

Prescribers and Medication Management

Mental health professionals provide a variety of services, including prescribing and medication management. **Medication** can play an important role in an individual's recovery with ongoing care and maintenance.

The following health care professionals can prescribe medication. They may also offer assessments, diagnoses, and therapy.

Psychiatrist

Psychiatrists are licensed medical doctors who have completed psychiatric training. They can diagnose mental health conditions, prescribe and monitor medications and provide therapy. Some have completed additional training in child and adolescent mental health, substance use disorders or geriatric psychiatry.

- ❖ **Degree requirements:** Doctor of Medicine (MD) or Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO), plus completion of residency training in psychiatry
- ❖ **Licensure & credentials:** Licensed physician in the state where they are practicing; may also be designated as a Board Certified Psychiatrist by the Board of Neurology and Psychiatry.

Psychiatric or Mental Health Nurse Practitioner

Psychiatric or mental health nurse practitioners can provide assessment, diagnosis and therapy for mental health conditions or substance use disorders. In some states, they are also qualified to prescribe and monitor medications. Requirements also vary by state as to the degree of supervision necessary by a licensed psychiatrist.

- ❖ **Degree requirements:** Master of Science (MS) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in nursing with specialized focus on psychiatry
- ❖ **Licensure & credentials:** Licensed nurse in the state where they are practicing. Examples of credentials include, but are not limited to the NCLEX (National Council Licensure Examination) and PMHNP-BC (Board Certification in psychiatric nursing).

Primary Care Physicians

Primary care physicians and pediatricians can prescribe medication. Primary care and mental health professionals should work together to determine an individual's best treatment plan.

- ❖ **Degree requirements:** Doctor of Medicine (M.D.) or Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO)
- ❖ **Licensure & credentials:** Licensed physician in the state where they are practicing.

Family Nurse Practitioners

Family nurse practitioners (FNP) can provide general medical services like those of a primary care physician, based on each state's laws. Like primary care physicians, they can prescribe medication, but you might consider visiting someone who specializes in mental health care. Family nurse practitioners and mental health professionals should work together to determine an individual's best treatment plan.

- ❖ **Degree requirements:** Master of Science (M.S.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)
- ❖ **Licensure & credentials:** Licensed nurse in the state where they are practicing. Examples of credentials include NCLEX (National Council Licensure Examination) and FNP-BC, Family Nurse Practitioner Board Certified).

Psychiatric Pharmacists

Psychiatrist pharmacists are advanced-practice pharmacists who specialize in mental health care. They can prescribe or recommend appropriate medications if allowed in their state and practice setting. They are skilled at medication management—meaning they evaluate responses and modify treatment, manage medication reactions and drug interactions, and provide education about medications. Many have completed additional training in child/adolescent psychiatry, substance use disorders or geriatric psychiatry.

- ❖ **Degree requirements:** Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD). Completion of residency training in psychiatric pharmacy is not required, but is common
- ❖ **Licensure & credentials:** Licensed pharmacist in the state where they practice; may be designated a Board Certified Psychiatric Pharmacist by the Board of Pharmacy Specialties.