



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration
Bedford Healthcare System

VA Bedford Healthcare System

Interprofessional Fellowship Program in Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Recovery-Oriented Services (PSR)

The VA Bedford Healthcare System is seeking applicants for the PSR fellowship program. Each year, we welcome 5 to 6 fellows at VA Bedford. We welcome applications in psychology, social work, and mental health counseling.

PSR fellows will become part of an interdisciplinary team of postgraduate fellows which may also include social work, nursing, psychiatry, vocational rehabilitation and/or occupational therapy. Each fellow will select two programs to work in throughout the year. The primary placement will be a program that focuses on serving Veterans with serious mental illness (SMI). For the second placement, fellows can choose from a variety of clinical, research, and/or administrative placements across inpatient, outpatient, or community-based programs. No specific emphasis is required for the second placement choice, and the options are designed to be flexible and offer the fellow opportunities to pursue individual professional interests. The program placements provide the fellow with an environment to learn and to apply the principles of psychosocial rehabilitation while working with an interdisciplinary team of experienced professionals. All fellows will provide outpatient individual therapy services to veterans with SMI through the Program for Outpatient Wellness, Engagement, and Recovery (POWER). In addition, the fellow will be actively involved in recovery-oriented assessments, program development, consultation, and educational dissemination regarding psychosocial rehabilitation within the medical center and nationally via conference presentations. Opportunities for participation in research are also available in collaboration with the VISN 1 Mental Illness Research, Education and Clinical Center (MIRECC).

The overall goals of the PSR fellowship are to provide training and clinical experiences for fellows so that they become grounded in the principles and values of PSR and incorporate them into their work with Veterans. Fellows receive a range of didactics and training to hone clinical skills and SMI knowledge. In addition, fellows can pursue professional interests by taking advantage of a range of training opportunities offered by the. Fellows acquire knowledge of current PSR research and practices to become a skilled PSR practitioner capable of promoting change in the VA system (to act as “agents of change”).

There are four main components to the PSR Fellowship at VA Bedford.

1. First Program Placement: Each fellow can choose a primary placement in one of the programs that serves Veterans with SMI. The possible placements include: 1) Community Residential Care (CRC); 2) the Mental Health Intensive Case Management (MHICM) Program which uses the Assertive Community Treatment model; 3) inpatient psychiatric services. (Estimated 10/15 hrs per week).

2. Second Program Placement: Each fellow has the opportunity to choose one or more secondary placements, with approval from one's preceptor and the PSR Fellowship Committee. Fellows' work in this placement must be recovery-oriented and focused on Veterans with more significant mental health disabilities. There are many possibilities for secondary program placements to choose from based upon the fellow's professional interests. Here are a few examples: Compensated Work Therapy (CWT); Domiciliary; Programs and Services for Homeless Veterans (HCHV); Veterans Administration Supported Housing (VASH); Behavioral Addictions Clinic; and clinical research via faculty affiliated with the VISN 1 MIRECC. (Estimated 10 hrs/week).

3. Program for Outpatient Wellness, Engagement, and Recovery (POWER): All fellows will carry a caseload of veterans receiving services through this outpatient program for Veterans living with SMI. This can also include development and implementation of outpatient groups for SMI (e.g., Living with Bipolar Disorder, Social Skills Training, etc.). (Estimated 5 hrs/week).

4. Group Project—Program Development/Evaluation & Education Dissemination: All the PSR fellows will work together throughout the course of the fellowship year on a program development or program evaluation project. The fellows will be given projects to choose from or may develop their own project idea with approval from the PSR Fellowship Committee. A final, written report of the project, including lessons learned, will be submitted to the PSR Fellowship Committee. Past education dissemination efforts have included presentations about the group projects at national conferences and presentations of project evaluation results to the hospital's program managers and staff of recovery-oriented programs. (Estimated 2-3 hrs/week).

Fellows are afforded considerable flexibility to design and implement clinical and/or programmatic changes toward the goal of greater enactment of psychosocial rehabilitation principles and practice. Fellows are seen as "change agents" within the medical center's psychosocial rehabilitation-oriented programs. As such, they often engage in consultation, program evaluation, and program development in their individual placements. In addition, the fellows are actively involved in program development, consultation, and educational dissemination regarding psychosocial rehabilitation within the larger medical center and nationally via conference presentations.

Please contact Andrew Peckham, PhD or Adam Kirschner, LICSW for more information:

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