

Postdoctoral Fellowship Training Program
Postdoctoral Fellowship Description
CLINICAL FOCUS

Title: Postdoctoral Fellowship in Trauma and Readjustment

APA-accredited: Yes

Site/Employer: VA Providence Healthcare System, Providence, RI

Primary Supervisor(s): Caren Francione, PhD and Jennifer F. Lambert, PhD

Additional Supervisors: Clinical: TBD depending upon interests
Research: TBD depending upon research interests

Description of Site: The Mental Health and Behavioral Sciences Service (MHBSS) at VA Providence has approximately 240 staff and trainees and provides MH and case management services to over 10,000 unique Veterans per year across over a dozen outpatient, inpatient and community-based programs. The majority of Veterans' Outpatient Mental Health care is provided within Behavioral Health Interdisciplinary Program (BHIP), a team-based approach to outpatient mental health care. BHIP teams may include Psychologists, Psychiatrists, MH Nurse Practitioners, Social Workers, Registered Nurses, Peer Support Specialists, and Chaplains who all work together to provide recovery-oriented, evidence-based, mental health care.

The Fellow's role on this team will be to conduct comprehensive diagnostic assessments and psychotherapy **with a focus on caring for Veterans who served in support of Post-9/11 combat operations (Operations Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom, New Dawn, Epic Fury, etc.), were recently discharged from active service, and/or are currently serving in the National Guard or Reserves.** The majority of Veterans present with Trauma-Related Disorders but the Fellow also will gain experiencing treating a variety of presenting problems to include readjustment to civilian life, sleep difficulties, anger/irritability, anxiety/stress, depression, substance use disorders, relationship problems, and education/employment. In addition to being part of an interdisciplinary BHIP team, the Fellow may work with the Post 9/11 M2VA Case Management Program to coordinate the care of Veterans along with other members of the Veteran's care team (e.g., Primary Care, Whole Health, Housing services, Employment Services, etc.).

Fellowship Aims:

1. To provide the Fellow with broad post-doctoral clinical training to address the unique needs of Veterans that have been involved in more contemporary deployments (Post 9/11) and may be experiencing trauma-related mental health diagnoses and readjustment concerns, including transitioning from war zones/military to civilian life.
2. To provide the Fellow training in evidence based cognitive-behavioral and ACT-based interventions to treat trauma/PTSD, anxiety, depression, irritability/arousal symptoms, sleep difficulties, co-occurring substance use disorders, and readjustment challenges following military deployment.

3. To provide the Fellow with clinical training in psychological assessment, diagnostic evaluation, individual, couples, and group therapy.
4. To provide the Fellow with training in provision of clinical supervision to Psychiatry and/or Psychology Residents
5. To increase the Fellow's knowledge and competencies with clinical research, which may include evaluating the effectiveness of program development projects, working with local researchers on ongoing projects (e.g., conducting screening assessments, participating as a study therapist), preparing one's dissertation or other manuscripts for publication, attendance at research meetings, etc..
6. To increase the Fellow's knowledge of system redesign, MH practice management, quality metrics, and administrative/leadership roles within a VA Medical Center (if optional leadership training opportunity is selected).

Fellowship Timeline

This is a one-year Fellowship. The Fellowship will initiate September 1, 2027 and conclude August 31, 2028.

Clinical Activity Plan (70%)

The Fellow will be integrated into a BHIP Team and spend approximately 5 days per week at this site. This will include providing trauma-informed, evidence-based interventions to Post 9/11 Veterans. Several additional specialized training opportunities will be offered (please see descriptions below) and the Fellow will work with the primary supervisor to determine the final training experience that best matches training goals.

In order to ensure that a high level of clinical training is provided, the following activities will be required:

Clinical Assessment: The Fellow will conduct diagnostic, comprehensive assessments for Veterans referred for Mental Health treatment. Competences gained include: (a) diagnostic assessment skills, (b) integrating data and preparing written reports; and (c) brief case presentations with clinical recommendations to the team and/or referral source.

Membership in an Interdisciplinary Treatment Team: The Fellow will demonstrate the ability to function as an independent clinician within the context of an interdisciplinary team. Fellow's 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 participate in treatment team meetings (1x a week) with the assigned BHIP team.

Treatment Services: The Fellow will demonstrate competence in evidence-based (CBT and ACT-based) interventions to treat a range of presenting conditions. Specific interventions may include Prolonged Exposure (PE), Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT), and/or Written Exposure Therapy (WET) for PTSD, Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy for Insomnia (CBT-I), Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) for Depression, and evidence-informed treatments for other disorders.

The Fellow will demonstrate competency in developing treatment plans that specify measurable benchmarks for treatment success and that reflect working knowledge of several different theoretical models.

Supplemental Training Opportunities: During the training year the following clinical opportunities will be available to the Fellow based on interest and goals.

- **Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT):** Fellows may attend a 2-day CPT training at VA Providence and participate in the 6-month consultation program (1 hour per week) with a regional CPT trainer in order to obtain provider status upon licensure. Supervision of these cases will be provided by assigned clinical supervisor in conjunction with weekly CPT consultation calls.
- **Clinical Supervision Training:** The Fellow may participate in supervision training that includes gain skills providing co-supervision in CBT to 2-3 psychiatry residents. May also provide assessment and/or group therapy supervision to the psychology residents or social work trainees.
- **MH Leadership:** this optional training experience involves a weekly meeting with Dr. Francione or Lambert, to gain insight into the day-to-day responsibilities involved in running a large MH service. The Fellow will be introduced to the various databases that are used for clinic management, tracking workload and productivity, assessing performance on quality metrics, etc., and will be involved in discussions related to strategic planning and change management.
- **Mindfulness Self- Compassion Group:** Fellows may have the opportunity to co-lead a Mindfulness Self-Compassion Group with a licensed Psychologist. This can be a 4-month clinical opportunity.
- **Inpatient Psychotherapy:** Fellows may participate in the delivery of evidence based individual psychotherapy (e.g., CBT-I, CBT for SP, mindfulness, MI for SUD, etc.) or group therapy in our acute inpatient ward. This can be a 6 or 12-month clinical opportunity.
- **Couple Therapy:** The fellow has the opportunity to learn Integrative Behavioral Couple Therapy (IBCT) in a group format. This can be a 12-month clinical opportunity.
- **Chronic Pain:** The Fellow may work with our Pain Psychologist to provide CBT for Pain and participate in the Pain Empowerment Group for Veterans.

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.

This position is designed to support a path towards licensure.

Path towards licensure: Yes

Didactic Training Activity Plan (10%)

The core educational objectives are: 1) To promote clinical, professional, and personal competence in providing mental health care to veterans in an interprofessional setting; and 2) To promote commitment to team-based and patient-centered interprofessional care. In order to work towards these goals, the Fellow may attend monthly Primary Care Service meetings and / or participate in monthly MHBSS colloquia. The latter often promotes evidence-based practices and / or involves guest presenters from allied disciplines.

The Fellow will be required to participate in the following post-doctoral seminars through the Brown Post- Doctoral Training Program:

- Core Seminar (2nd Tuesday of month, 5:00 to 6:30 pm)
- DPHB Academic Grand Rounds (1st Wednesday of month, 11:00 to 12:30)
- Clinical Ethics Seminars (1st Wednesday of month, 10:00 to 11:00 am)
- Clinical Psychology Fellow Seminar (1st Tues. of month, 4:30 to 6:00 pm)
- Clinical Psychology Becoming A Supervisor Seminar (3rd Tues. of month, 4:30 to 5:30 pm)

The following seminars are optional:

Postdoctoral Training Program Grantsmanship seminars

Postdoctoral Training Program Special Topics in Statistics and Research Methods

Research (20%)

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 the following:

- **Conducting program development/evaluation and system redesign projects.** In past years, Fellows have started a pain assessment clinic for Veterans on chronic opiates, a walk-in sleep clinic during our Post-Deployment Clinic, a Storytelling Group culminating in a public Memorial Day event, an emotion-based Writing Group for Veterans with PTSD, an LGBTQ Wellness Group, and a survey examining barriers to EBP use among VA MH providers. Fellows are encouraged to collect outcome data to be presented at national meetings, submitted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal, and/or presented at Brown's Mind Brain Research Day.
- **Engagement in ongoing research projects:** Fellows may also become involved in ongoing research projects, including serving as a study therapist in an ongoing RCT, conducting assessments for an RCT, etc. 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

Clinical supervision will be provided in the form of one-hour weekly face-to-face individual supervision blocks with licensed clinical psychologists on site (minimum of 2 hours individual, face-to-face supervision weekly) as well as two additional hours of groups and/or individual supervision per week. 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 rounds and treatment teams with members of the interprofessional teams.

The Fellow and supervisors will develop fellowship goals and learning objectives early on in the first year. At the midpoint and conclusion of the Fellowship, the Fellow and supervisors will provide formal performance evaluations of one another.

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 VA Providence
2. Telephone
3. A laptop computer with internet access
4. Access to copying equipment
5. Clinical space for meeting with patients/clients.

Reporting and Approval

This fellowship is part of the CPP. The position has been discussed and approved by the CPP faculty in Training Committee meeting.

Director, Clinical Psychology Program

Director, Postdoctoral Fellowship Training Program