



## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is the Mental Health Service Corps?

The New York City Mental Health Service Corps (MHSC) is a ThriveNYC<sup>1</sup> workforce expansion initiative that aims to both close gaps in behavioral health services and to advance innovation and public health promotion. MHSC promotes collaborative care in primary care and evidence-based innovations in behavioral health settings<sup>2</sup> in high need areas. The program is funded by the City of New York.

MHSC places full-time, fully-funded masters- and doctoral-level mental health clinicians in mental health clinics, substance use programs and primary care practices in high-need communities throughout the city. These clinicians are trained to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services and support for the assessment, screening and treatment of substance use and mental health issues.

### Who are MHSC Corps behavioral health clinicians?

MHSC behavioral health clinicians are clinically trained masters- and doctoral-level mental health counselors, social workers and clinicians who are committed to working in high-need communities that have experienced barriers to mental health care. MHSC behavioral health clinicians are selected to meet the needs of the communities based on their experience, interest and ability to speak the languages and understand the cultural needs specific to the patient population. They are expected to engage the communities where their placement sites are located and aid in health promotion and prevention, and in reducing stigma.

### How long will MHSC behavioral health clinicians be available for a practice?

MHSC behavioral health clinicians must commit to three years of service, and the clinical hours they provide will count towards their clinical licensure.

### What will MHSC behavioral health clinicians do?

MHSC behavioral health clinicians will be trained and supported in the use of evidence-based therapeutic interventions and mental health promotion methods. They will be supervised by a licensed clinical social worker and/or psychologist, and trained to screen, assess and treat patients for mental health and substance use disorders within diverse cultural and linguistic environments.

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<sup>1</sup> **ThriveNYC: A Roadmap for Mental Health for All** is a comprehensive public health approach to mental health. To learn more, visit [thrivenyc.cityofnewyork.us](http://thrivenyc.cityofnewyork.us)

<sup>2</sup> Behavioral health practices include New York State Office of Mental Health-licensed Article 28 and 31 mental health clinics, New York State Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services-licensed Article 32 substance use clinics, Personalized Recovery Oriented Services programs, Partial Hospital programs and field-based Assertive Community Treatment teams.



### **What does the MHSC look like in primary care practices?**

Behavioral health clinicians will promote and support the integration of behavioral health services using the Collaborative Care Model. In addition to a supervising social worker, the behavioral health clinicians will also be supported by a MHSC supervising psychiatrist. Supervising psychiatrists provide clinical assistance and support to primary care practices and behavioral health clinicians. Services provided by the behavioral health clinicians will include screening, assessment and treatment for depression, anxiety and substance use. In pediatric settings, the MHSC behavioral health clinician can also introduce other services such as socioemotional screening and family treatment.

### **What does the MHSC look like in behavioral health practices?**

Behavioral health clinicians will expand and enhance the behavioral health site's existing capacity or scope to meet the needs of the community served while promoting the use of evidence-based approaches. Behavioral Health practices will include New York State Office of Mental Health licensed Article 28 and 31 mental health clinics providing services to children and/or adults; New York State Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services licensed Article 32 substance use clinics; and other behavioral health practices such as Personalized Recovery Oriented Services programs, Partial Hospital programs, and field-based Assertive Community Treatment teams.

### **What are the eligibility criteria?**

To be eligible to join the MHSC, behavioral health and primary care practices must:

- Designate a representative within the practice or site to be the lead contact for MHSC
  - Dedicate staff who can provide onsite support, task supervision and crisis support to MHSC behavioral health clinicians
  - Be located in a high-need area and/or serve a high-need population as determined by DOHMH
  - Demonstrate a need for additional mental health clinicians
  - Have appropriate clinical and work spaces for behavioral health clinicians and patients
  - Be willing to participate in on-site trainings offered by MHSC program to facilitate integration services
- Use the MHSC to advance the use of best practice models and expand access to mental health and substance use care

### **What are the expectations for my site?**

If your primary care site is selected, it will be expected to:

- Identify clinical leaders at the site who are dedicated to the Collaborative Care Model
- Provide access to the site's electronic health record to MHSC behavioral health clinicians
- Have a panel size of at least 1,500 unique patients per site
- Establish processes for the behavioral health clinician to generate a caseload
- Become a member of NYC REACH (New York City Regional Electronic Adoption Center for Health), which assists NYC-based practices with quality improvement and practice transformation initiatives (membership is free)
- Obtain and process the proper clearances for the behavioral health clinician to work at the site
- Orient, train and support the behavioral health clinician in site workflow processes and procedures

If your behavioral health practice site is selected, it will be expected to:

- Participate in trainings or meetings to align with MHSC evidence-based practices in behavioral health treatment
- Participate in interviews or surveys as part of program operations and evaluation



- Establish processes for the behavioral health clinician to generate a caseload
- Provide clinical coverage for clinician's time away from the site to attend MHSC-sponsored meetings and trainings
- Obtain and process the proper clearances for the behavioral health clinician to work at the site
- Orient, train and support the behavioral health clinician in site workflow processes and procedures

**How much does this service cost the practice?**

MHSC services are free to the sites. In addition to a private space for consultation with patients, the practice may need to cover the costs associated with access to electronic health records or access to other systems used in the practice.

**Will the practice be able to bill for the MHSC behavioral health clinician's services?**

No, services provided by the MHSC behavioral health clinician will not be billed. MHSC behavioral health clinicians can help with capacity concerns and/or enable new models or service possibilities for care, which are often not well supported by reimbursement and difficult to start up.

**What is the application process and timeframe?**

To join, complete the application, available for either primary care or behavioral health care settings, at:  
<http://nycreach.org/practice-transformation/#mental-health-service-corps>

Please submit your application as soon as possible as there are a limited number of MHSC behavioral health clinicians.

