



ASSOCIATION
FOR BEHAVIORAL
HEALTHCARE



We hope this message finds you well. As we embark on a new edition of our eUpdate, we're thrilled to welcome you to another round of engaging content and updates that matter. Thank you for being part of our community. Your feedback and suggestions are invaluable to us. Feel free to reach out and let us know what topics you'd like us to cover or if there's anything specific you'd like to see in future editions.

This Month's eUpdate

Every month, ABH compiles important information and resources to keep you updated and informed. Here is a glimpse of what you can expect in this month's eUpdate:

- [ABH Annual Meeting](#)
- [Campaign to Strengthen Mental Health Centers](#)
- [Behavioral Health Workforce Graduate Student Scholarship](#)
- [Help Us Be Counted:](#)
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ABH Annual Meeting

On Tuesday May 13, we hosted our Annual Meeting, uniting member organizations from across Massachusetts for an afternoon of Association business and collaboration.

Audrey Shelto, President & CEO of BCBSMA Foundation joined us as keynote speaker, to discuss the importance of protecting Medicaid and preserving access to behavioral health care. We're proud to be part of a network so dedicated to advancing health equity and improving lives. Your insights, passion, and commitment are what drive meaningful change in our communities.

Thank you to everyone who attended the event!



Campaign to Strengthen Mental Health Centers

On Monday May 12, ABH President/CEO Lydia Conley testified alongside many of our members at the State House in support of S. 874/H. 1396.

This bill would Implement a 5% rate increase for all outpatient behavioral health services. This rate increase would apply to services provided in mental health centers and private practices, which provide critical services to our communities every day. Higher reimbursement rates would ensure MHCs are able to pay adequate salaries to retain and recruit clinicians, reduce waitlists, and ensure a workforce of providers prepared to deliver quality care.

Please visit www.strengthenmentalhealthcenters.org to learn more.



Behavioral Health Workforce Graduate Student Scholarship Program Open Deadline 6.15.25

The Commonwealth has launched a two-year \$25 million scholarship program for graduate students completing degrees or certificates in behavioral health fields. [Applications are now open](#) for the first round of scholarship funds, totaling \$12 million for the 2024-2025 academic year. Awards will be retroactive to the fall 2024 semester. Advanced degrees are required for many careers in behavioral health, particularly for licensed and certified roles providing clinical care. Supporting individuals in the behavioral health pipeline throughout their education and career development is essential to increasing the pool of available behavioral health professionals working to serve the needs of the Commonwealth.

Scholarship information including:

- Applicant Eligibility Criteria
- Scholarship Conditions and Recipient Responsibilities
- Eligible Institutions
- Eligible Programs
- Award Value
- How to Apply

More Information can be found on the Massachusetts Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA) website: <https://www.mass.edu/osfa/programs/behavhealthscholarship.asp>.

A summary of the program is available here: <https://www.mass.edu/osfa/documents/publications/2024/OSFA%202024->

If you have any questions please contact the Office of Student Financial Assistance at (617) 391-6070 or osfa@osfa.mass.edu.

Help Us Be Counted: 2025 MA Health Care and Human Services Workforce Survey

As you know, workforce is critical to our ability to provide timely, quality behavioral health services. Past ABH surveys have shown that workforce issues delay access to care and threaten care quality.

ABH is partnering again with the Center for Health Information and Analysis (CHIA), a state agency responsible for collecting health information, on the **2025 Massachusetts Health Care and Human Services Workforce (MHCW) Survey**. This statewide, biennial survey aims to monitor workforce capacity and diversity across the health care and human services sectors, including behavioral health. Key findings and more information from the inaugural 2023-24 MHCW survey can be found here: <https://www.chiamass.gov/massachusetts-healthcare-workforce-survey/>.

Why your participation matters:

- **Representation:** It is crucial for the behavioral health sector to be represented in the Commonwealth's data collection. The more of us who participate, the more accurately we are able to understand what's going on in the behavioral health workforce.
- **Advocacy:** Data from this survey will bolster our efforts to advocate with the Healey-Driscoll administration and the legislature for policies and programs on your behalf, such as pipeline, licensing, and payment reforms.
- **Tailored insights:** Participating organizations will receive a tailored benchmark report from CHIA, that will highlight key findings about your organization and/or the behavioral health sector.

Survey Details:

- The organization administering the survey is JSI Research & Training Institute (JSI).
- **Your organization should have received an email from mahealthcareworkforesurvey@jsi.com to complete online survey on or around March 5th.**
- The email was sent to the contact that CHIA has on file, generally the Executive Director or CEO, although HR VP or Director in a few instances.
- Recipients should check their spam folders if they cannot find the message.
- If you have questions, contact the JSI survey team at mahealthcareworkforcesurvey@jsi.com or 877-219-9955.
- Please note that a human services sector survey will also be coming soon.

Please help us represent the behavioral health sector on workforce issues so that we can support effective policy and programs in Massachusetts.

Massachusetts Institute for Community Health Leadership

The Massachusetts Institute for Community Health Leadership (MICHL), a program of the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation, develops evolving leaders to: increase their personal impact; strengthen their effectiveness in their organization; enhance the organization's influence in the health care system; and understand effective leadership in the context of privilege, health inequities, and racial equity.

MICHL is an opportunity for emerging leaders in a variety of public health and health care settings in Massachusetts to participate in leadership development with a cohort of professionals who are experiencing many of the same challenges, demands, and benefits of this work. Participants will have the opportunity to join a network of emerging leaders across the state and will extend their growth and engagement, not only through the initial nine-month program experience, but also as a result of building a supportive group of colleagues.

MICHL is thrilled to announce that information and application materials for the 13th cohort of the Massachusetts Institute for Community Health Leadership program (MICHL) are now available on the [Foundation website](#). The application portal will officially open to begin receiving applications on Monday, June 2, 2025, and the nine-month Cohort 13 program experience will launch in September 2025 and run through May 2026.

There are two upcoming virtual information sessions. Click on the date(s) below to register.

- [Wednesday, June 18 | 4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.](#)
- [Tuesday, July 15 | 12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.](#)

2024 Books Closing

In January, MassHealth sent the following notice to MCOs regarding the August 31, 2025 deadline for the health plans to submit Rate Year (RY) 2024 encounter data. Given each plan has its own operational processes, individual plan deadlines vary and are listed below.

Subject: RY24 Encounter Data Deadline

*We are writing to inform you of the **RY24 encounter data deadline of 8/31/2025** for RY24 reconciliation and RY26 prospective risk adjustment, and RY27 rate setting. **August 2025 is the final month for MCEs to submit new encounters to MassHealth with dates of service 1/1/2024 – 12/31/2024.** As is standard procedure, MassHealth expects this August encounter submission to include all **claims paid through 7/31/2025.***

In order to promote transparency and collaboration, MassHealth expects that plans notify their provider networks of this date and any associated deadlines for claims submission and reconciliation as soon as possible. It is also expected that plans will begin to work with providers to identify any potential claims issues from this timeframe and work toward resolution prior to the aforementioned deadlines.

Plan deadlines:

- [Carelton/MBHP](#): June 26, 2025
- [Optum](#): July 1, 2025

- [Point32Health](#): July 11, 2025

Books closing does not supersede timely filing deadlines; providers should bring any outstanding claims to their provider representatives ASAP. Providers should **document all communications with plans**, including the date when claims/issues were first brought to the plans.

July 2025 Committee Schedule

[Friday, July 11](#)

Corporate Compliance, 10 a.m.

[Tuesday, July 15](#)

OTP, 9:30 a.m.

ABH's Committees are the "grassroots" of our organization. To learn more about ABH's Committees, [click here](#).

Interesting Reads

- [One researcher shares her experience studying and living with bipolar disorder.](#) *NPR*.
- [Addiction treatment providers in Mass. worry about federal funding cuts.](#) *WBUR*.
- [Language Service Cutbacks Raise Fear of Medical Errors, Misdiagnoses, Deaths.](#) *KFF News*.
- [Proposed Medicaid Federal Match Penalty for States that have Expanded Coverage for Immigrants: State-by-State Estimates.](#) *KFF News*.
- [From dogs to rabbits, NPR readers share how adopting shelter pets impacted them.](#) *NPR*

ABH Staff

[Click here](#) to learn more about ABH staff, and to access and download a staff directory.

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