

## HOW DO PSYCHOLOGIST AND PSYCHIATRIST PRACTICE DIFFERENTLY?

- Both have approximately same years of training, but method of training is vastly different. Psychiatrists, due to knowledge of medicine, usually prescribe medication for behavioral mental health disorders; increasing national shortage of psychiatrists which has restricted their ability to do anything but practice medicine; most psychiatrists focus on health treatment via medication vs. individual and group therapy.
- Psychologists due to broad knowledge of how the mind and environment work, tend to conduct psychotherapy, testing (neurological and functional), reinforce functional capacities of individual.
- Most psychologists focus on mental health therapy; in some states, psychologists with specialized training can prescribe.
- Most psychiatrist appointments typically last 10-15 minutes on a monthly basis for medication management. Legally prescribe medication “within scope of practice,” i.e. to treat mental health disorders.
- Psychologists typically spend 45-50 minutes with a client weekly.
- Psychologists help clients address the underlying source of distress rather than symptom management.
- Psychologists teach life skills that the client can use over the course of their lifetime.

## PSYCHOLOGISTS STAND OUT FROM THE REST

- Seeing a psychologist for testing/assessment, therapy and other services saves the patient time and referrals for insurance at minimum given the client can receive all services from one person or psychological practice.
- Given that psychologists are the most trained doctoral providers, their skills with assessment, diagnosis and therapy:
  - » Provides more accurate testing which means less time trying to figure out the root of the health issue
  - » Might lead to fewer disruptions/absences from school, work, etc.
  - » Psychological intervention is associated with better treatment compliance in a medical setting, shown to be more effective long term than medications for many diagnoses and may contribute to a 20-30% reduction in overall health care costs



## BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SPECIALIST *Who is Who?*

The Oklahoma Psychological Association (OPA) represents the highest level (doctoral) behavioral health professional, in Oklahoma. In efforts to assist the public, private insurance companies and lawmakers about the various health professionals and their training, OPA put together this easy to use information.



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**OKPSYCH.ORG**



# BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROVIDERS

## EDUCATION/SCOPE OF PRACTICE

Psychologists are the highest level trained behavioral health care providers across the US. How do they differ from other providers? We have provided summaries of comparison. For a complete documentation and comparison of services visit [www.okpsych.org](http://www.okpsych.org).

**PSYCHOLOGIST:** Doctorate with national accreditation standards (college and graduate school); specialize in psychology (PhD, PsyD, EdD); extensive training in research, design, and application with evidence-based treatments. Internship, residency (10+ years); post-doctoral fellowships, additional specializations e.g. neuropsychology. APA Accreditation standards with scope of practice in behavior modification, psychotherapy/counseling, psychological, neuropsychological and psychodiagnostics assessment, psychopharmacology in scope of practice in some states, psychopathology diagnose and treatment, forensic evaluations, and continuation of care from intake to services rendered.

**PSYCHIATRIST:** Medical degree with national accreditation standards (college and medical school); specialize in psychiatry (MD, DO) as a physician and/or surgeon; internship, residency (10+ years); general medicine, biochemical, psychotherapy/counseling, psychopharmacology, psychopathology diagnose/treatment with AMA standards.

**MASTERS IN SOCIAL WORK** Master's degree (LCSW) with national accreditation standards, (college and graduate school (abbreviated one year or full two years); two years post-graduate supervised hours (4000 hours); specialized in macro or micro practice; academically trained in individual practice, group intervention and case management.

**MASTER'S IN COUNSELING/MENTAL HEALTH** Master's degree with accreditation standards in Oklahoma; (college and graduate school (5-6 years); two years post-master supervised by LPC (3000 hours); specialized in individual/group therapy minor case management substance abuse.

**PSYCHOLOGY TECHNICIAN** Bachelors or High School with one year of experience with no specialized training and must operate under the direct/ongoing supervision of a license psychologists; can become a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) which allows applicants from a variety of fields to pursue licensure (including clinical social workers, physical therapists, psychologists and counselors)

**BOARD CERTIFIED BEHAVIOR ANALYST** Bachelors, Masters, or PhD with BCBA (dependent on professional standards of the field); college, grad school (5-6 years) with a scope of practice in applied behavioral analysis and treatment planning. This is a designation provided to certified, licensed professionals from OKDHS as a BCBA and applicants are from varied fields who may pursue licensure in clinical work, social work physical therapy, psychology, counseling.

**MASTERS IN MARRIAGE & FAMILY THERAPY** Master's degree (LMFT), college and graduate school (5-6 years) supervised post grad hours (1000 hours); specialized in individual/group therapy, minor case management and substance abuse.

**PARAPROFESSIONALS** bachelor's degree with no specialized training required. ADL skills in food, hygiene, financial, DD access community resources. No certification or license required.

**PEER COUNSELORS** No educational requirements and scope of practice is pastoral counseling and substance abuse counseling. No license or certification required.