

Minnesota's Licensed Counseling (LPC and LPCC) Workforce

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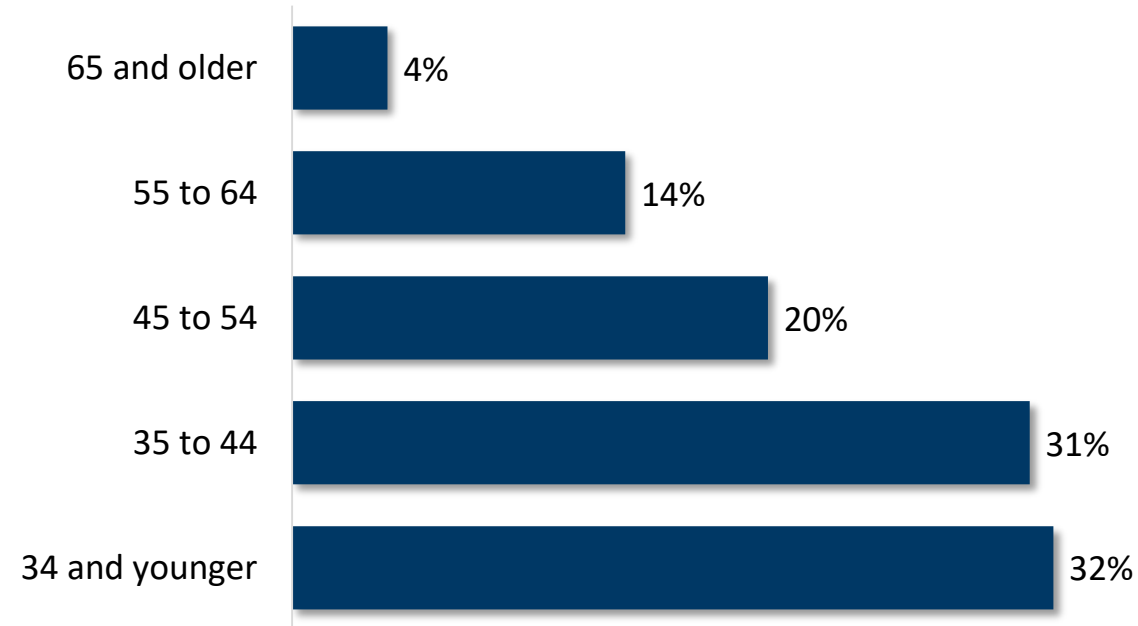
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Minnesota's Licensed Counselors (LPC and LPCC) Workforce Summary

- Licensed Professional Counselors (LPCs) and Licensed Professional Clinical Counselors (LPCCs) are mental health care providers. They work in a variety of settings and may specialize in any number of mental health sub-specialties to care for patients and clients. LPCs and LPCCs serve a historically underutilized role in health care, filling gaps in services that result from the slowly-reducing stigma of mental health and its care. LPCs and LPCCs must graduate from an accredited mental health related programs. Learn more about their legal scope of practice in Minnesota at <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/148B>, specifically statutes 148B.50-148B.72. LPC and LPCC practices are distinct from one another, but are similar in essence. Therefore, we analyze the two sets of licensees together in this report.
- According to the Minnesota Board of Behavioral Health and Therapy, there were a total of **2,202** LPCs and LPCCs with active licenses in Minnesota as of October, 2018.
- The licensed counseling workforce is relatively young, with nearly a third under the age of 34. The vast majority of licensed counselors report that they plan to continue practicing in the field for at least 10 more years, signifying stability in this workforce.
- The majority of licensed counselors are white, female, have masters' degrees, and speak only English in their practice.
- Generally speaking, licensed counselors report high levels of work satisfaction, though many report higher satisfaction with the profession overall than with their work in the last year.
- Like nearly all other health care providers, licensed counselors are not evenly distributed across the state. The majority work in the Twin Cities metro area or other urban areas, creating access challenges for rural residents. The typical rural mental health counselor not only serves a larger geographic area, but also may serve many more people, as well.

Demographics: Sex and Age

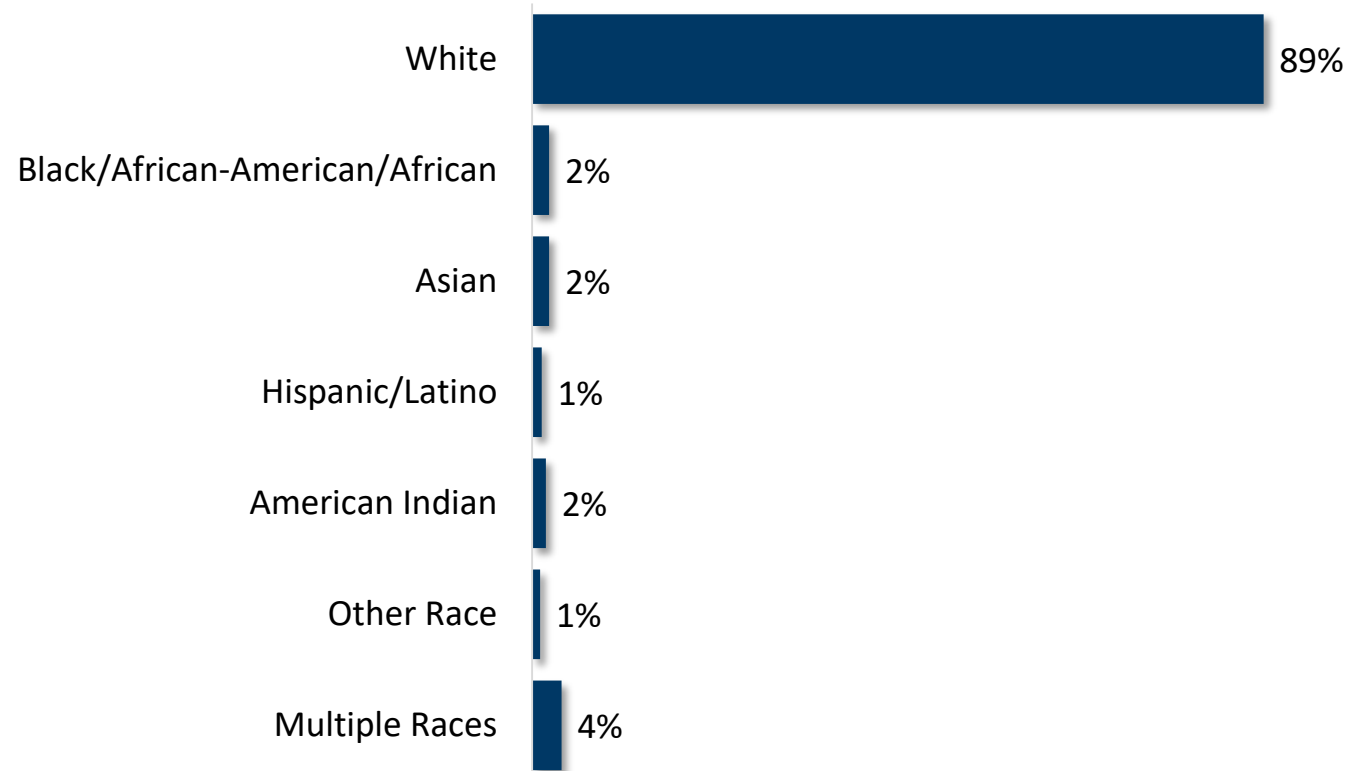
Age of Minnesota Licensed Counselors (LPCs/LPCCs)



- The licensed counseling workforce is relatively young, with more than 60 percent ages 44 and younger.
- (Not shown above): With a few exceptions, health care professions are predominantly female. This is true for licensed counselors as well. Approximately 82 percent of all Minnesota LPCs and LPCCs are female.

Demographics: Race and Ethnicity

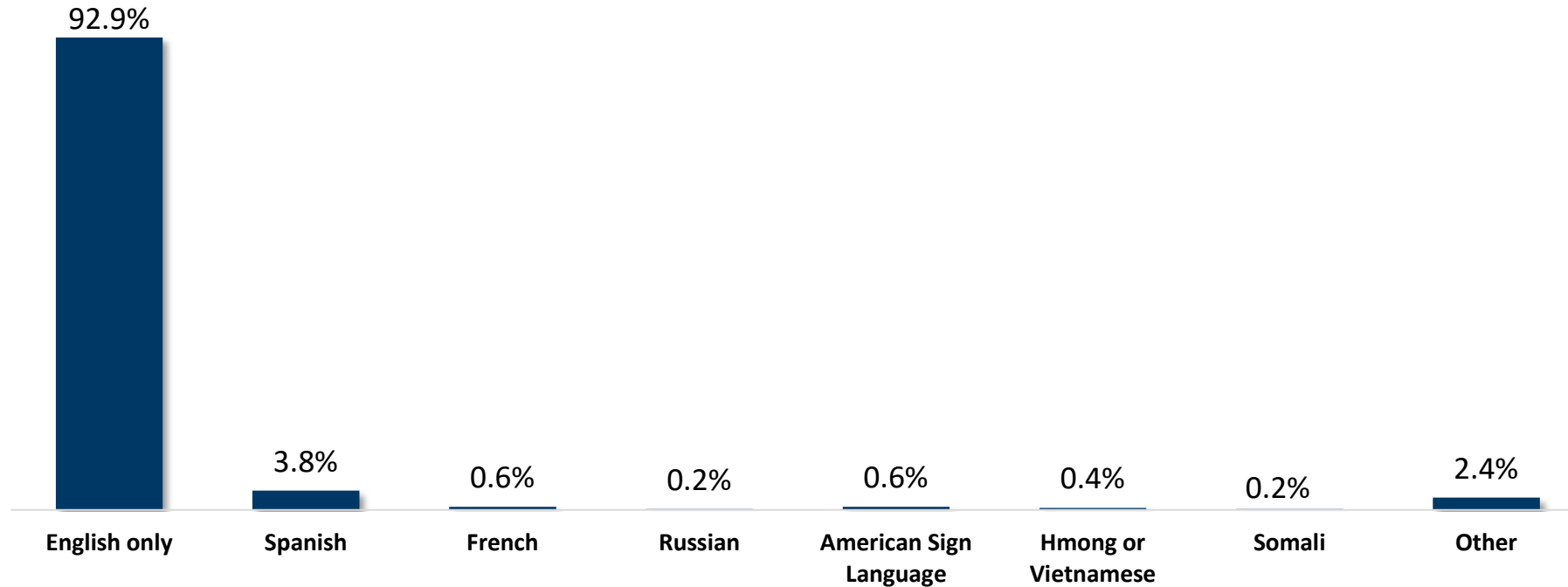
Race of Minnesota LPCs and LPCCs



- Typical of racial patterns among health care professionals, the majority (89 percent) of LPCs and LPCCs indicated they were white. There were small shares of LPCs and LPCCs identifying as multi-racial or African American (approximately six percent combined) and even smaller shares of Hispanic/Latinx, Asian, and American Indian.

Demographics: Languages Spoken in Practice

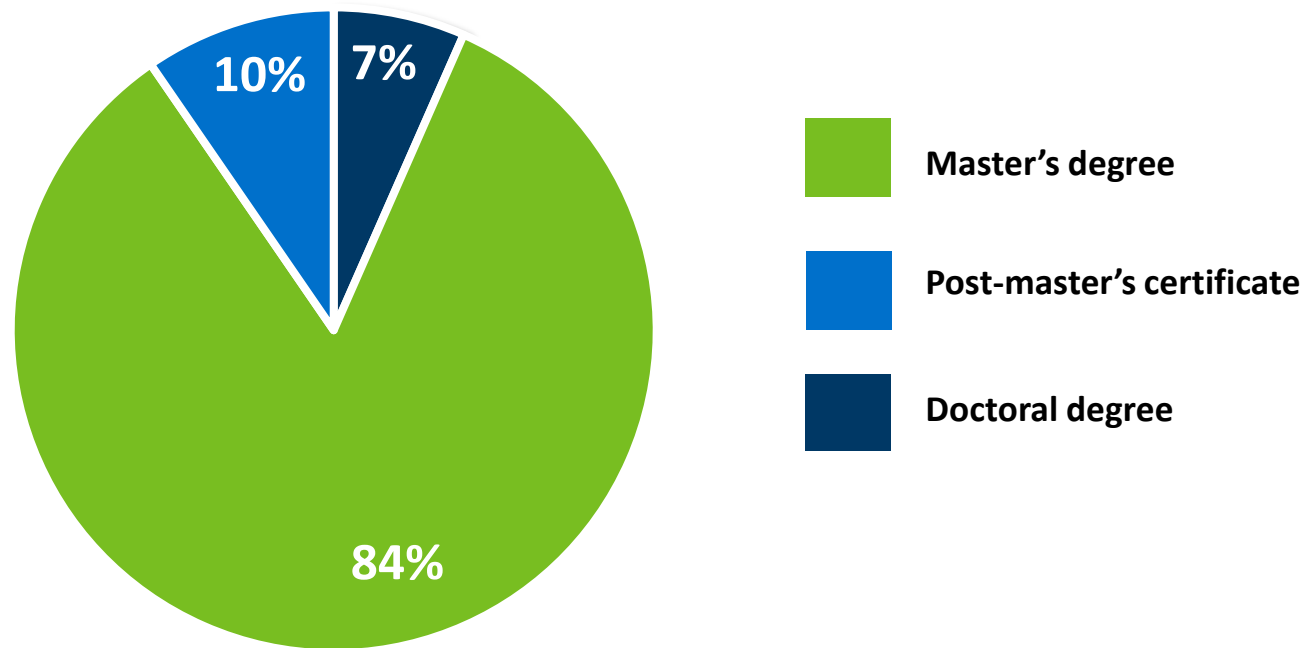
Languages Spoken by Minnesota LPCs and LPCCs in their Practices



- The majority of licensed counselors—approximately 93 percent—spoke only English in their practices. The second most commonly spoken language was Spanish. Very small shares of licensed counselors spoke other languages such as French, Russian, Hmong or Somali with their patients.

Education: Educational Attainment

Highest Degree Earned by Licensed Counselors, 2014



- The majority of licensed counselors have masters' degrees, with another 10 percent holding a post-masters' certificate, and seven percent holding doctorate degrees.

Education: Minnesota Graduates

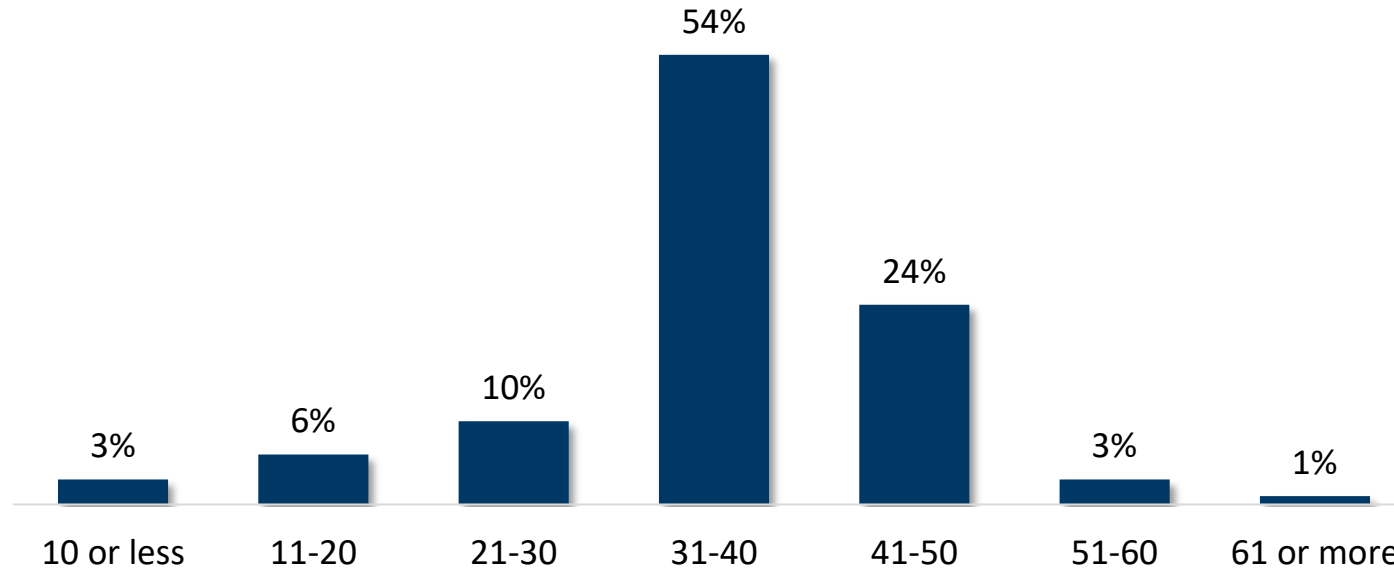
Mental Health Counseling Program Graduates, by Year

Licensed Counselor Program Graduates, by Year				
Region	Institution	2015	2016	2017
Central	St. Cloud State University	11	5	20
	Northwest	Minnesota State University – Moorhead	18	14
Southeast	Bemidji State University	8	2	2
	St. Mary's University	102	103	101
Southwest	Winona State University	0	0	1
	Minnesota State University – Mankato	17	13	9
Twin Cities	Adler Graduate School	93	96	87
	University of St. Thomas	61	67	68
	Bethel University	27	27	42
	University of Minnesota – Twin Cities	9	12	8
	Augsburg University	0	0	1
Total		346	339	365

- The data above shows the number of degrees completed in these mental health counseling programs, and therefore is a measure of the potential pipeline for the licensed counseling profession. (It is not a count of people working in the profession.)
- The single largest share of graduates earned their degrees in the Twin Cities area, but Saint Mary's University, located in Southeast Minnesota, conferred the largest number of degrees to mental health program graduates.

Employment: Employment & Hours Worked

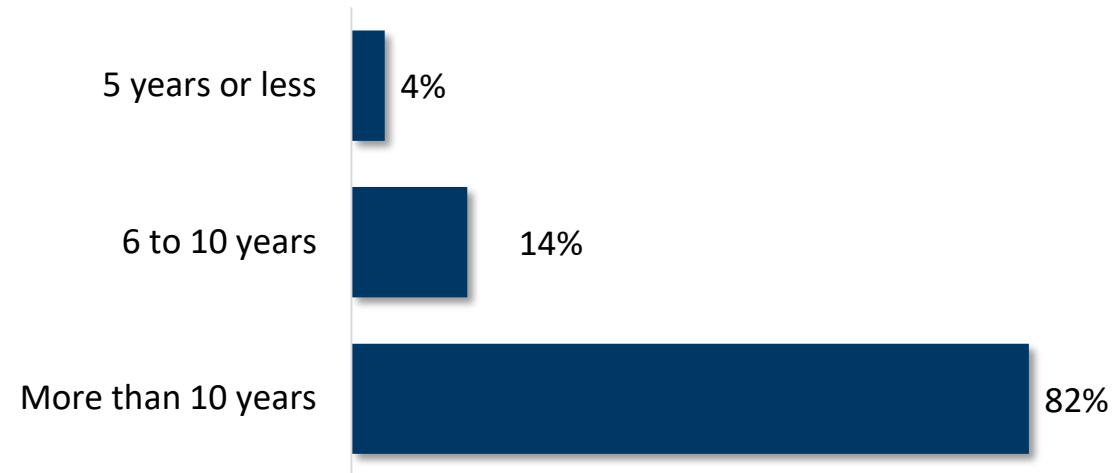
Hours Worked in a Typical Week



- The median work week for licensed counselors was 40 hours, and half of all LPCs and LPCCs worked between 31 and 40 hours per week. A relatively small proportion of LPCs and LPCCs (less than 20 percent) worked 30 hours or fewer.

Employment: Future Plans

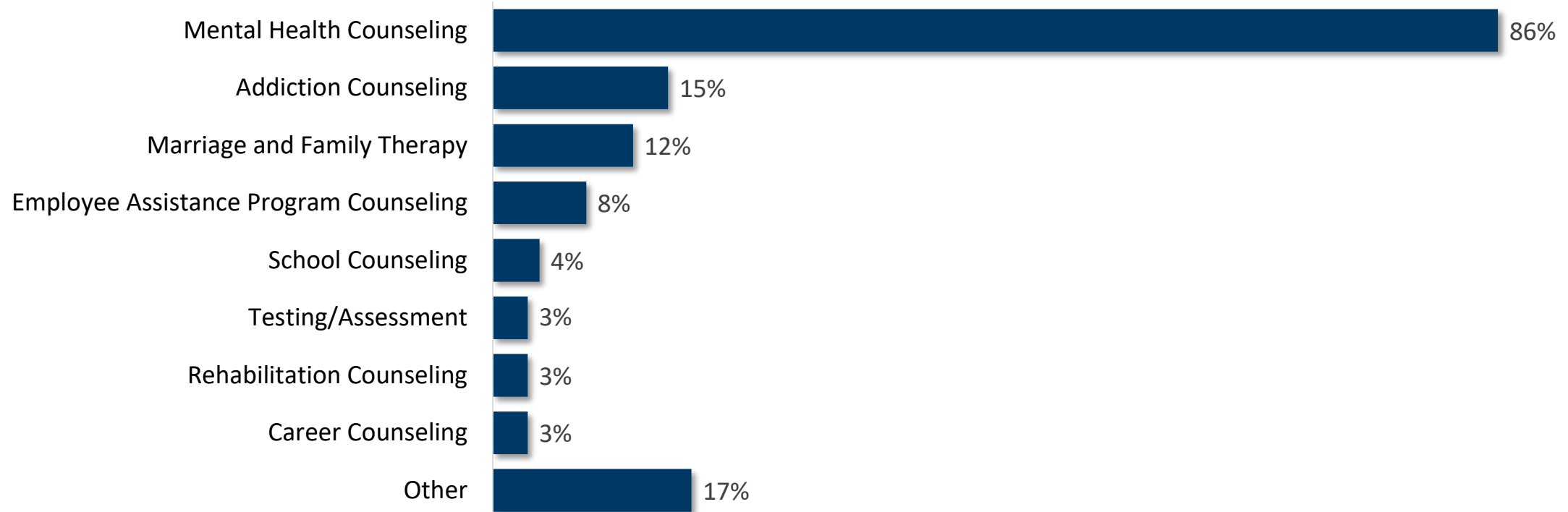
“How long do you plan to continue practicing as a licensed counselor in Minnesota?”



- Just 4 percent of Minnesota LPCs and LPCCs indicated that they planned to leave the field within five years. Nearly 82 percent of LPCs and LPCCs plan to remain in the field for more than ten more years, reflecting the stability (and relative youth) of this profession.
- (Not shown above): Among that small sub-group planning to leave within five years, the majority (66 percent) said they planned to retire. Roughly nine percent of this sub-group planned to leave the field due to burnout or dissatisfaction, and approximately 13 percent said they planned to pursue training to advance in their current or a related profession.

Licensed Counselors at Work: Specialties

LPC and LPCC Specialties



- The survey asked licensed counselors to identify all the therapeutic specialties they practiced. As shown above, the single most commonly reported specialty was mental health counseling, followed by addiction counseling (a distant second). An estimated 17 percent of counselors selected “other” on this question, and the most commonly reported “other” response was Ph.D. or PsyD.

Licensed Counselors at Work: Work Settings

LPC and LPCC Primary Work Settings

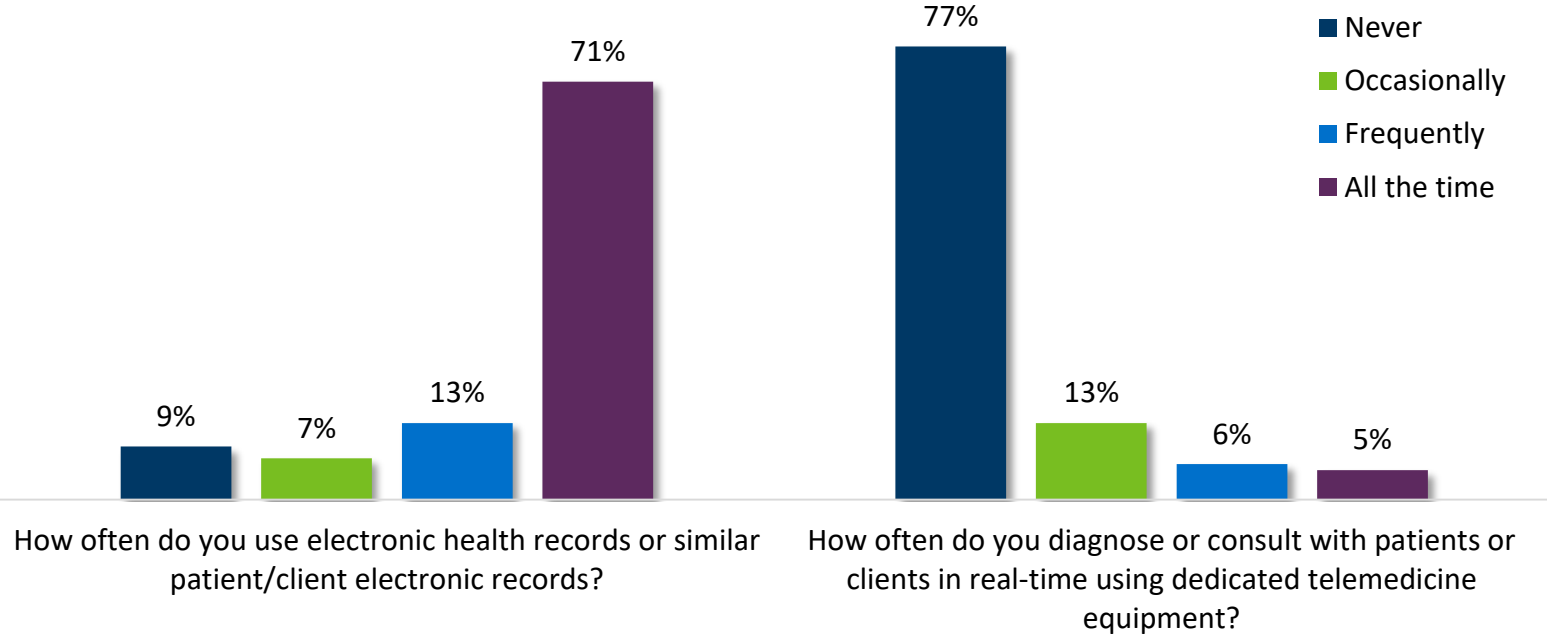
Setting	Share of LPC/LPCCs Working in this Setting
Clinic/Professional Office/Health Center/Ambulatory Care	59.3%
Insurance/Benefits Management Organization	7.9%
Community/Faith-Based Organization	7.7%
Hospital	4.9%
Correctional Facility	3.6%
School (K-12)	3.5%
State, County, or City Agency	2.8%
Long-Term Care Facility	1.5%
Academic (Teaching/Research)	2.8%
Public Health Agency	0.5%
Home Health Care	0.6%
Other	5.0%

- Over half of licensed counselors work primarily in a traditional clinic setting. Insurance/benefits management organization settings are second most common at 8.2 percent.

Source: MDH LPC/LPCC Workforce Survey, 2018. The survey includes questions on both the “primary” and “secondary” settings in which providers work. For the purposes of the analysis in this section, we present data only on primary settings. An analysis indicated that the types of settings in which LPCs and LPCCs worked did not differ depending on whether they were primary or secondary. The chart above is based on 1,299 valid responses.

Licensed Counselors at Work: EHRs and Telemedicine

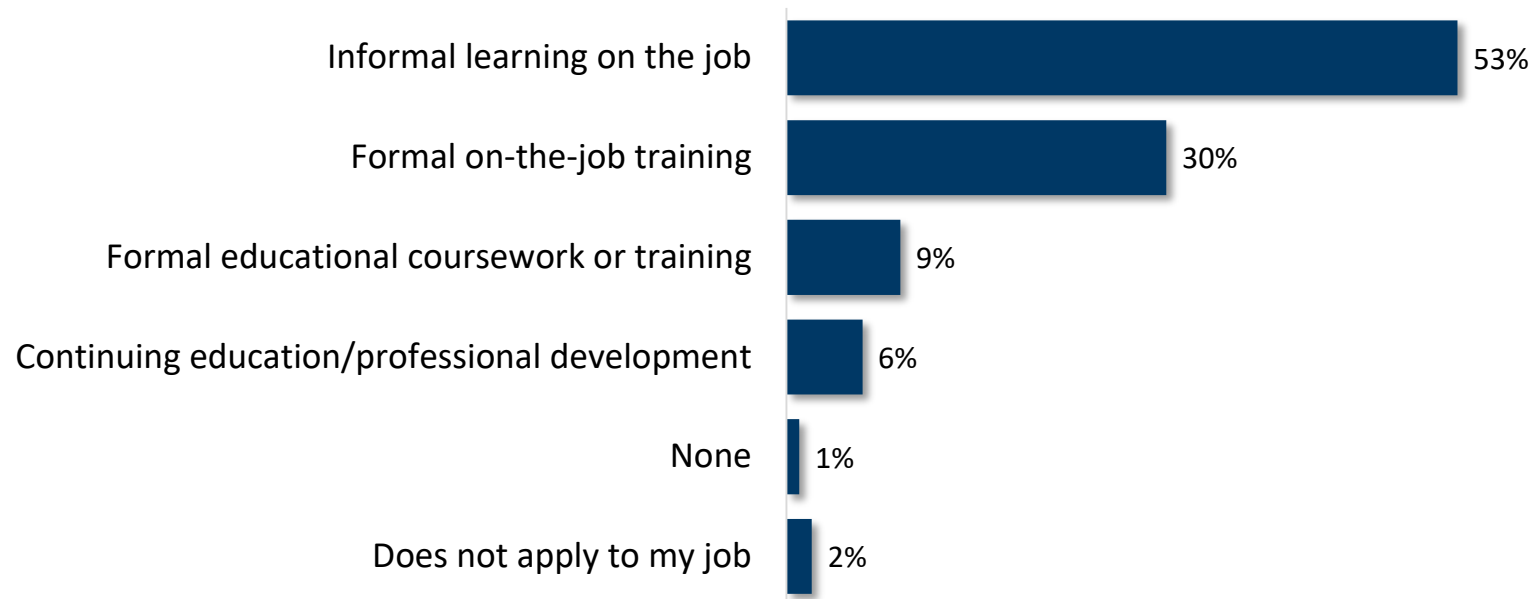
LPC and LPCCs' Use of Electronic Health Records and Telemedicine Equipment



- The 2018 survey included items about the use of both electronic health records (EHRs) and dedicated telemedicine equipment. The results showed that the majority (approximately 71 percent) of LPCs and LPCCs use EHRs “all the time,” but most do not use telemedicine equipment regularly.

Licensed Counselors at Work: Teamwork

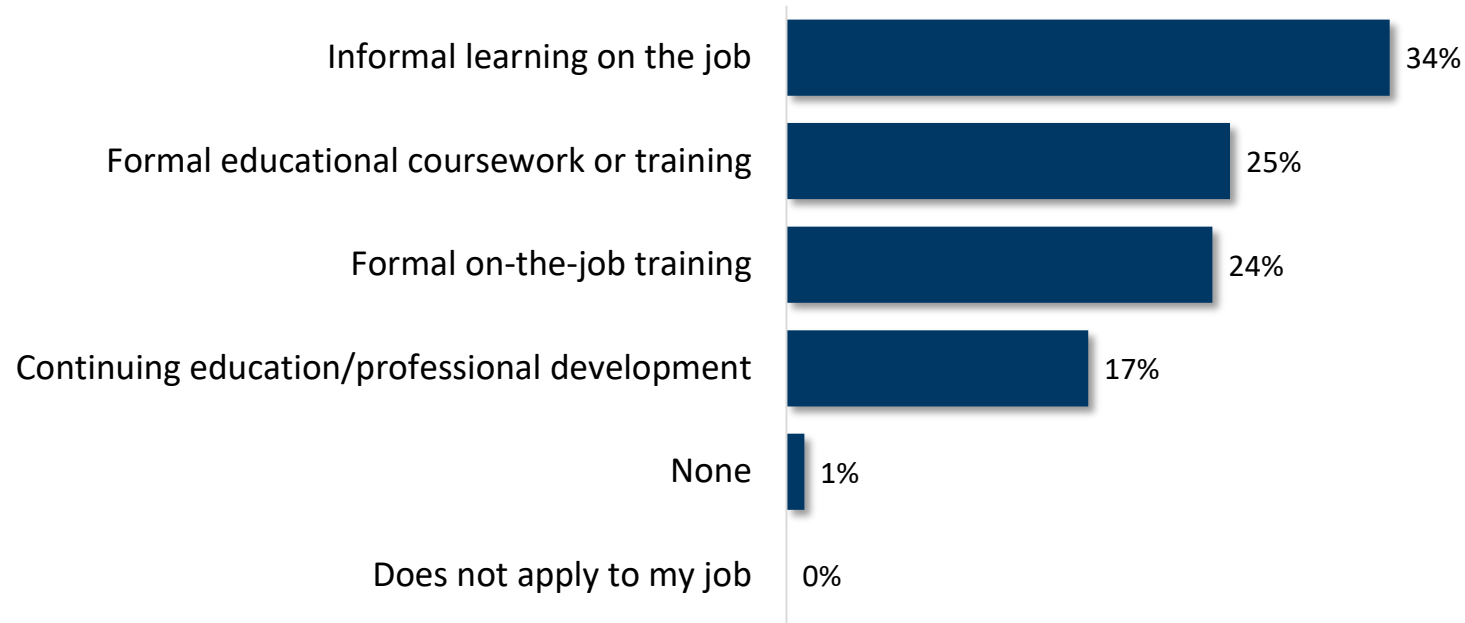
“Which of the following work or educational experiences best prepared you to work in a multidisciplinary team when providing care?”



- Health care providers increasingly work in multidisciplinary teams, prompting educators and health policymakers to ask how best to train providers to communicate and coordinate across professions. MDH included a question on its 2018 survey to shed light on these concerns. As shown above, roughly 80 percent of licensed counselors reported that learning on the job (either informal or formal) *best* prepared them to work in multidisciplinary team.

Licensed Counselors at Work: Cultural Competence

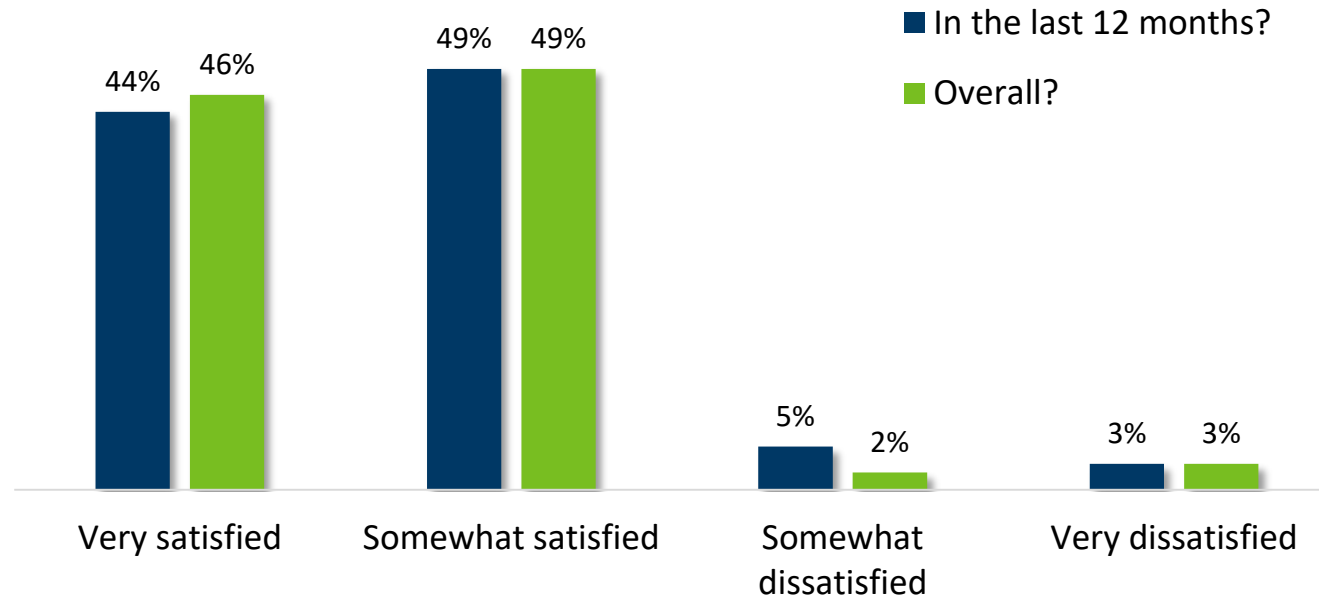
“Which of the following work or educational experiences best prepared you to provide culturally competent care?”



- Minnesota LPCs and LPCCs reported that they were best prepared to provide culturally competent care through a number of different methods, with informal learning on the job being the most commonly reported.

Licensed Counselors at Work: Career Satisfaction

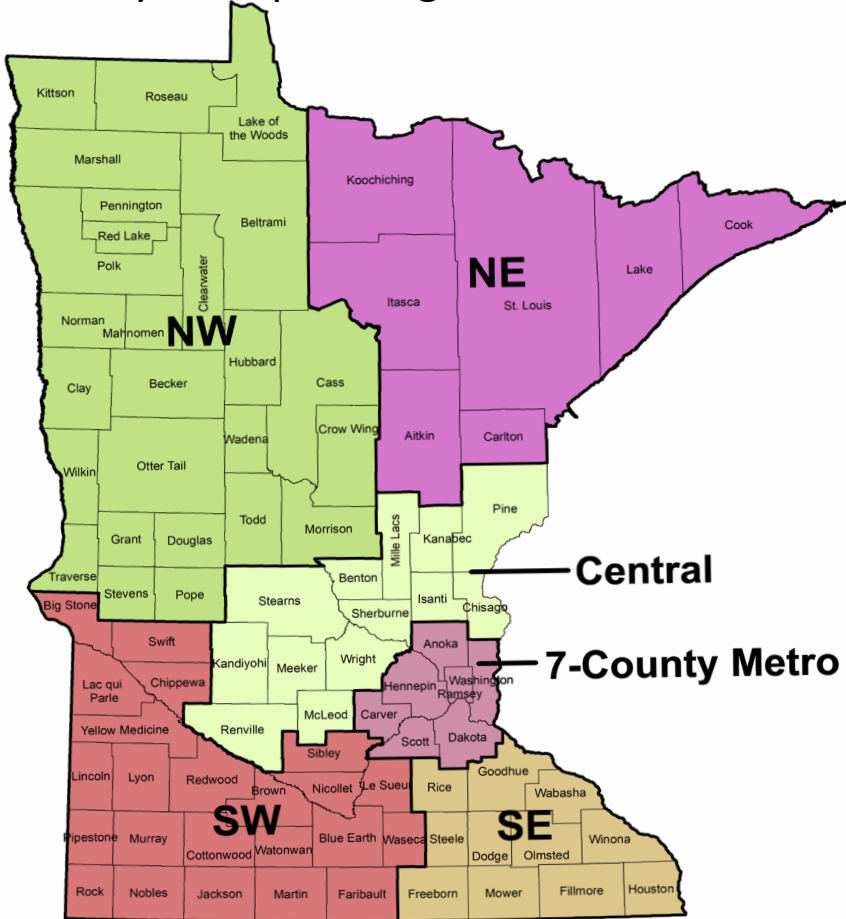
How satisfied have you been with your job....



- The 2018 survey included questions on career satisfaction in the past 12 months and overall. As shown above, the majority of licensed counselors indicated that they were either “somewhat satisfied” or “very satisfied,” both in the past 12 months and overall.
- LPCs and LPCCs were slightly more likely to report being very satisfied with their career overall compared to the last 12 months (about a 2 percent difference)—a trend typical among health care professionals for which work satisfaction data is available. This is consistent with prior MDH survey data and national findings which suggest that the increase in administrative work—such as dealing with billing, insurance, and electronic medical records—has dampened work satisfaction among health care providers.

Geographic Distribution: Two ways to present geography

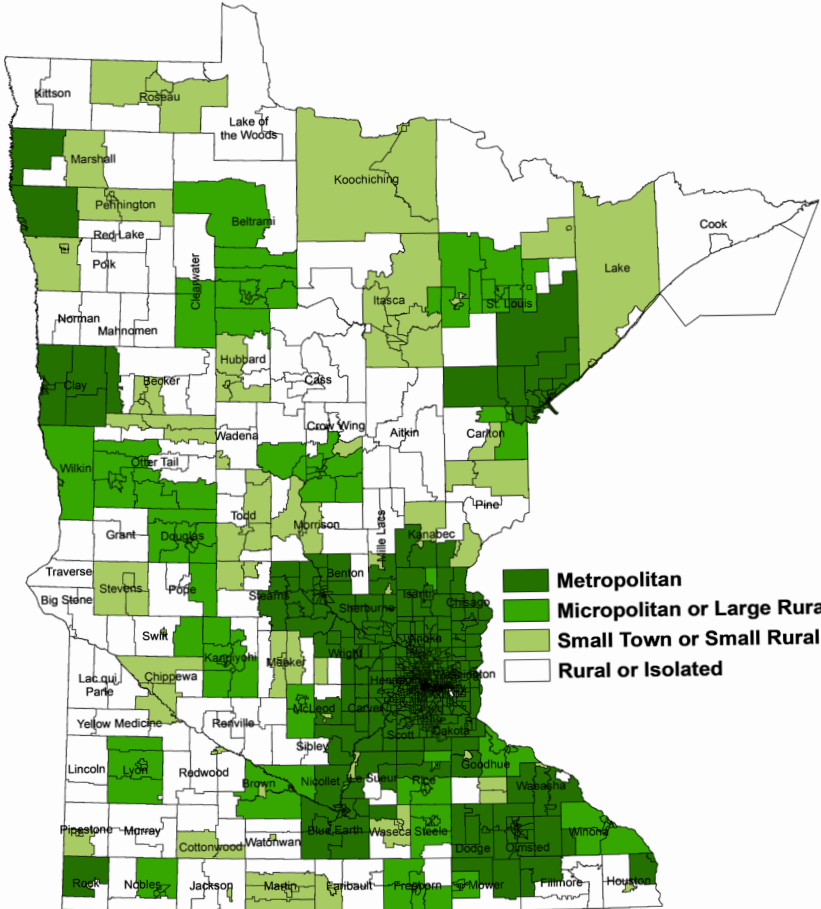
By state planning areas



For more information:

<https://apps.deed.state.mn.us/assets/lmi/areamap/plan.shtml>

By rural-urban commuting regions (RUCAs)

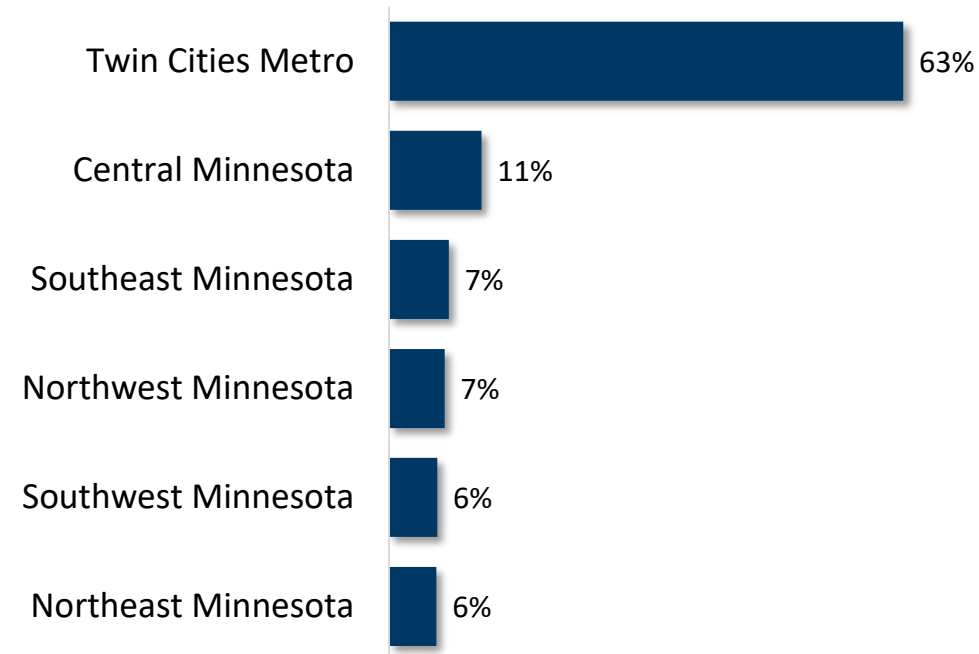


For more information:

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/data/workforce/method.html#ruca>

Geographic Distribution: by Planning Area

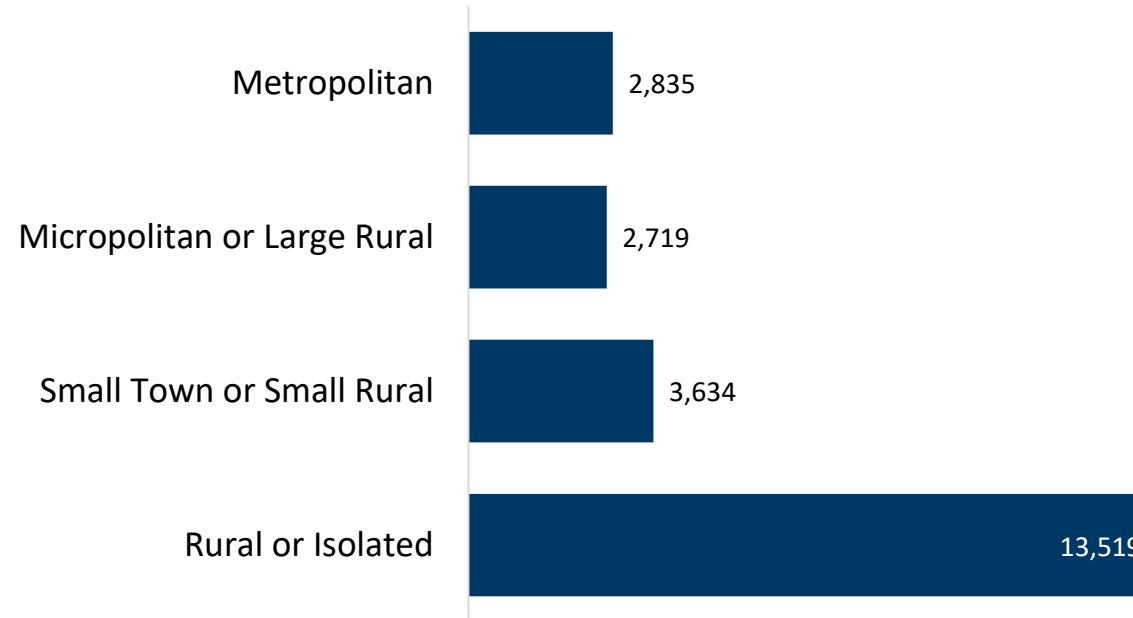
Share of LPCs/LPCCs by State Planning Area



- Roughly half of all LPCs and LPCCs work in the Twin Cities metro area. Roughly 20 percent of the licensed LPCs and LPCCs reported having an out of state address or no address and are therefore not included above.

Geographic Distribution: by Rurality

Minnesota Population-to-Licensed Counselor Ratio, by Level of Rurality



- The chart above provides another view of the geographic distribution of licensed counselors, showing the number of people to every one LPC or LPCC in urban, large rural, small rural, and isolated rural areas. As shown, there are 2,835 people for every one LPC or LPCC in urban areas of Minnesota, compared to roughly ten times that in many of the most rural areas of the state. This pattern is typical of other health care professions, and reflects the relative inaccessibility of mental health care, especially in sparsely populated areas of Minnesota.

Methodology

The data in this report come from two sources:

- The **Minnesota Board of Behavioral Health and Therapy (BBHT)** provides data on the entire population of licensed counselors who have active licenses in the state of Minnesota. The BBHT maintains this database primarily for administrative purposes. BBHT provides the data to the Minnesota Department of Health, Office of Rural Health and Primary Care (MDH-ORHPC). This report uses data current as of October, 2018. At that time, there were a total of **2,202** licensed counselors with active Minnesota licenses, approximately 90 percent of whom indicated that their primary business address was in Minnesota. (Note that the analyses exclude counselors whose licenses were active/restricted or active/conditional.) Analysts at the Minnesota Department of Health-Office of Rural Health and Primary Care clean, organize, and geocode addresses that come from the board, which is how we can identify practice locations (shown in Slides 19 and 20).
- The **2018 Minnesota Department of Health LPC/LPCC Workforce Survey** collects additional demographic and workforce data from licensed counselors. MDH-ORHPC administered the survey to all counselors who renewed their Minnesota license in the calendar year of 2018. The response rate was approximately 63 percent.

Notes

Visit our website at

<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/orhpc/workforce/reports.html>
to learn more about the Minnesota health care workforce.

County-level data for this profession is available at

<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/orhpc/workforce/database/>

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