

(Effective January 1, 2025)

WAC 246-821-400 Professional standards for certified BHSS. (1)

A behavioral health support specialist provides treatment for a behavioral health condition which is impacting a client's quality of life by:

(a) Delivering brief, evidence-based interventions to treat individuals with behavioral health conditions, including mental health or substance use disorders, consistent with subsection (3) of this section;

(b) Tracking and monitoring treatment response and outcomes using measurement-based care. Interventions should be adjusted based on patient response to find the most effective treatment;

(c) Regularly conferring with their clinical supervisor;

(d) Consulting with their clinical supervisor about a client whose symptoms fail to improve; and

(e) Referring a client to alternate health care providers or other resources when the client's needs exceed the BHSS's scope of practice or competence.

(2) A BHSS may not make diagnoses, but may provide symptom-based treatment within their scope of practice. Treatment may be based on the diagnosis of another provider or may occur prior to a diagnosis from another provider, based on screening and assessment. A BHSS adjusts interventions to the intensity of the client's symptoms, whether mild to moderate or acute.

(3) Brief, evidence-based interventions are strategies focused on the reduction of symptom severity within a time frame congruent with the needs of the patient, provider, and treatment setting. The strategies are often informed by principles associated with cognitive behavioral, problem-solving, strategic, or solution-focused psychotherapies.

(4) When the duration of treatment involving a single intervention exceeds six months, the BHSS must confer with their supervisor to determine appropriate next steps, which should include whether a new intervention or a referral to a setting and provider with a scope of practice matching the complexity of patient problems is appropriate.

(5) If the BHSS' supervisor elects to continue the intervention after six months, the BHSS must confer with their supervisor every six months to determine appropriate next steps consistent with subsection (4) of this section.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.227.020, chapter 18.227 RCW, and 2023 c 270. WSR 24-21-083, s 246-821-400, filed 10/16/24, effective 1/1/25.]