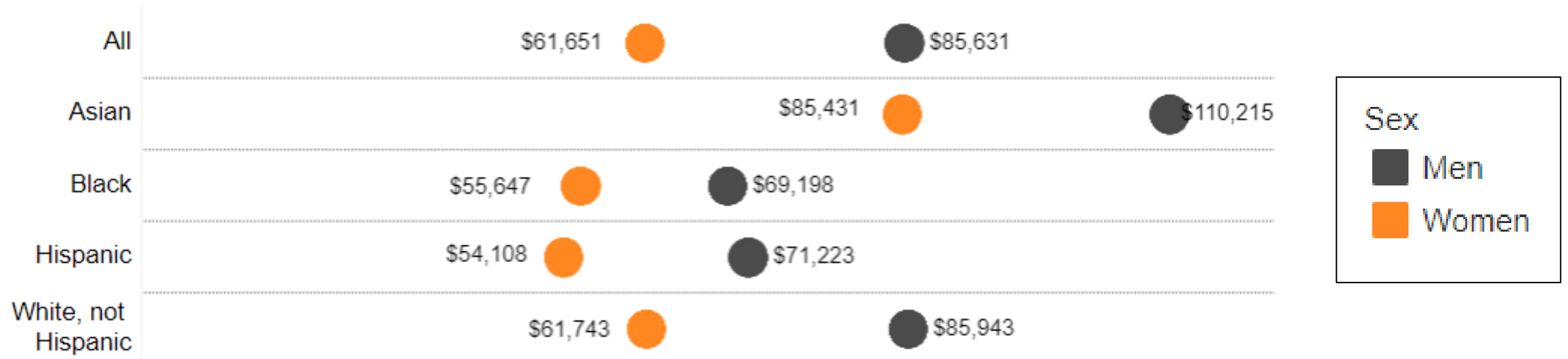
Source: U.S. Department of Labor. Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs. [Earnings Disparities by Race and Ethnicity](#)

U.S. Wage Disparities

All Professional Occupations, 2020 Earnings



Annual earnings



Source: U.S. Department of Labor. Women's Bureau. [Earnings and earnings ratios by sex, race, and occupation group](#)

U.S. Wage Disparities

All Professional Occupations, 2020 Earnings



Women's to men's earnings ratio, compared to same race



Source: U.S. Department of Labor. [Earnings and earnings ratios by sex, race, and occupation group](#)

U.S. Wage Disparities

All Professional Occupations, 2020 Earnings

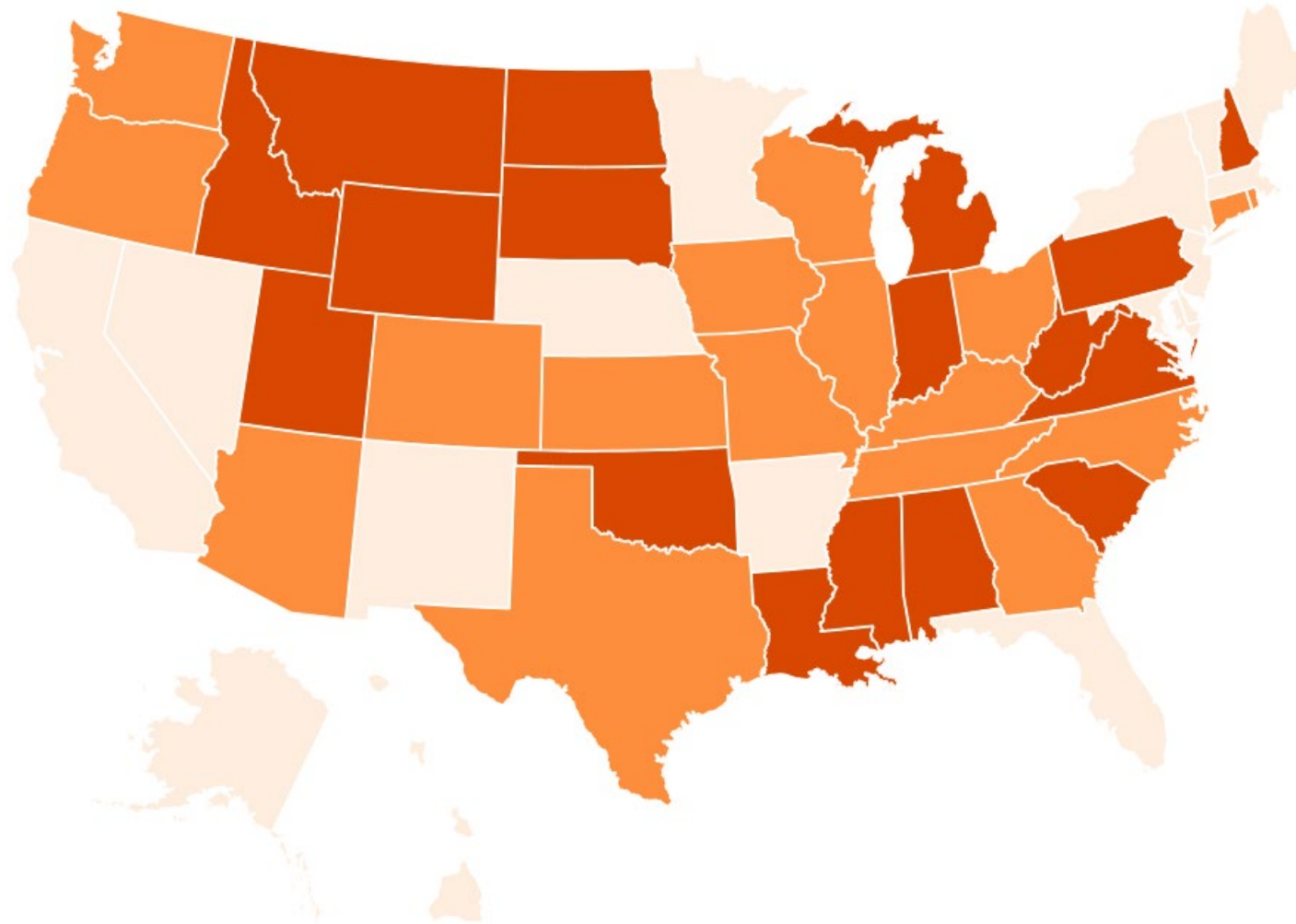


Women's to men's earnings ratio, compared to White, non-Hispanic men



Source: U.S. Department of Labor. [Earnings and earnings ratios by sex, race, and occupation group](#)

U.S. Male/Female Wage Disparities



Wage disparities vary by region.

Legend

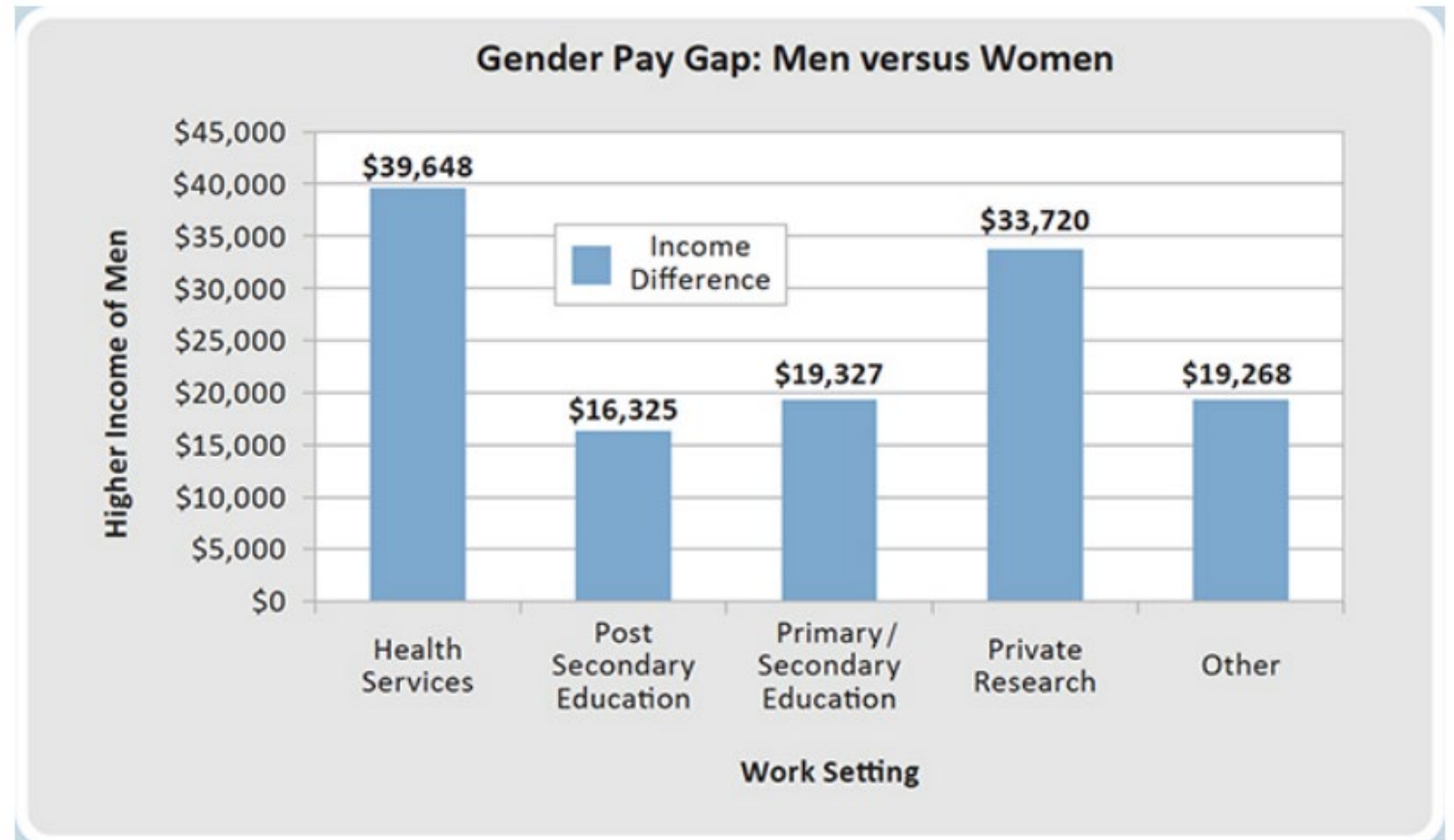
- Lower Disparity - More than \$0.77
- Middle Disparity - \$0.74 to \$0.77
- Higher Disparity - \$0.64 to \$0.74

Source: U.S. Department of Labor. [Earnings Disparities by Sex](#) (dataset: Jan 2017- Dec 2019)

Psychologists: Pay Disparities by Gender



“The largest pay gap for psychology doctorates occurs in health services, where men earn an average of \$39,648 more than women.”



Source: Center for Workforce Studies. (2014, December 1). Does the gender pay gap in psychology differ by work setting? *Monitor on Psychology*, 45(11). <https://www.apa.org/monitor/2014/12/datapoint>

Other Mental Health Professions, Earnings by Occupation & Sex



Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey, 2022

Table 39. Median weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers by detailed occupation and sex

| | median earnings | men earnings | women earnings |
|--|-----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Community and social service occupations | \$1,128 | \$1,199 | \$1,093 |
| Substance abuse and behavioral disorder counselors | \$945 | NA | \$922 |
| Mental health counselors | \$1,150 | NA | \$1,152 |
| Healthcare social workers | \$1,142 | NA | \$1,122 |
| Social workers, other | \$1,130 | \$1,182 | \$1,120 |

Table 39. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. [Median weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers by detailed occupation and sex.](#)

Other Mental Health Professions, Earnings by Occupation & Race



Average Annual Wages by Race/Ethnicity and Health Care Occupation, Pooled 2011 2018

| Occupation | All Races/ Ethnicities | Non- Hispanic | Hispanic | White | Black | Asian/ Pacific Islander | American Indian/Alaska Native | Multiracial |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------|----------|----------|----------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| Therapist | \$39,862 | \$39,953 | \$38,959 | \$38,860 | \$44,123 | \$48,361 | \$32,173 | \$33,488 |
| Community- based worker | \$55,030 | \$55,658 | \$49,778 | \$56,407 | \$47,627 | \$66,814 | \$47,961 | \$46,540 |

Source: Frogner, B. K., & Schwartz, M. (2021). Examining Wage Disparities by Race and Ethnicity of Health Care Workers. *Medical care*, 59(Suppl 5), S471–S478. <https://doi.org/10.1097/MLR.0000000000001613>

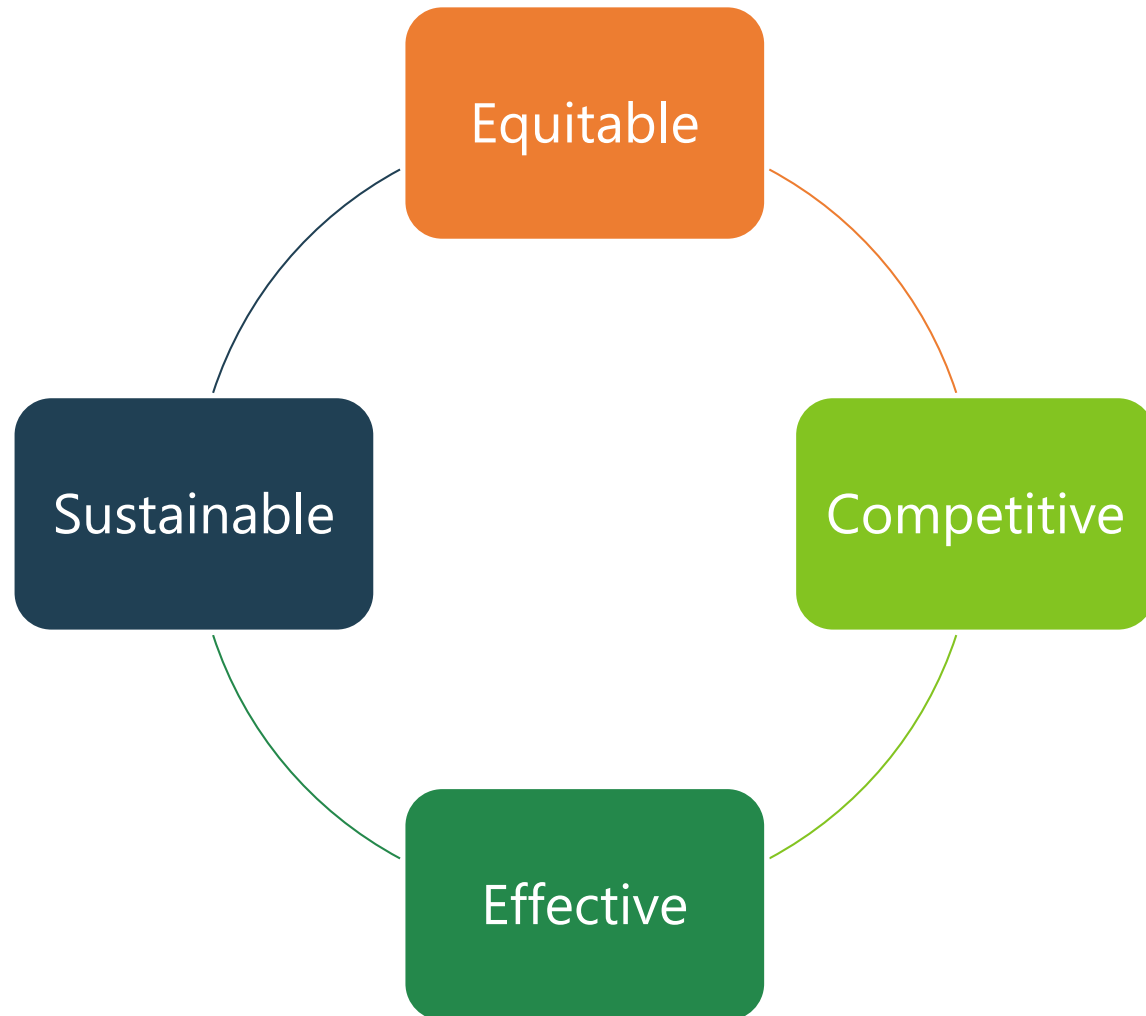


RETENTION & RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES

Core Components



FOCUS ON COMPENSATION



Equitable and **effective** compensation structure defines a **sustainable** approach to total compensation that is **competitive** and attractive to potential and current staff and maintains fairness.

MENTAL HEALTH WORKFORCE



Demand



Workforce

MENTAL HEALTH WORKFORCE



- How does your organization value mental health vs. physical health?
- Is this affecting the compensation of mental health providers?
- Is your organization's compensation model equitable between mental health providers and primary care providers?
- In 2017, primary care reimbursements were 23.8% higher than behavioral health reimbursements
- In 2017, eleven states had reimbursement rates that were >50% for primary care vs. behavioral health



PAY EQUITY STRATEGIES

- Conduct regular pay audits
 - Identify pay gaps
- Prioritize salary adjustments
- Practice pay transparency
- Develop a compensation philosophy and policies – **then revisit and revise it with input from staff**
- Develop an employee-focused organizational pay culture



Visit the STAR² Center's [Pay Equity Checklist](#) for more information

THINK ABOUT THE TOTAL COMPENSATION PACKAGE



- Salary
- Bonuses
- Benefits
- Professional Development
- Career Pathways
- Promotions
- Culture
- Financial Wellness



A CULTURE FOCUSED ON FINANCIAL WELLNESS



- Provide **financial literacy classes**
- Host speakers and training opportunities
- Offer solutions to ease your employee's financial stress
- Hold annual workshops for retirement planning help and setting long-term financial goals
- Pay employees a **thriving** wage





BE INCLUSIVE / BE CREATIVE

BENEFITS

- Think beyond anti-discrimination policies
 - Leave (e.g., bereavement, holidays, parental paid leave)
 - Benefits – do they include partners/family? Who defines “family”?
 - Health plan – is it inclusive?
 - Ex: transgender health coverage

COMPENSATION & BENEFITS FOR MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDERS



- Clinical Supervision
- Licensing Support
- Continuing Education
- Flexible Work Schedules (remote, hybrid, part-time, etc.)
- Career Pathways



WHY IT MATTERS?

Clinical Supervision



Clinical supervision is a formal and disciplined working alliance in which the supervisee's clinical work is reviewed and reflected upon, with the aims of:

- Improving the supervisee's work with clients
- Ensuring client welfare
- Supporting the supervisee's work
- Supporting the supervisee's professional development

But, clinical supervision is costly (ex: social workers spend two to four years under clinical supervision to secure a clinical license; supervisees often charge hundreds of dollars a week for this service)

WHY IT MATTERS?

Licensing Support



- Mental health providers must maintain an active license
 - Sometimes multiple state licenses, if providing telehealth services
- License is renewed every two to three years depending on state or licensing body requirements



WHY IT MATTERS?

Continuing Education



Continuing Education Unit (CEU), Continue Medical Education (CME)

CEU/CME suggested budget per mental health provider:

- Five to seven paid days off annually to attend continuing education conferences
- \$1,500 - \$2,000 per provider to cover CEU/CME expenses

WHY IT MATTERS?

Flexible Work Schedules



- Offer part-time option for most, if not all, clinical positions in mental health
- Remove noncompete clauses
- Hybrid work
 - Keep in mind state licensing requirements
- Move away from the five-day work week and 9-5 schedule

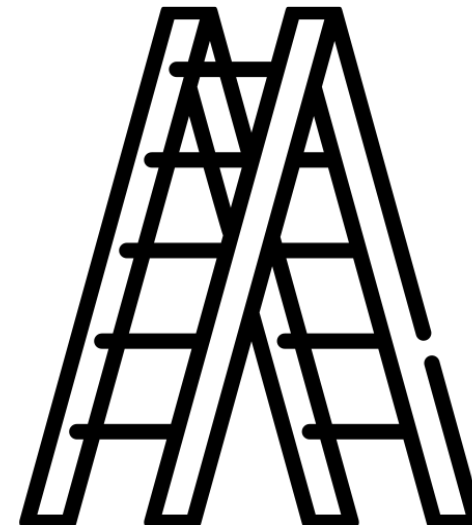
WHY IT MATTERS?

Career Paths & Career Ladders



Career paths encompass varied forms of career progression, including the traditional vertical career ladders, dual career ladders, horizontal career lattices, career progression outside the organization and encore careers.

Career ladders are the progression of jobs in an organization's specific occupational fields ranked from highest to lowest based on level of responsibility and pay.



Source: [SHRM](#);
Images: [Flaticon](#)



PROVIDING TRANSPARENCY

COMPENSATION TRANSPARENCY



- Train and prepare managers to talk about salary
- Ensure all staff understand your health center's pay philosophy
- Routinely evaluate compensation and benefits
- Solicit input from staff at all levels



HOW TO TALK TO STAFF?



- Assume staff already talk to each other (federally protected in most cases)
- Be prepared to explain:
 - Policies and procedures
 - Salary ranges and reasoning
 - Deciding factors for bonuses and raises
 - Bonuses should be for **ALL** staff regardless of role
 - Benefits – show value
- Be open to concerns, critiques, feedback, and different staff needs
- Brainstorm flexible, adaptable benefits and career paths



COMPENSATION IN JOB ANNOUNCEMENTS & INTERVIEWS



- Include salary ranges in job postings
 - Requirement in several states
- Discuss compensation right away
 - First interview
 - Ensure pay expectations between candidate and health center align
 - Explain compensation philosophy
- Discuss benefits
- Take a JEDI lens
 - Understand the history of pay inequity and marginalized populations
- Speak to your health center's commitment to pay equity



COMPENSATION & ONBOARDING



- Make compensation a conversation priority
- Explain benefits & **educate staff on how to maximize them**
- Conduct stay interviews
 - Discuss salary
- Discuss career paths and ladders
- Ensure new hire understands compensation policies and procedures



INVEST IN THE WORKFORCE



Turnover is **EXPENSIVE!**

*Calculate your health center's turnover costs by using the [STAR² Center Financial Assessment for Provider Turnover Tool](#) (newly updated!)



As leaders, ask yourselves:

- What's the actual cost of turnover?
- What's the cost of a provider vacancy?
- How much does it cost to recruit?
- How much money is your organization losing to these workforce issues?
- How can you better invest money to retain staff and minimize losses?



FEATURED RESOURCE:

PAY EQUITY CHECKLIST

A checklist to help your health center look holistically at its compensation structures.

Access the resource [here](#).



FEATURED RESOURCE:

COMPENSATION & MENTAL HEALTH

A factsheet on supporting staff mental health through compensation equity and inclusive benefits.

Access the resource [here](#).

FEATURED RESOURCE



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SOLUTIONS TRAINING AND ASSISTANCE
FOR RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

- Review position descriptions with an equity and inclusion lens
- Recruiting from minority-led and focused professional organizations
- Implementing practices to mitigate bias in hiring
- Establishing a mentorship program to support organizational advancement for minoritized or underrepresented groups



Visit the STAR² Center's [Building an Inclusive Organization Toolkit](#) for more information

BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE ORGANIZATION

Job Posting Sites

The following national organizations have Career Centers available for job postings. Click on their organization's name to be directed to their website.

[National Hispanic Medical Association](#)

NHMA empowers Hispanic physicians to lead efforts to improve the health of Hispanic and other underserved populations in collaboration with Hispanic state medical societies, residents, and medical students, and other public and private sector partners.

[National Black Nurses Association](#)

NBNA's mission is to provide a forum for collective action by African American nurses to represent and provide a forum for black nurses to advocate for and implement strategies to ensure access to the highest quality of healthcare for persons of color.

[National Association of Hispanic Nurses](#)

NAHN is the nation's leading professional society for Latinx nurses.

[National Medical Association](#)

NMA is the collective voice of African American physicians and the leading force for parity and justice in medicine and the elimination of disparities in health.

[National Alaska Native American Indian Nurses Association](#)

NANAINA unites American Indian/Alaska Native nurses and those who care for AN/AI people to improve the health and well-being of American Indian/Alaska Native people.

[Philippine Nurses Association of America](#)

PNAA is an organization responsive to Filipino-American nurses' needs.

[Out Professional Network!](#)

Out Professional Network! provides the LGBT community with a trusted professional network, which pairs members with employers who are serious about building a diverse workforce to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse customer base.





STAR² CENTER RESOURCES

- [Recruitment & Retention Self-Assessment Tool](#) (Newly updated!)
- [Health Center Comprehensive Workforce Plan Template](#) (formerly Health Center Provider Recruitment & Retention Plan - Newly updated!)
- [Pay Equity Checklist](#)
- [MA/DA Retention Paper](#)
- [Financial Assessment Tool](#) (Newly updated!)
- [Building an Inclusive Organization Toolkit](#)
- [Resiliency Toolkit](#)

[You can find all of the STAR² Center's free resources here](#)

[Sign up for our newsletter here for new resources, trainings, and updates](#)

READY TO LEARN MORE?

Check out the
STAR² Center Self-Paced Courses

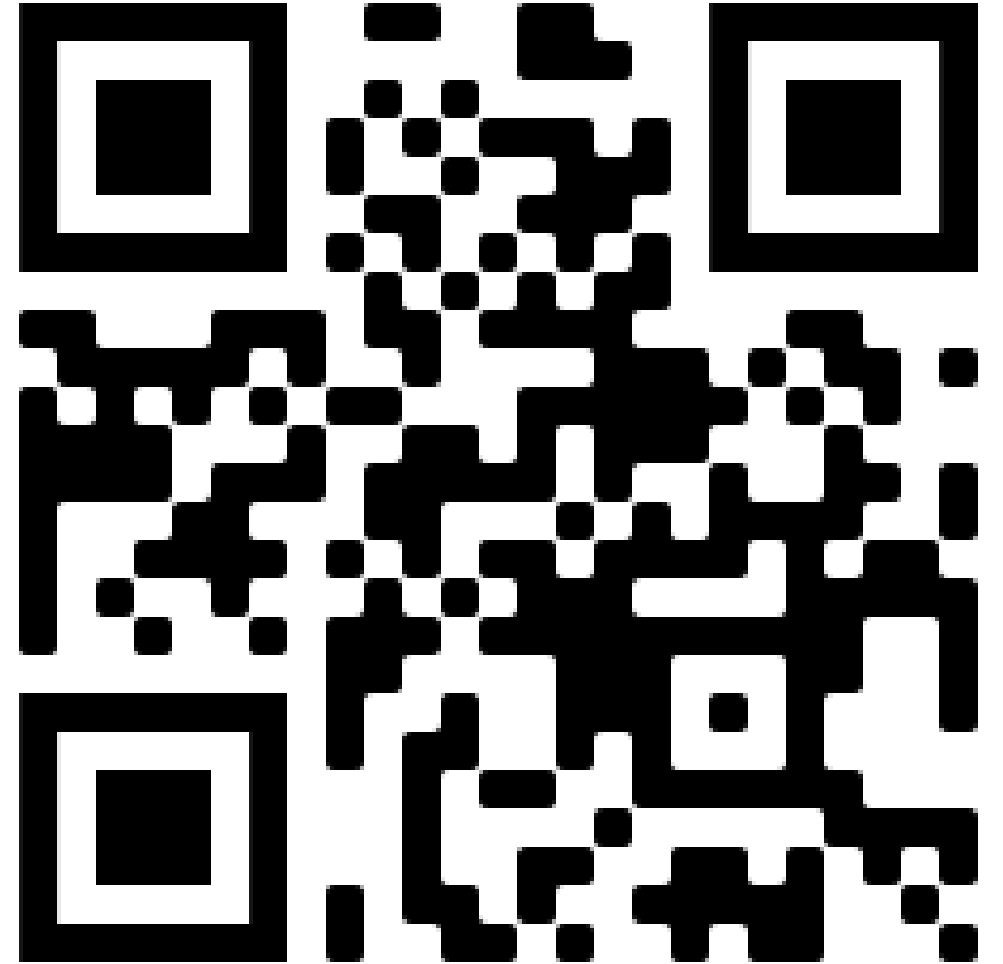
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