

# Types of Mental Health Professionals



## How should I choose?

You may have decided that it is time to get mental health treatment, but where should you start? Some important things to consider when choosing a mental health provider include what your concern or condition is and whether you need medications, therapy, or both.

## What else should I consider?

- Education, training, licensure, and years of experience
- Theoretical approach to treatment and use of evidence-based care
- Level of expertise in the area that you are seeking treatment
- Availability of appointments, fees, proximity to work/home
- Personality fit – you should feel comfortable talking with your provider

### Psychiatrists

<b>Education/Degree:</b>	Doctor of Medicine (M.D.) –or– Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (D.O.)
<b>Training:</b>	4 years of medical school 4 years of residency 1-2 years of fellowship, depending on specialty
<b>Licensure:</b>	Licensed by the Medical Board of California
<b>Board Certification:</b>	Board Certified in Psychiatry (+specialty certifications) by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology
<b>Job Description:</b>	Psychiatrists are qualified to diagnose and treat a wide range of mental health conditions, to prescribe and manage psychiatric medications, and to provide therapy.

### Psychologists

<b>Education/Degree:</b>	Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) –or– Doctor of Psychology (Psy.D.)
<b>Training:</b>	4-5+ years of graduate school 1 year of predoctoral internship (2,000 hours) 1-2 years of postdoctoral fellowship (1,500 hours)
<b>Licensure:</b>	Licensed in Clinical Psychology by the California Board of Psychology
<b>Board Certification:</b>	American Board of Professional Psychology (A.B.P.P.)
<b>Job Description:</b>	Psychologists provide individual, couples, family, and group therapy for a wide range of mental health diagnoses and conditions. They are also qualified to administer and interpret psychological assessments, which may be used to diagnose mental health conditions and/or further evaluate a person's behavioral, emotional, and cognitive abilities.

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## Marriage and Family Therapists

<b>Education/Degree:</b>	Master of Arts (M.A.) or Master of Science (M.S.) in marriage and family therapy or another mental health-related area
<b>Training:</b>	2+ years of graduate school 2+ years (3,000 hours) of supervised clinical hours
<b>Licensure:</b>	Licensed in Marriage and Family Therapy by the CA Board of Behavioral Sciences
<b>Job Description:</b>	LMFTs provide individual, couples, family, and group therapy for a wide range of mental health diagnoses and conditions with a focus on social and relational contexts.

## Professional Clinical Counselors

<b>Education/Degree:</b>	Master of Arts (M.A.) or Master of Science (M.S.) in counseling
<b>Training:</b>	2+ years of graduate school 2+ years (3,000) of supervised clinical hours
<b>Licensure:</b>	Licensed in Professional Clinical Counseling by the CA Board of Behavioral Sciences
<b>Job Description:</b>	LPCCs provide counseling to individuals, couples, families, and groups in a variety of settings with a focus on individual development.

## Clinical Social Workers

<b>Education/Degree:</b>	Master of Social Work (M.S.W.)
<b>Training:</b>	2+ years of graduate school 2+ years (3,000) supervised clinical hours
<b>Licensure:</b>	Licensed in Clinical Social Work by the CA Board of Behavioral Sciences
<b>Job Description:</b>	LCSWs can provide therapy and are also trained to connect individuals and families to other community resources and services.

## Who do I contact to find out more?

Referrals for mental health treatment can be made by physicians, mental health professionals, other allied health professionals, or from the patient or family directly. Please contact us as listed below for more information.



### Mind Health Institute, Newport Beach

450 Newport Center Drive, Suite 380 • Newport Beach, CA 92660  
949-891-0307 • [www.mhi-nb.com](http://www.mhi-nb.com)

### Mind Health Institute, Laguna Beach

361 Forest Avenue, Suite 205 • Laguna Beach, CA 92651  
949-391-4669 • [www.mhi-lb.com](http://www.mhi-lb.com)