

Behavioral Health Forum Charter

Approved April 2022

Who We Are

The Behavioral Health Forum is a convening body for partner organizations throughout the Better Health Together (BHT) region that provide behavioral health services, enhance the behavioral health workforce, or interact in other ways with behavioral health systems. Its goal is to address challenges collaboratively to improve behavioral health services and systems.

The Forum was formed in 2018 as a Better Health Together (BHT) advisory group during the Integrated Managed Care (IMC) transition. Following the initial IMC transition, the group continued to meet to address challenges related to COVID and workforce. In 2022, the Forum became a self-governing body with full decision-making power. BHT continues to convene, facilitate, and provide administrative support for the group.

How We Work

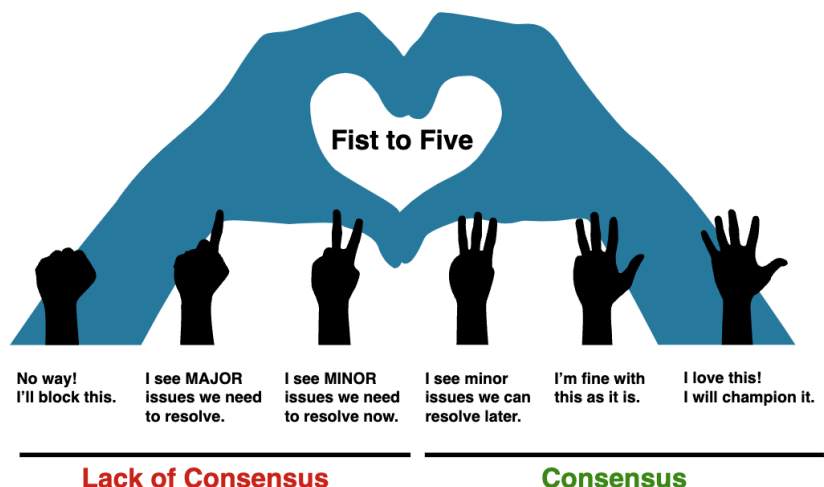
The Behavioral Health Forum contributes to our vision by:

- Creating a forum for discussion, idea-sharing, and collaborative decision-making
- Governing collectively through open discussion and participatory budgeting
- Building meaningful connections and partnerships among those who interact with the behavioral health system
- Promoting shared language and understanding
- Collectively building and implementing plans to tackle behavioral health challenges in the BHT region
- Soliciting feedback from and promoting our work to others in behavioral health settings

Decision-making

The Forum seeks consensus on decisions using a fist-to-five facilitated discussion and voting process (see image). Funding decisions are made through collective processes such as participatory budgeting and are guided by equity-focused guiding principles developed collectively. These principles will be built into facilitation and decision-making processes. They may evolve over time as Forum members identify ways to integrate equity more fully into the work.

Forum members who are not in attendance at meetings will be able to give input and register their vote(s) following meetings.



Membership

Members of the Behavioral Health Forum are behavioral health subject- and ground-level experts. All interested organizations and individuals are welcome to attend Forum meetings. New voting and non-voting members can join the Forum at any time.

Voting members are organizations in the BHT region doing work with behavioral health clients or on workforce issues related to behavioral health. Voting membership is not open to state-level agencies or managed care organizations. Voting members serve in a decision-making capacity, including defining project funding levels, amounts, and parameters for eligibility. Each voting member organization is allotted one vote, though there is no limit to the number of staff members who may attend the Forum and participate in consensus-building discussions.

Voting member expectations include the following:

- Attend meetings regularly and participate in discussions and decision-making
- Bring ideas, suggestions, and opportunities to the group
- Take and share information, ideas, and partnership opportunities back to their organization

To become a voting member of the Forum, organizations must sign a membership agreement confirming their eligibility.

Non-voting members are organizations and individuals who do not meet the above criteria, including MCOs and state agencies. These members participate in discussion and information sharing but do not have decision-making authority.

Non-voting members do not need to sign a membership agreement.

Forum Staffing

BHT provides staffing and administrative support for the Behavioral Health Forum, including facilitation, communication, and administering release of funds, contracts, reporting, and evaluation.