



**Clinical Psychology Training Programs at Brown: A Consortium of the  
Providence VA Medical Center,  
Lifespan, and Care New England  
Postdoctoral Fellowship Training Program  
Postdoctoral Fellowship Description: CLINICAL FOCUS**

**Title:** Postdoctoral Fellowship in General Mental Health

**Site:** Providence VA Medical Center (PVAMC), Providence, RI

**Supervisor(s):** Alexandra Chiulli Burns, Psy.D. (primary supervisor)  
Sarah Filone, Ph.D. (secondary supervisor)  
Natalia Villa Hernandez, PhD (MFT supervisor)  
Deb McKenna, NP (Urgent Care supervisor)  
Research supervisor TBD depending upon research interests

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**Description:**

Fellows will work with underserved populations in the general outpatient program (CAPS: Comprehensive Ambulatory Psychiatry Section) located within the Mental Health Service at the Providence VA Medical Center. This fellowship is designed to provide a generalist training opportunity, as well as to meet the individualized training goals of each fellow. As such, the fellowship will include generalist outpatient training with a broad range of experiences including: individual therapy; group therapy (customized to areas of interest); biopsychosocial assessment; urgent care (triage experience/ risk assessment/ learn about psychotropic meds/ ER/ admission process to inpatient levels of care); and couples therapy (formal IBCT training and supervision of cases). In addition to these components, fellows may choose to obtain specialty training in one or more of the following areas (as available): CBT-D, ACT-D, DBT-informed, PTSD treatment (participate in VA CPT provider training program), CBT-i, LBGQTIA+ Wellness, Tiered supervision experience.

**Fellowship Aims:**

1. To provide the Fellow with training in formulating complex case conceptualizations, creating patient-centered treatment plans, and flexible application of evidence-based group and individual therapies to patients with a wide array of presenting problems in an outpatient general mental health setting.
2. To provide the Fellow broad training in serving as part of an interdisciplinary, patient-centered treatment team.
3. To provide the Fellow with clinical training in psychological assessment and diagnostic evaluation.
4. To provide the Fellow with training in triage, assessment, and intervention in a mental health urgent care setting.
5. To provide the Fellow with training adjunct DBT, CPT, and marital & family therapy.
6. To increase the Fellow's knowledge and competencies with clinical research. This may include conducting research (e.g., analyzing data and preparing manuscripts on existing data sets and other involvement in

ongoing research projects), critical reviews of articles and book chapters, grant writing, and attendance at research meetings.

### **Fellowship Timeline**

This is a one-year Fellowship. The Fellowship will initiate September 1, 2024 and conclude August 31, 2025.

#### **Clinical Activity Plan (70%) (28 hours per week)**

Seventy percent of the Fellow's time will be devoted to clinically related activities. The fellow will be integrated into the Providence VA Medical Center's general mental health outpatient clinic (CAPS) and mental health urgent care (UC) team. Duties may include serving as a member of patient-centered, Behavioral Health Interdisciplinary Program (BHIP) teams, providing evidence-based therapies to Veterans of all eras to include individual, group, and marital/family therapies, and providing assessment and treatment services to Veterans experiencing acute mental health crises. In order to ensure that a high level of clinical training is provided, the following activities will be required:

1. Treatment Services (20 hours per week): The Fellow will provide treatment services in two venues: outpatient general mental health and urgent care. Services in outpatient general mental health will include individual, group, and marital/family psychotherapy. Services in urgent care will consist of conducting problem-focused assessments and brief interventions to address immediate mental health concerns as well as developing a working knowledge of psychotropic medications.

The Fellow will demonstrate competence in evidence-based cognitive-behavioral therapies to treat anxiety and mood disorders, trauma disorders, personality disorders, serious mental illness, sleep disorders, and health, adjustment, and relationship problems. Training may be available for the following specific interventions: Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT; for depression, sleep, insomnia, chronic pain), Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) for depression, Prolonged Exposure (PE) and/or Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT) for PTSD, Motivational Interviewing (MI), Problem-Solving Therapy, Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT), Integrated Behavioral Couple's Therapy, and other evidence-informed treatments for other disorders. Fellow can also be involved in LBGTQ+ Wellness group.

An emphasis will be placed on training in the flexible application of evidence-based protocols to meet the needs of the individual patient. The Fellow will demonstrate competency in developing sophisticated case conceptualizations that reflect working knowledge of several different theoretical models, creating and adapting individualized treatment plans using an measurement based care model. The fellow will be encouraged to develop group programming that aligns with their clinical interests and identified clinic needs.

2. Clinical Assessment (6 hours per week): The Fellow will conduct full diagnostic evaluations and/or psychological assessments of Veterans referred for mental health treatment within a general outpatient setting and brief, problem-focused assessments in an urgent care setting. Competences gained include: (a) diagnostic assessment using DSM-5/ICD-10 criteria; (b) the selection, administration, scoring, and interpretation of psychological tests; (b) integrating data and preparing written reports; and (d) feedback and/or consultation to Veteran and relevant parties (e.g., treatment team, involved family members, etc.).
3. Membership on an Interdisciplinary Treatment Team (2 hours per week): The Fellow will demonstrate the ability to function as an independent clinician as a member of an interdisciplinary treatment team (i.e., BHIP). His/her interactions with other providers will demonstrate an understanding of the responsibilities and limitations of a psychologist in a general medical and psychiatric setting. The Fellow will demonstrate competency in communicating with providers of different disciplines and developing comprehensive treatment plans in full collaboration with the Veteran and his/her treatment team.

4. **Clinical Documentation:** The Fellow will have the ability to maintain accurate records and to document case formulations, assessment results, treatment plans, and progress notes in a timely, concise, and clear manner.

**Didactic Training Activity Plan (10%) (Approximately 4 hours per week)**

Didactic activities: The core educational objectives are: 1) To promote clinical, professional, and personal competence in providing mental health care to Veterans; and 2) To promote commitment to team-based and patient-centered care.

1. The fellow will be required to participate in the following post-doctoral seminars through the Brown Postdoctoral Training Program.
  - Core Seminar (2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of month, 5:30 to 7:00 p.m., 1.5 hours)
  - DPHB Academic Grand Rounds (1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of month, 11:00 to noon, 1.0 hours)
  - Clinical Ethics Seminars (1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of month, 10:00 to 11:00 a.m., 1.0 hour)
  - CPP Didactic Series (1<sup>st</sup> Monday of the month, 4:00pm - 5:30 p.m., 1.5 hours)
2. The Fellow will have the option to attend the monthly VA Mental Health Services colloquia which promote evidence-based practices and often involve guest presenters from allied disciplines (1 hour per month).
3. The following seminars through the Brown Postdoctoral Training Program are optional:
  - Grantsmanship seminars (1 hour per week)
  - Special Topics in Statistics and Research Methods (1 hour per week)

**Research (20%) (8 hours per week)**

Twenty percent of the Fellow's time will be devoted to research. The Fellow will work with a research mentor toward producing a traditional scientific product in a content area to be determined based on Fellow's research interests. This may include initiating and collaborating on manuscript preparation and submission of journal articles, and panel/poster submissions at a regional or national conference. Fellows may use existing data that has been collected and archived (e.g., by the supervisor or the Fellow's dissertation). Fellows may also become involved in ongoing research projects, assisting with clinical interventions, assessments, etc. For those Fellows interested in learning about writing a grant, seminars and mentoring opportunities are available with senior psychologists within the Department of Psychiatry (see above under Didactics). Finally, for Fellows interested in learning about the editorial review process of manuscripts submitted to refereed journals, ad hoc reviewing opportunities may be made available with his/her research mentors.

**Supervision and Evaluation**

A total of at least 3 hours of face-to-face clinical supervision per week will be provided as follows: (1) psychotherapy and assessment will be provided via one-hour face-to-face individual supervision meetings each week with a licensed psychologist on site (2) marital and family therapy supervision will be provided in a face-to-face group format for one hour per week with a licensed provider, (3) supervision for urgent care will be provided with a licensed prescribing provider and overseen by a licensed psychologist. An additional hourly block of individual, face-to-face supervision will be offered for academic/research supervision. The Fellow also will have access to several additional forums for direct and indirect supervision through optional participation in regularly scheduled treatment teams meetings in the general mental health clinic.

The Fellow and supervisors will develop fellowship goals and learning objectives early on in the year. At the midpoint and conclusion of the Fellowship, the Fellow and supervisors will provide formal performance evaluations of one another. At each point in time, the Fellow will also provide an evaluation of the program relative to the goals and learning objectives of the Fellowship.

Please visit the [Brown Faculty](#) page to view supervisor profiles.

**Resource Requirements**

The Fellow will be provided with the following resources:

1. Office space at the PVAMC
2. Telephone
3. A personal desktop computer with internet access
4. Access to copying equipment
5. Clinical space for meeting with patients/clients.
6. VA issued laptop for telehealth

**Reporting and approval**

This fellowship will be part of the CPP.

Director, Clinical Psychology Program (CPP)

Director, Postdoctoral Fellowship Training Program (PFTP)