



# Minnesota's Marriage and Family Therapist Workforce

Marriage and family therapists are mental health professionals trained to address relationship, mental and emotional disorders within the contexts of couples, family systems and communities. The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), in cooperation with the Minnesota Board of Marriage and Family Therapy (BMFT), collects information on the demographics, education and location of marriage and family therapists licensed in Minnesota. As part of their license renewal process, therapists also complete an MDH health care workforce survey. Unless otherwise noted, the analysis below is based on BMFT data, which was obtained for 100 percent of licensed marriage and family therapists (LMFTs). Information on race, work status and settings, and future plans was obtained through the MDH LMFT survey, which had a 57 percent response rate.<sup>1</sup> All data presented here are for therapists with active Minnesota licenses as of June 12, 2013.

## Overall

The Minnesota Board of Marriage and Family Therapy (BMFT) was established in 1987 and issued its first licenses to marriage and family therapists in early 1989.<sup>2</sup> As of June 2013, 1,578 marriage and family therapists (LMFTs) were licensed in Minnesota. Ninety-four percent of those had Minnesota mailing addresses.<sup>3</sup>

## Education

To obtain a license to practice as an MFT, individuals must graduate from an accredited master's or doctoral program, pass both state and national examinations, and complete a minimum of two years (4,000 hours) of post-graduate supervised practice experience.

Of the 1,578 LMFTs licensed in the state, 72 percent received their academic training in Minnesota. Over half (56 percent) of these trained at private schools and 16 percent at state-owned colleges and universities.

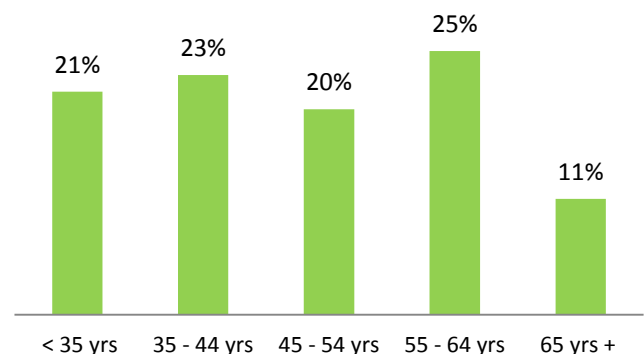
## Gender, Race and Ethnicity

Women represent 76 percent of the Minnesota LMFT workforce and men 24 percent. Among respondents to the MDH workforce survey, 91 percent identified as White. Those identifying as Asian, Black or multiple races each accounted for 2 percent of total respondents. Those identifying as American Indian accounted for 0.5 percent,<sup>4</sup> and one percent identified as Hispanic.<sup>5</sup>

## Age

The median age of Minnesota-based LMFTs was 48 years. Just over one third (36 percent) were 55 years of age or older (Figure 1).

**Figure 1. Age Distribution of Minnesota's LMFTs (N=1,489\*)**

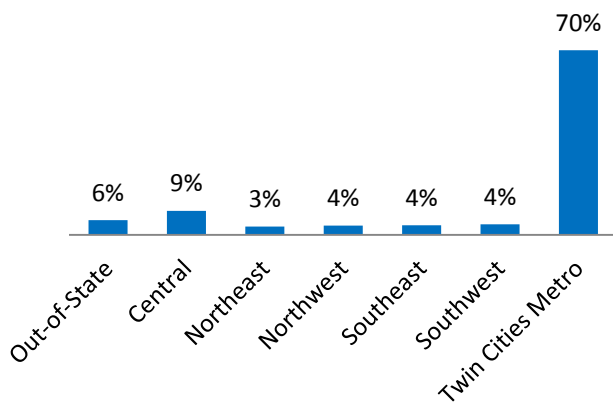


Source: Minnesota Board of Marriage and Family Therapists (BMFT) and Minnesota Department of Health (MDH). \*Does not include Minnesota licensees with out-of-state mailing addresses.

## Geographic Distribution

Nearly two-thirds (70 percent, or 1,112) of the state's LMFTs were located in the seven-county Twin Cities metropolitan region, with the second-largest concentration in the central region of the state. Other than those with out-of-state addresses, the balance of LMFTs were evenly distributed among the remaining Minnesota regions.

Figure 2. Regional distribution of LMFTs (N=1,578)



Source: BMFT and MDH

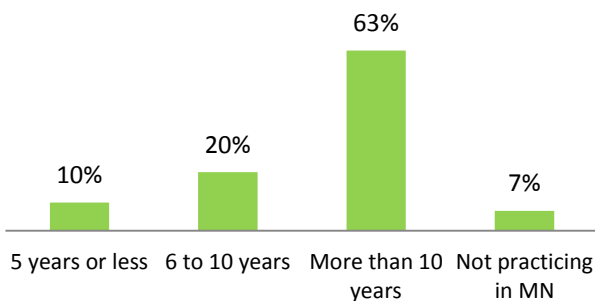
Similarly, Minnesota-based LMFTs were clustered in urban areas across the state, with only 14 percent were located in rural areas: 9 percent were in large rural settings, 2 percent in small rural areas and 3 percent in isolated rural areas.<sup>6</sup>

**Work Status and Future Plans**

The large majority (89 percent) of LMFTs responding to the MDH survey reported working in paid positions. An additional 2 percent were working in unpaid positions and 4 percent in another field. One percent was seeking work in the field. The remaining LMFTs were retired, not working for family or medical reasons, unemployed and not seeking work, students or in another work status situation.<sup>7</sup>

Nearly two-thirds of LMFTs surveyed said they expected to continue working in their field for more than a decade more (Figure 3). Those licensed but not practicing in Minnesota were predominately employed in another field or retired.

Figure 3. Intent to continue practicing in MN (N=386)

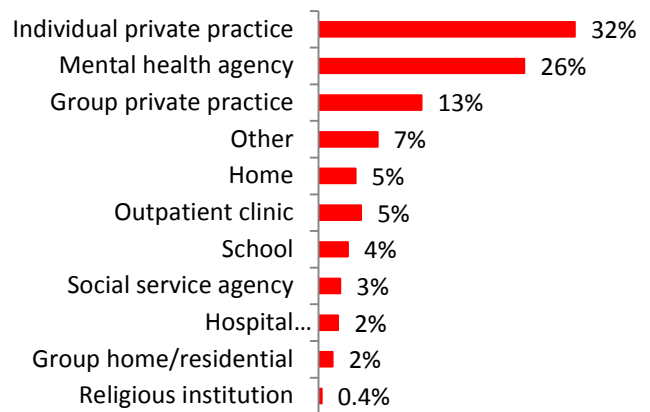


Source: MDH Health Care Workforce Survey

**Primary Work Settings and Activities**

Seventy-one percent of LMFTs responding to the MDH survey reported they were primarily engaged in private practice, employed by a mental health agency, or a private group practice (Figure 4). A unique service provided by LMFTs is reflected in the category “Home,” which refers to therapists who make house calls or provide in-home therapy. The “Other” category includes settings such as prisons, crisis lines and higher education.

Figure 4. Minnesota-based LMFT work settings (N=724)



Source: MDH Health Care Workforce Survey

**Notes**

- <sup>1</sup> This is the overall response rate. Response rates for individual survey questions may vary. Survey results are subject to self-selection as well as non-response error, so may not be representative of the LMFT population in Minnesota. This limitation applies only to the MDH survey questions.
- <sup>2</sup> Minnesota Statutes Sections 148B.30 – 148B.31.
- <sup>3</sup> License data was supplied by the BMFT to MDH as required by statute. This analysis includes only LMFTs with a current, current/supervisor or conditional license status.
- <sup>4</sup> 807 of 1,489 LMFTs responded to the question about race.
- <sup>5</sup> 791 of 1,489 LMFTs responded to the question about ethnicity.
- <sup>6</sup> These categories are based on Rural-Urban Commuting Areas (RUCAs). For more information, see [Defining Rural, Urban and Underserved Areas in Minnesota](#).
- <sup>7</sup> 853 of 1,489 LMFTs responded to the work status question.



For more information, contact:  
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