

Why it's so hard to find a mental health professional

By Lena H. Sun, Washington Post

Woman sitting on sofa and crying with therapist taking notes (Bigstock)

The demand for mental health services is growing nationally, and comprehensive mental health legislation is gaining momentum in Congress for the first time in years. But both forces could run up against a counter-force: a shortage of psychiatrists, psychologists, counselors and therapists in much of the country.

More than half of U.S. counties have no mental health professionals and so “don't have any access whatsoever,” according to Thomas Insel, director of the National Institute of Mental Health.

The implications are significant.

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