Qualifications of Professional Counselors

Providing Mental Health Counseling Services Under TRICARE

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President and CEO, NBCC and Affiliates

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Complimentary Mechanisms: Licensure and Certification

- Certification helps standardize licensure requirements across states
  - Master’s level or higher education
  - Practicum/internship
  - Supervised experience
  - Direct supervision
  - National counselor examination
Professional Credentials and Standards for Practitioners

- Research regarding counselor education
- Methods used to evaluate counselors
Research Regarding Counselor Education

Roles and tasks of professional counselors

- Work behavior areas = 136
- Importance
- Frequency

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Research Regarding Counselor Education

- CACREP accredited: 81%
- Not CACREP accredited: 19%
Educational Levels of Counselors

- Masters: 81%
- Doctorate: 15%
- Specialist: 4%
Populations Served by Counselors

- Individuals: 47%
- Groups: 17%
- Families: 22%
- Couples: 14%

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Populations Served by Counselors: Age

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### Methods Used to Evaluate Counselors

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Counselor Licensure Examinations: An Overview of the Process

- Advisory committee of subject matter experts is assembled
- Committee prepares a list of task statements
- A draft survey is formulated from task statements
- After a pilot of the survey, it is distributed to sample population
- Results analyzed by testing experts and reviewed by the advisory committee
- A final report and exam content outline are created
- All examination questions are linked to the exam content outline

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Sample Work Behavior Areas

Assess potential for client to harm self/others
Conduct diagnostic interview
Diagnose based on DSM-IV criteria
Provide consultation for human relationship development
Participate in consultation with colleagues on cases
Administer structured clinical interviews
Assist client in understanding test results

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Counselor Licensure Examinations

- Adhere to:
  - the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (1999)

- Ensure a valid certification examination that is recognized internationally as the standard for the counseling profession

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National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) accreditation represents the foremost certification program recognition available.

NBCC’s flagship certification, the National Certified Counselor (NCC) accredited since 1985.
Maintaining Counselor Credentials

Continuing education

- Counseling theory/practice and the helping relationship
- Human growth and development
- Social and cultural foundations
- Group dynamics, processing and counseling
- Career development and counseling
- Assessment
- Research and program evaluation
- Counselor professional identity and practice issues

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Maintaining Counselor Credentials: Ethical Standards and Adjudication

- Safe and effective practice of counseling
- Protection of all clients and their families
- Any person or group may initiate an ethics case
- Certification and membership organizations cooperate with state licensure boards
Counselors Making a Difference

- Work with over 30 million clients a year
- Provide over 6 million hours of pro bono counseling services a year

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## Recent Studies on Returning Military Personnel

- **More deployments; longer duration**

- **Increased needs of military personnel**
  - Stress-related disorders, including PTSD
  - Family and marital difficulties
  - Financial concerns
  - Substance abuse
  - Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)
  - Depression
  - Anxiety
  - Domestic violence

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Summary

- Critical timing
- Access to mental health care providers
- Existence of strong professional standards, which are based on current research into the profession
Thank You

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