

**VA Advanced Fellowship Program in Mental Illness Research and Treatment
at the VISN 5 Mental Illness Research, Education, and Clinical Center (MIRECC)**



**VA Maryland Health Care System
Baltimore Medical System**

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<http://www.mirecc.va.gov/visn5/research/fellowship.asp>

The VA Advanced Fellowship Program in Mental Illness Research and Treatment at the VISN 5 MIRECC has two 2-year fellowship positions: one position for a Physician Fellow from psychiatry, neurology, radiology, internal medicine, or other areas of medicine and one position for an Allied Health Fellow from clinical psychology, counseling psychology, social work, nursing, or pharmacy.

Our program trains fellows to become successful researchers whose work increases access to effective mental health services for all Veterans who need them. People living with mental health conditions face stigma, discrimination, poverty, homelessness, lack of access to health care, and health disparities – as well as the challenges of their health problems – that present enormous barriers to recovery. Many do not have a voice in their care. We are clinician researchers who are committed to addressing this through innovative applied research and resource development. Our active research program addresses some of the most important mental health services research priorities within VA: evaluating **peer-delivered mental health services** to support their wide-scale implementation and dissemination; determining effective strategies for **engaging Veterans in mental health services** and ensuring that those services are personally meaningful; **developing interventions** that move beyond the medical model of treating symptoms with medication by **promoting holistic and self-directed recovery** and by addressing the **intersections of gender, age, being a Veteran and other social identities with mental health and healthcare**; expanding **Whole Health knowledge and resources** within VA so that this model is fully realized within mental health treatment programs; actively involving **Veterans** who may benefit from specialized mental health services; and working towards **reducing suicide through better identification of and engagement with those at highest risk**. Fellows develop independent programs of research that address these and other high priority areas to improve the lives of Veterans. Fellows also devote time to supervised delivery of mental health services, both to identify important clinical questions and to experience first-hand the challenges and successes related to **translating scientific findings into their practice**. Our didactic offerings, complemented by those of the national program, offer focused learning in biostatistical methods, health informatics, and grant writing alongside opportunities to develop and apply knowledge to support the **equity and empowerment of people living with mental health conditions**. Overall, fellows spend approximately 65% of their time in research-related research and clinical activities, 25% of their time in clinical service and training activities, and 10% of their time in didactic and administrative activities. We are committed to supporting diversity within our Fellowship and welcome applications from candidates representing different geographic areas, ages, gender identities, racial and ethnic backgrounds, sexual orientations, disabilities, disciplines, and life experiences.

We are one of 25 sites in the national VA Advanced Fellowship Program in Mental Illness Research and Treatment. Our program follows the broad organizational structure of the national program, which aims to provide clinical research activities in concert with clinical experiences over a 2-year time frame. MIRECC Fellowship sites around the nation are linked electronically and by two-way interactive videoconference for learning, information sharing, and the development of a national laboratory in advanced psychiatry and psychology. Our program is affiliated with the University of Maryland, School of Medicine, Department of Psychiatry; this provides an outstanding collaborative and interdisciplinary setting for fellows. Our program has been in existence and offering postdoctoral training since 2003. Our fellows have established careers as experts in serious mental illness research and clinical care in VA, academic, and hospital settings.

The VA Capitol Health Care Network (VISN 5) serves Veterans from the entire state of Maryland, and portions of Virginia, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and the District of Columbia. Fellows' offices and research activities are housed in the Baltimore VA Medical Center, located in downtown Baltimore, and adjoining the University of Maryland School of Medicine and Medical Center.

Detailed information about the VA Advanced Fellowship Program in Mental Illness Research and Treatment at the VISN 5 MIRECC can be found on the national MIRECC website at <http://www.mirecc.va.gov/mirecc-fellowship.asp> and at the VISN 5 website at <http://www.mirecc.va.gov/visn5/>. Potential applicants are encouraged to contact Dr. Melanie Bennett at Melanie.Bennett@va.gov to discuss details of the opportunities available for fellows.

Candidate Requirements

A successful candidate will have actively participated in research with resultant presentations and publications and will have graduate training in applied research in mental health and recovery. The fellowship adheres strongly to a scientist-practitioner model of training. The candidate will demonstrate a commitment to the scientist-practitioner model as evidenced by history of research in serious mental illness, as well as training in empirically supported treatments for those with these conditions. Successful candidates will also demonstrate a commitment to serving Veterans and an interest in VA.

Physician applicants must have completed ACGME-accredited training, be board eligible or board certified, and have an active, unrestricted U.S. license to practice. International medical graduates must also have a current visa and an ECFMG certificate that is valid indefinitely. Applicants on a J-1 visa must also have current ECFMG sponsorship. Eligible psychologists and allied health professionals must be U.S. citizens. Psychologist applicants must have graduated from an American Psychological Association (APA) or Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) accredited doctoral program in clinical or counseling psychology (or be on track to complete their graduate program prior to beginning the fellowship) and must have completed an APA- or CPA-accredited internship. For eligibility requirements for other Allied Health disciplines, please contact Sherry A. Beaudreau, Ph.D., ABPP at Sherry.Beaudreau@va.gov or Nathan Hantke, Ph.D. at hantke@ohsu.edu.

Application Procedures

Applications are being accepted now through December 4, 2020. The Fellowship Steering Committee will review all completed applications and will extend invitations for on-site or telephone interviews during late December 2020 and early January 2021. Offers will be extended in February 2021. All applicants should submit the following documents:

1. A letter of interest that outlines career goals, expectations, and goodness of fit with our program
2. A current curriculum vitae
3. Official graduate transcripts
4. Three signed letters of recommendation, one of which must be from an internship supervisor

Psychologist applicants should submit these materials through the APPA CAS portal (<http://appic.org/AAPL-APPA/APPA-Postdoc-Application-Information>). All other applicants should email these materials directly to Dr. Bennett.

All questions and inquiries should be sent via email to Dr. Bennett at Melanie.Bennett@va.gov.