



Postdoctoral Fellowship Training Program
Postdoctoral Fellowship Description
RESEARCH FOCUS

Title: Postdoctoral Fellowship at The Pediatric Anxiety Research Center (PARC)-
Community Based Research

APA-accredited: YES ___ NO X

Site: Bradley Hospital

Supervisor(s): Jennifer Freeman, PhD (Primary Supervisor)
Jennifer Herren, PhD
Kristen Benito, PhD
Erin O'Connor, PhD
Josh Kemp, PhD
Yovanska Duarte-Velez, PhD

The goal of this fellowship is to provide training in the assessment and treatment of child and adolescent anxiety and OCD, the conduct of community engaged clinical effectiveness research, and work with patients/families and a broad range of other study partners (Providers, Agency Leadership, Payers, State Health Policy Advisors, Community Engagement teams, Dissemination/Sustainability/Scalability experts) on a large-scale intervention trial. Cognitive Behavioral Treatment (CBT) including exposure therapy is the treatment of choice for youth anxiety, yet multiple barriers limit access to care. Youth from historically marginalized groups face even greater barriers to accessing high-quality care, including limited availability and inconvenience of services, transportation difficulties, lower mental health literacy, and experiences of stigmatization and discrimination. The question of how best to improve access to high quality care is particularly relevant in community health settings (e.g., Certified Community Behavioral Health Centers (CCBHCs) and Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs)) that serve a high proportion of vulnerable youth due to the staggering and longstanding failure to include these youth in clinical trials and the clear need to tailor treatment to better address barriers to access, quality, and clinical improvement.

Training goals will be met primarily by working as part of a collaborative team on a Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI)-funded study ("Testing Delivery Modalities of Team-Based Cognitive Behavioral Treatment (CBT) for Pediatric Anxiety in Community Health Settings: Developing Pathways to Health Equity"; Freeman (PI/Director), Herren (Co-Director)) designed to compare three modalities for delivering outpatient exposure-based CBT in youth ages 5-18 using existing care teams in CCBHC/FQHC ("safety net") settings: in-person (traditional face-to-face sessions only, occurring in the office and home/community) vs. telehealth (only occurring remotely via web-based video conference) vs. flexible (tailored mix of telehealth and/or in-person sessions). A total of 501 children with anxiety and/or OCD will be treated, with 167 children randomly assigned to each of the treatment conditions. The primary aims are to compare the relative effectiveness of in-person vs. telehealth vs. flexible CBT for: reducing anxiety-related functional impairment, improving family treatment engagement, improving family satisfaction, reducing barriers to treatment access, and maintaining treatment quality. Secondary

outcomes are to understand predictors of pre- to post-treatment change in functional impairment including severity of illness, caregiver burden, and family accommodation and to explore group differences in time course of response and durability of treatment gains. Longer-term goals include establishing a service delivery model that can be scaled nationally in similar practice settings.

Fellows will serve as coordinators at 2-3 partnering organizations/sites (working alongside a primary full-time study project coordinator and Drs. Freeman and Herren as primary supervisors). They will also be primary coders of treatment fidelity and quality. Study coordination duties include assisting with recruitment and screening, supervision of research assistants and data collection, and participation in regular research and partner engagement meetings. Fellows will provide therapist consultation in exposure therapy with the support of Drs. Herren, Benito, Duarte-Velez, and Kemp. They will work with Dr. O'Connor and support the independent evaluator (IE) process by completing clinical interview eligibility assessments as needed. Fellows will also assist in quality monitoring by rating recorded therapy sessions using the Exposure Guide. Fellows will rate sessions from other sites they are not coordinating (ensuring they are masked to condition). They will receive training to criterion for coding and be supervised by Dr. Benito to ensure quality and prevent drift. The fellow will assist with data analysis and manuscript preparation and will gain supervision experience by supervising research assistants. Additional training goals related to assessment and treatment will be met through involvement with other ongoing clinical trials and clinical programs at PARC. Additional opportunities exist to participate in other lab-based research projects and clinical activity as time allows.

Description of Site

The Emma Pendleton Bradley Hospital, founded in 1931, is the nation's first psychiatric hospital devoted to children and adolescents. Its services include a 72-bed acute inpatient program for children and adolescents with emotional, behavioral, and developmental disorders; partial hospital and intensive outpatient programs for children ages newborn to eighteen years with a range of emotional and behavioral issues; and a large and active outpatient treatment program offering individual, family, and group psychotherapy, medication management, occupational and speech/language therapy, and neuropsychological evaluations to children and adolescents with complex mental health needs.

Pediatric Anxiety Research Center (PARC) is an internationally recognized research group in pediatric OCD and anxiety, continually receiving NIMH research funding since 1999. PARC has been at the forefront of developing and testing treatments for pediatric OCD including three large multisite trials considered seminal treatment outcome studies which positioned PARC (along with the University of Pennsylvania and Duke University) as leaders in the field of youth OCD treatment research. Current PARC research focuses on comparative effectiveness of team-based anxiety treatment; improving understanding of psychological and biological factors in pediatric OCD and anxiety including the use of augmentative Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS) (the first ever project in the country to use TMS to treat adolescent OCD); use of technology (including virtual reality and AI) to improve training, access, and patient outcomes; optimizing parent led exposure practice via pragmatic reporting tools and real-time reporting; and examining relationships between sleep and extinction learning in highly anxious youth. The PARC research team has years of collective research experience studying treatment efficacy and effectiveness, pragmatic quality monitoring, therapist training and implementation methods in community settings.

Fellowship Aims

1. To provide the fellow with experience in the area of therapist training, consultation, and cultural adaptations specific to the assessment and treatment of anxiety disorders in childhood and adolescence.

2. To provide the fellow with a working knowledge of skills necessary to conduct community engaged clinical trials research. This includes study coordination, data management, supervision of staff, and working with a wide range of study partners.
3. To provide the fellow with experiences analyzing data, presenting results at national meetings, and writing original peer-reviewed publications. The fellow will also receive training in the writing of extramural grants.
4. To provide the fellow with training in quality monitoring, reliability coding, and the importance of these tools in the dissemination and implementation of evidence based treatments in community settings.

Fellowship Timeline

The duration of the fellowship is 2 years, contingent upon satisfactory progress in Year 1. The anticipated start date is September 1, 2025. Activities are distributed as follows: 65% research time, 25% clinical time, and 10% didactic time.

Research Activity Plan (65%)

65% of the Fellow's time will be devoted to research activities including work specific to the PCORI-funded grant described above, independent research time, and collaboration on other PARC research studies.

- Work on PCORI grant: Duties will include helping with study coordination (e.g., help with recruitment and screening, coordination with partners at agency sites and as part of structured engagement with community partner groups, supervision of research assistants and data collection), participation in weekly research meetings, and quality monitoring involving rating recorded therapy sessions. (50%)
- Independent research activities Review of relevant literature, manuscript preparation and submission: The fellow will be encouraged to collaborate on manuscript preparation and poster submissions at national conferences. Individually tailored goals will be established in this area. The Fellow will develop a research proposal and complete a project in an area of interest within the broad area of anxiety/OCD treatment research and/or community engaged research. (10%)
- Collaboration on ongoing PARC research studies: As interest and time allows, the Fellow will be able to attend research meetings for other funded projects and collaborate on data analysis and the creation of products from these studies. (5%)

Clinical Activity Plan (25%)

In order to ensure that the fellow receives broad clinical training in the area of assessing and treating youth with anxiety and OCD, the following clinical activities which are part of the research project will be included:

- 1) Study Assessments- including diagnostic evaluations and outcome monitoring
- 2) Therapist training and ongoing consultation – they will provide small group case consultation and troubleshooting using principles of exposure, consultant feedback using the Exposure Guide with a focus on culturally responsive care. They will also assist in didactic and experiential training workshops for both licensed and non-licensed providers focused on evidenced-based treatment for pediatric anxiety and OCD.

Optional (based on trainee goals) Outpatient Assessment and Treatment (1 case, 2 hrs/week, 5%):

- Clinical assessment and treatment: The fellow will conduct evidence-based assessment and treatment of youth in the PARC outpatient program at Bradley Hospital.

- Supervision: The Fellow will receive at least 1 hour per week of group supervision (provided by Dr. Herren)

Path toward licensure: YES X NO

Didactics (10%)

10% time (4 hours/week) is available for didactics (3hrs/wk) and research supervision (one hr/wk).
 Postdoctoral Seminars: The fellow will participate in postdoctoral seminars through the Postdoctoral Fellowship Training Program.

- Mandatory Didactics: (approximately 3 hr/wk)
- RFP Seminars (1 per week).
 - Postdoc Core Seminar (1 x per month).
 - DPHB Academic Grand Rounds (1 per month).
 - Clinical Ethics Seminar Series- (1 per month).
 - Grant Writing, (1 per week)

Optional Didactics: (approximately 1hrs/wk available; would come out of research time if chosen)

- Special Topics in Statistics
- DPHB Diversity Mentoring Program – including opportunities for mentorship from faculty within DPHB conducting work in areas of interest

Supervision and Evaluation

The following supervision will be provided each week:

- Dr. Freeman serves as the primary supervisor for the fellowship and as such she will be responsible for making sure that all training objectives and supervision requirements are being met.
- 1-hour of individual research supervision (to be provided by Dr. Freeman) (counted as part of the 4hrs/wk of didactic time)
- 1 hour of group supervision related to IE assessments (to be provided by Dr. O’Connor; time already counted in the Research Activity Section, see above)
- 1 hour of group supervision every other week related to quality monitoring and use of the Exposure Guide (to be provided by Dr. Benito and Dr. Herren; time already counted in the Research Activity Section, see above)
- 1 hour per month of group supervision related to partner engagement (to be provided by Dr. Kemp; time already counted in the Research Activity Section, see above).
- 1-2 hours of group supervision related to overall oversight of the project and site coordination and consultation (to be provided by Drs. Herren and Duarte-Velez; time already counted in the Research Activity and Clinical Activity Sections, see above)
- 1-hour of group, face-to-face supervision about PARC Outpatient clinical work (to be provided by Dr. Herren and Dr. O’Connor) (time already counted in Clinical Activity Section, see above)

At every 6 months for the duration of the fellowship, the fellow and the supervisors will provide formal evaluations, and evaluations 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

Fellow will be provided with the following resources:

- Access to space appropriate for clinical care

- A computer and project specific software
- Internet access
- Telephone

Reporting and approval

This fellowship will be part of the Research Fellowship Program. The position has been discussed and approved by the Training Committee in their monthly meeting.

Associate Director, Research Fellowship Program

Director, Postdoctoral Fellowship Training Program