



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
Aging and Long-Term Support Administration
PO Box 45600, Olympia, Washington 98504-5600

August 16, 2024

AL TSA: NH #2024-038

**UPDATED: GERIATRIC BEHAVIORAL HEALTH WORKER (GBHW) HOUR VALIDATION
PROCESS ONGOING**

Dear Nursing Facility/Home Administrator:

This Dear Provider Letter (DPL) supersedes AL TSA: NH #2024-010.

Guidance was provided to nursing homes for the geriatric behavioral health worker (GBHW) hour submission to the Residential Care Services (RCS) Policy Unit for verification, state Q2 (April 1, 2023 – June 30, 2023), Q3 (July 1, 2023 – September 30, 2023), and/or Q4 (October 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023) was described in DPL NH #2024-010.

The validation process for GBHW hours submitted for state Q2-Q4, 2023 identified widespread data submission inaccuracies which would have resulted in artificially inflated state minimum direct care nursing HPRD thresholds.

As a result, the RCS Policy unit will continue validation of all GBHW hours submitted by deadline, and not previously submitted to CMS Payroll Based Journal (PBJ), for addition of a portion to the state minimum direct care nursing 3.4 HPRD calculation for the quarter under review.

GBHW RULE:

- [RCW 74.42.010\(4\)](#): "Geriatric behavioral health worker" means a person with a bachelor's or master's degree in social work, behavioral health, or other related areas, or a person who has received specialized training devoted to mental illness and treatment of older adults.
- [RCW 74.42.360\(1\)\(c\)](#): The department shall establish in rule an exception allowing geriatric behavioral health workers as defined in [RCW 74.42.010](#) to be recognized in the minimum staffing requirements as part of the direct care service delivery to individuals who have a behavioral health condition. Hours worked by geriatric behavioral health workers may be recognized as direct care hours for purposes of the minimum staffing requirements only up to a portion of the total hours equal to the proportion of resident days of clients with a behavioral health condition identified at that facility on the most recent semiannual minimum data set. To qualify for the exception:
 - (i) The worker must:
 - A. Have a bachelor's or master's degree in social work, behavioral health, or other related areas; or
 - B. Have at least three years' experience providing care for individuals with chronic mental health issues, dementia, or intellectual and developmental disabilities in a long-term care or behavioral health care setting; or
 - C. Have successfully completed a facility-based behavioral health curriculum approved by the department under [RCW 74.39A.078](#);

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D. Any geriatric behavioral health worker holding less than a master's degree in social work must be directly supervised by an employee who has a master's degree in social work or a registered nurse.

(5) For the purposes of this section, "behavioral health condition" means one or more of the behavioral symptoms specified in section E of the minimum data set.

- [WAC 388-97-1090\(7\)](#): "A nursing home may use the hours of geriatric behavioral health workers as defined under RCW 74.42.010 to meet this section's direct care minimum staffing requirements."

For a portion of GBHW hours to be included in the state HPRD calculation, all of the following requirements must be met:

- The identified provider must be paid directly by the nursing home. Provider hours billed directly to Medicare, Medicaid, and/or private insurance cannot be submitted to CMS PBJ and are not eligible for inclusion.
- GBHW service hours, performed by qualified staff and submitted to the Department, must be clearly identified within the eligible resident's assessment and comprehensive care plan.
 - [WAC 388-97-1000 Resident Assessment](#),
 - [WAC 388-97-1020 Comprehensive plan of care](#).
- GBHW hours must be submitted only for time spent providing services identified in the comprehensive plan of care, by qualified GBHW staff, and documented in the eligible client's record.
- Hours submitted to CMS PBJ under any category may not be submitted as GBHW hours. Example: The facility social worker works on Tuesday for 8 hours. One (1) hour was spent providing targeted behavioral health services as outlined in the resident's comprehensive plan of care and 7 hours were spent in other duties.
 - GBHW services provided during the 1 hour are documented in the resident's record.
 - The NH can choose whether to submit the 1 hour to CMS PBJ or to the state for inclusion of a portion of this hour in the state HPRD calculation. The same hour cannot be submitted under more than one category.

To submit a request for validation of eligible GBHW hours provided to eligible residents, the nursing home will:

1. Submit a written request, with all required documentation, by deadline, to

RCSPolicy@dshs.wa.gov.

For Timeframe:	Deadline for submission of eligible GBHW hours for inclusion in quarterly 3.4 HPRD Calculation:
January 1 – March 31	May 30
April 1 – June 30	August 29
July 1 – September 30	November 29
October 1 – December 31	March 1

2. Submit the following documentation by deadline:
 - a) One (1) accurately completed GBHW Information and Attestation form for each qualified staff member who provided GBHW services to eligible residents as outlined in the resident's comprehensive care plan and documented in the client's record; and

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- b) One (1) accurately completed GBHW 3.4 HPRD Staffing Data and Coding spreadsheet. The PBJ System ID # for each staff must be included; and
- c) Include detailed payroll and/or agency billing documents for each eligible staff submitted for validation.
- d) For staff qualifying under RCW 74.42.360(1)(c)(i)(B), documentation must be provided for both the specialized training received and the three years of experience providing geriatric behavioral health services for individuals with chronic mental health issues, dementia, or intellectual and developmental disabilities in a long-term care or behavioral health care setting; and
- e) The RCS Policy Unit may request a copy of the eligible resident's care plan for timeframe submitted and/or documentation in the resident's record of GBHW services provided on the date of service submitted.

The RCS Policy Unit will:

If all required documentation is received by the policy unit by deadline, GBHW hours submitted will be validated by ensuring:

- Each staff submitted meets eligibility requirements; and
- Each client served meets eligibility requirements; and
- Hours were not previously submitted to CMS PBJ; and
- Hours were paid directly by the nursing home.

An email will be sent to Management Services Division (MSD) with the number of validated GBHW hours for inclusion in the state minimum direct care nursing 3.4 HPRD calculation for the quarter under review. The facility will be copied in this email.

Attachments:



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GBHW%203.4%20H
PRD%20Staffing%2C

If you have any questions, please contact Jodi Lamoreaux, NH Policy Program Manager, at (360) 464-0487 or Jodi.Lamoreaux1@dshs.wa.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amy Abbott". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Amy Abbott, Director
Residential Care Services

DSHS: "Transforming Lives"