



**Black Hills  
Health Care System**  
Department of Veterans Affairs

## Psychology Internship Program

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**\*Applications Due: November 15**

**\*APPIC Match #: 155512**

### Accreditation Status

The pre-doctoral internship at the **VA Black Hills Health Care System** is fully accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of the American Psychological Association. The next site visit is scheduled for the academic training year of 2017.

### Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation

**American Psychological Association**  
750 First Street NE, Washington, DC 20002-4242  
(202) 336-5979

### Application & Selection Procedures

#### ***Application Criteria:***

- Must be a student in an APA-accredited clinical or counseling psychology program and have approval for internship status from his or her graduate school program Training Director.
- Applicants must be US citizens.
- It is preferred that the applicant will have completed a minimum of 1000 Doctoral-level practicum hours (1500 hours are strongly encouraged) prior to the application submission deadline. These hours are to include intervention, assessment, and supervision.
- Three years of pre-internship graduate training are required and the individual should be admitted to Doctoral Candidacy.

### ***Application Information:***

- The deadline for filing applications and required documentation is November 15<sup>th</sup>.
- The VA BHHCS Psychology Internship is a participant in the APPIC Matching Program (#155512) and utilizes the "APPIC APPLICATION FOR PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP." This form should be completed online through the APPIC website: <http://www.appic.org/>

### ***Apply to the program by including all the following information in the online APPIC application:***

- Completed APPIC online application - APPI; which can be accessed at the APPIC Web Site: <http://www.appic.org/>
- In the APPI cover letter, a description of the applicant's specific interest in our internship program.
- Three (3) letters of recommendation from the applicant's closest faculty advisors or practicum supervisors stressing the areas of training that should receive particular attention.
- Graduate school transcript(s)

**NOTE:** After receipt of the initial application package all communication will be accomplished via the e-mail address provided on the APPIC application unless otherwise specified. Applicants who have been selected during the uniform notification period will need to complete a Standard Form 171 for the appointment to be processed. All new Medical Center employees are subject to background checks and a random drug screen during their orientation period. Interns are included in the random selection for drug screening during their appointment. Because of significant time delay between completion of criminal background checks and the start of the internship year, interns, immediately upon selection will be instructed to begin the procedure for completing this background check.

*The Internship Training Faculty will review applications and invitations for interviews will be extended to highly ranked applicants.*

### ***Notification of acceptance***

The VA Black Hills Medical Center training program abides by APPIC and APA guidelines in the selection of interns. As required under APPIC policies, offers to interns may not be made before Match Day. Further, the VA Medical Center is an Equal Opportunity Employer. The selection of interns is made without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, politics, marital status, physical handicap, or age.

## **Program Schedule and Benefits**

### **Schedule**

The internship year begins in the middle of July and is divided into 3 four-month rotation experiences. The intern is required to complete a minimum of 2080 hours of training during the internship year and can expect to work 40-50 hours per week. There are ten paid federal holidays that apply to interns at the VA BHHCS. The intern accrues 104 hours (13 days) of annual leave per year, which must be used prior to the end of the internship training year. Additionally, interns

accrue 104 hours (13 days) of sick leave per year. Interns are not required to use their accrued sick leave; however, they will not be paid the unused amount.

### **Stipends**

Three internship positions are made available for 2080 hours each internship year for graduate level students from APA accredited doctoral programs in Clinical or Counseling Psychology. The program does not accept non-stipend, doctorate level interns in psychology. The Department of Veterans Affairs provides the stipends for these intern positions. All intern stipends are paid at the nationwide amount determined annually by the VA Office of Academic Affairs. Current stipend information can be accessed on the VA Psychology Training website:

<http://www.psychologytraining.va.gov/>

### **Office Space**

The Psychology Internship at VA BHHCS provides office space for interns in compliance with APA Accreditation requirements. Offices are equipped with computer access to medical records, the internet, word processing, and e-mail.

### **Library and Information Resources**

The VA BHHCS maintains a professional library. This facility houses current journals, performs PSYCH-LIT and MEDLINE computerized literature searches, and maintains reference audiovisuals. Interns are free to utilize the library services to support their training and research needs.

### **Liability Coverage**

Interns working under the supervision of psychologists at VA BHHCS or at facilities with whom the Medical Center is providing contractual work are protected by the Federal Tort Claims Act, which provides for the Federal Government assuming the liability for professional practice of one's duties within the scope of employment.

## **Psychology Setting**

The VA Black Hills Health Care System (BHHCS) is affiliated with the University Of South Dakota School Of Medicine, and offers training for graduate and doctoral students. In addition to psychology interns, affiliations with other educational institutions provide intensive training experiences and continuing education for registered nurses, psychologists, physicians, pharmacists, podiatrists, counselors, occupational and manual arts therapists, and social workers. The BHHCS is staffed with over 600 full and part-time employees. Staff physicians and consultants provide health care in a number of major specialties. The medical center staff is supplemented with volunteers from local and national service organizations, which provide a variety of services to patients.

### **Psychology Internship Program**

The Veterans Affairs Medical Center Psychology Internship Program at the BHHCS is an APA-accredited program that offers training to doctoral level interns. The responsibilities for supervising the psychology interns reside with the Psychology Staff of the BHHCS.

The first week of the internship consists of a comprehensive orientation. At the end of the first week of orientation, the intern drafts a statement of training and educational goals for the internship year. The intern's year of training will be based on and guided by this statement, advice of the intern's graduate program director, and input from the internship faculty. The intern's training plan may be changed during the training year, with the approval of the Clinical Training Committee.

The Training Committee has the responsibility of managing the program and coordinating all aspects of the training experience. A psychologist designated to be the Director of Clinical Training within the Mental Health Service Line (MHSL) chairs the Committee.

### **Overall Goal**

The VA BHHCS Psychology Internship Program is designed to provide students with a broad range of experiences in a variety of service delivery modalities with diverse client/patient populations by psychologists of varying personal and professional styles and areas of expertise. Interns are provided with the educational and experiential opportunities necessary for them to develop the confidence and competence to engage in the independent practice of professional psychology. The training program, by nature, is strongest in providing experience focused on rural and frontier healthcare. Consistent with the Practitioner Model of training, VA BHHCS Psychology Internship Program strives to help interns develop the knowledge and skills necessary to function responsibly and independently as clinicians in a range of institutional, private, and academic settings.

### **Core Competencies**

Each intern is expected to develop and demonstrate certain core competencies during the internship year. These core competencies are taught, monitored, and evaluated during each trimester placement. Successful completion of the internship requires the demonstration of these core competencies. Satisfying core competencies requires demonstration and observation of a level of knowledge and skill expected of an intern who is preparing to enter the professional practice of psychology. These core behaviors are addressed in seminars dealing with professional and personal ethics and are demonstrated and evaluated in case presentations and in trimester evaluations by supervisors, as well as through individual and group supervision. Discussions with interdisciplinary staff, with whom the intern interacts within their various experiences, also become reflected in weekly supervision records. Core competencies are also addressed through evaluation at the beginning of the internship experience and in the various experiences by both trimester evaluations and roundtable discussions.

#### **Core areas consist of the following:**

- Professional Standards and Behavior
  - Ethics
  - Professional Deportment
  - Respect for Cultural Diversity
  - Maintenance of Professional Boundaries
- Professional Skill Competency
  - Case Conceptualization
  - Cultural Diversity
  - Diagnostic Skills/Use of Formal Assessment

- Psychotherapy/Counseling
- Crisis Intervention Skills
- Consultation/Evaluation/Supervision
- Scholarly Inquiry
- Personal Functioning
  - Use of Supervision
  - Self Regulation

## Program Structure

### Major Rotations

Interns will be required to complete two of the following 4-month rotations, in addition to the mandatory rotation (Outpatient/Inpatient Mental Health), to complete the internship program.

#### **Outpatient/Inpatient Mental Health**

This mandatory rotation consists of outpatient services through the Mental Health Clinic and inpatient services through the Inpatient Psychiatric Unit (Ward 148). Interns will be required to follow patients through both of these areas and may also be called upon to provide unique duties for each service when required.

Psychologists working in the Outpatient Mental Health Clinic provide direct care services including assessment, treatment, and consultation to veterans in need of these services and are referred by their primary physician. Clients are often referred following inpatient treatment of a substance abuse problem or major mental illness. Initial assessment and treatment for individuals entering directly through the outpatient care system include diagnoses of personality disturbances, psychoses, anxiety disorders, paraphilias, and mood disorders. Team meetings are held for case discussion to address treatment progress and changes in the provision of treatment. When feasible, family therapy and marital therapy are instituted to augment the treatment of a veteran.

The Inpatient Psychiatric Unit (Ward 148) at the Fort Meade Campus is a 10 bed locked inpatient unit staffed by PAs, RNs, LPNs, Nursing Assistants, a psychiatrist, a psychologist, a social worker and a Nurse Practitioner. The patient population of the unit represents a broad spectrum of psychiatric disorders. Psychological services on Ward 148 include formal psychological consultation reports for diagnosis and treatment planning and other consultation requests such as assessment of suicidality and dangerousness, interview-based diagnostic formulations, individual and group psychotherapy, interventions for behavior management, and discharge planning.

#### **Goals of Outpatient/Inpatient Mental Health**

On this rotation the intern: will assume progressively independent responsibility for the treatment and assessment of patients enrolled in the Outpatient Mental Health Clinic and Inpatient Psychiatric Unit; will learn to view cases from the perspective of risk management, utilization

review, and treatment efficacy; will be exposed to ethical, legal and professional considerations as they impact patient care in inpatient and outpatient settings; and will further delineate and develop a theoretical orientation and adapt it to cases within these settings.

## **Health Psychology**

The Integrated Health Psychology experience features assessment; individual and group psychotherapy; and consultation for veterans with a wide variety of disorders and medical conditions. The primary treatment activities are at the Ft. Meade campus, and include inpatient and outpatient Health Psychology-Primary Care and outpatient services offered at the Rapid City Community Based Outpatient Clinic. We use a biopsychosocial model of care, which incorporates evidence-based treatment modalities, and complementary and alternative interventions to serve our patients, many of whom have co-occurring disorders. We emphasize an ecological/contextual understanding of our work and observe the effects of both the contemporary environment and the environment of evolutionary adaptation. Our treatment teams include a health psychologist(s), physicians, physician assistants, social workers, nurses, nurse practitioners, LPNs, dietitians, pharmacists, occupational therapists, and addiction therapists. We actively contribute to Primary Care and Mental Health Services and apply Health Psychology principles and practices, including a wide variety of assessment and treatment interventions, program evaluation, development and research.

### **Goals of the Health Psychology Experience**

Our service gives the intern experience with the broad range of activities necessary for the effective treatment of a wide variety of conditions, disorders and diseases in the Mental Health, Primary Care and other service lines, with the goal of providing truly integrated care. The intern will become familiar and skilled with evidence-based approaches such as cognitive-behavioral interventions, psychoeducational activities, and Resilience Enhancement, as well as complementary and alternative approaches and 12 step programming. They will learn professional skills of case conceptualization and development of treatment goals and objectives within a contextual/ecological framework, inter-professional relationship enhancement, ethical and professional responsibilities.

## **Home-Based Primary Care**

The Home-Based Primary Care (HBPC) experience features assessment, consultation and treatment for veterans of all ages who have been diagnosed with multiple chronic diseases and who may benefit from care and follow-up from HBPC staff. Chronic medical diseases typically seen on the rotation include Congestive Heart Failure (CHF), Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), diabetes, chronic pain, osteoarthritis, hypertension, and other chronic cardiac diseases. Psychological disorders include depression, anxiety, PTSD, dementias, and adjustment disorders. Additional issues arising within the HBPC setting include adherence issues, intergenerational family relationships, and social isolation. Referrals to the HBPC program are accepted from all areas of medical care within the Black Hills Health Care system. The patients served include males and females of American Indian, Caucasian and other ethnic backgrounds living within approximately 60 miles of the Fort Meade VA Medical Center.

Home-Based Primary Care (HBPC) is an interdisciplinary health care service that provides individualized health care services to veterans within the milieu of their home and family. The HBPC team consists of a physician, nurse practitioner, RNs, LPNs, social worker, dietitian, pharmacist, occupational therapist, and psychologist. The objectives of HBPC for each veteran include: (1) reduction in hospital stays/readmissions; (2) improving quality of life; (3) minimizing the effects of illness and disability; (4) restoring health, attaining optimal functioning, and/or independent living; (5) enabling terminally-ill patients to remain in their home; and, (6) to offer an alternative to nursing home placement. Thus, interns will be involved in facilitating these goals through assessment, consultation and treatment.

Interns will be involved in the depression and mental status screenings, participate in weekly team meetings, and work with patients with a wide range of issues as indicated above. They will provide consultation with staff regarding the management of problem behaviors. This rotation requires a high level of independence and is not available as a first rotation. The intern may opt to participate in the HBPC rotation following a successful completion of a major rotation. This experience begins with observations of the psychologist, follows with duties as a co-assessor/co-psychologist. The intern will explore the critical nature of the therapeutic relationship as it applies to chronic medical illness.

### **Goals of the Home Based Primary Care Experience**

The HBPC experience at the Fort Meade VAMC is designed to acquaint the intern with health/medical psychology assessment, support, valuing, and intervention procedures as well as consultation and membership in the treatment team. Interns completing the experience will have basic competencies in administering, scoring and interpreting assessment instruments appropriate to the setting.

### **Independent Clinic Mental Health Experience**

This experience comprises one full rotation with emphasis on developing an independent clinic offering outpatient mental health experiences with opportunities for assessment/group therapy/consultation with an intensive outpatient addictions program. The highlight of this rotation is to learn how to develop an outpatient practice. Either the outpatient mental health component or the addictions component can be taken as specialty experiences within the rotation.

#### **A. Outpatient Mental Health**

Veterans in the Rapid City area are provided with outpatient psychological services at the Rapid City VA Clinic. The intern will be able to serve as the primary therapist for veterans and offer individualized treatment for their specific needs, which is representative of the psychologist role seen in an outpatient mental health clinic. The intern will conduct psychological assessments, respond to consults, and conduct individual, couples, and family psychotherapy. This rotation offers an exceptional experience in working independently in the psychologist role. While there is contact with primary care medical staff and psychiatry (psychiatrists and psychiatric physician's

assistant), the intern will have more freedom to work autonomously with their clients compared to other VA service programs in the hospital setting.

### **B. Rapid City Addiction Disorders Service**

Veterans with addiction disorders and dual diagnoses are treated in an outpatient evening format. Individual and group approaches are employed. The treatment program follows an individualized approach for the veteran who would be expected to accomplish treatment goals within four to six weeks. Interns serve as primary therapists, complete psychological assessments, provide individual psychotherapy, facilitate therapy groups, administer psychological tests, write integrative summaries and provide consultation to the multidisciplinary addiction disorders treatment team. The intern would be expected to contribute to individualized treatment planning and be vital members of the addiction disorders treatment team consisting of addiction therapists, a social worker, nurses and a physician's assistant. This rotation offers a unique opportunity to work with families and significant others as another modality to augment sobriety and mental health for the veteran.

## **Neuropsychology**

The Neuropsychology experience features assessment, consultation, and treatment for patients with neurological disorders that affect their cognitive functioning. Disorders typically seen on the rotation include: Dementia of the Alzheimer's Type, Dementia Associated with Alcoholism, Traumatic Brain Injury, Brain Tumors, Parkinson's Disease, Stroke, Anoxia, Toxic Poisoning, Attention Deficit Disorder, and Learning Disabilities. Referrals come from inpatient and outpatient physicians, and from within the VA Black Hills Health Care System (including Primary Care, Mental Health Services, Substance Abuse Treatment Services, Extended Care, Medicine, and Surgery). The patients served include males and females from Caucasian, American Indian, and other ethnic backgrounds.

The experience follows a model of gradually increasing involvement. It begins with the intern observing the neuropsychologist, then becoming a co-assessor, and finally conducting complete neuropsychological assessments, under the supervision of the neuropsychologist. Interns coming into the program with advanced neuropsychology and/or testing skills will advance more quickly with regard to involvement in the evaluation process. Interns will also have the opportunity to attend and participate in the Polytrauma/TBI Clinic, neuropsychology case conferencing, and neuropsychology didactics. Opportunities exist for those interested in individual and group cognitive rehabilitation.

### **Goals of the Neuropsychology Experience**

The Neuropsychology experience at the Fort Meade Campus is designed to acquaint interns with neuropsychological assessment if they have not had such experience thus far. This rotation also provides the opportunity to advance the skills of interns who enter the program with previous neuropsychological experience. Interns will become proficient in interviewing clients, choosing and administering test batteries, scoring and interpreting test results, writing neuropsychological reports, providing feedback to clients on the assessment results and consulting with referral

sources on how to best implement the recommendations provided by the evaluation. For those interns desiring to enter the field of neuropsychology, the experience will need to be followed by a post-doctoral residency in neuropsychology.

### **PTSD Clinical Team (PCT)**

The PTSD Clinical Team (PCT) experience features assessment, consultation, case management, and treatment for veterans with a diagnosis of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and co-occurring disorders. The PCT Program is an outpatient program, although initial contact can be with the veteran while he/she is on inpatient status. Treatment may also extend to the veteran's family and/or significant others. Referrals originate from inpatient and outpatient physicians at the VA Black Hills Health Care System (predominately Psychiatry, Addictive Disorders, the Rapid City Vet Center, Primary Care, veteran's organizations, and self-referral). During this rotation, interns will also work with veterans exposed to Military Sexual Trauma (MST). The veterans served include a significant proportion of American Indian veterans (approximately 15%). Because of the nature of the populations serviced, this rotation follows a model of gradual involvement that varies in course depending upon the skills and rapport-building capabilities of the intern.

#### **Goals of the PTSD Clinical Team (PCT) Rotation**

The PCT experience is designed to acquaint the intern with the personality dynamics, assessment and treatment of the population served. The intern will, by the end of the rotation, gain skills in diagnosing PTSD, as well as formulating and implementing treatment strategies. The intern will be able to conceptualize this population in a way which best fits his/her own theoretical framework and allows for optimal treatment of the veteran. Intern will become part of a multidisciplinary team and develop an understanding of the role of a professional psychologist in such a setting.

### **Minor Rotations (Optional)**

Interns may choose from the following minor rotations for up to 8 hours per week, depending on the major rotation selected. At this time, the mandatory Outpatient/Inpatient Mental Health and PCT rotations do not allow concurrent minor rotations.

#### **Health Psychology**

The intern may choose this experience as a minor rotation. The description for this rotation is similar to the Health Psychology major rotation; however the time committed as a minor rotation would be substantially less.

#### **Neuropsychology**

The intern may choose this experience as a minor rotation. The description for this rotation is similar to the Neuropsychology major rotation; however the time committed as a minor rotation would be substantially less.

## **Outpatient PTSD Services**

**(this minor rotation will be offered dependent on staff availability)**

The Outpatient PTSD Minor Experience is an outreach component of the PTSD Clinical Team (PCT) program. The experience consists of providing mental health services to veterans at outreach settings within the VA BHHCS (e.g., Pine Ridge CBOC, Hot Springs campus, etc.).

Psychological services include individual and group psychotherapy, psychological evaluation for diagnosis and treatment planning, and consultation requests such as assessment of suicidality and dangerousness. Diagnostic formulations will occur through use of clinical interview, and psychological testing when clinically indicated.

### **Goals of the Outpatient PTSD Services Experience**

Interns engage in clinical training experiences in preparation for the professional practice of psychology, in part, by assuming responsibilities comparable to those of regular staff. Interns provide individual and group therapy, perform psychological evaluations, engage in interview derived diagnostic formulations, and actively participate in treatment team formulation of patient treatment plans and treatment progress updates. The psychological evaluations feature assessment, consultation, and treatment for patients across a wide age span. Sensitivity to cross-cultural issues is required. Disorders typically seen on the rotation include PTSD and other related disorders such as mood disorders, addictions, personality disorders, anxiety disorders, among others. Interns are expected to participate in all staff-sponsored clinical activities in the delivery of services to patients.

## **Addiction Disorders Services**

Veterans with addiction disorders and dual diagnoses are treated in an outpatient evening format. Individual and group approaches are employed. The treatment program follows an individualized approach for the veteran who would be expected to accomplish treatment goals within four to six weeks. Interns serve as primary therapists, complete psychological assessments, provide integrative summaries and provide consultation to the multidisciplinary addiction disorders treatment team. The intern would be expected to contribute to individualized treatment planning and be vital members of the addiction disorders treatment team consisting of addiction therapists, a social worker, nurses and a physician's assistant. This rotation offers a unique opportunity to work with families and significant others as another modality to augment sobriety and mental health for the veteran.

## **Extended Care Behavioral Health Services**

**(Geropsychology/Rehabilitation/Convalescence/Nursing Home/Hospice)**

The Extended Care experience features assessment, consultation and treatment for Veterans of all ages rehabilitating from medical and surgical issues, many of whom have psychiatric and neurological disorders. Disorders typically seen on the rotation include: PTSD, Schizophrenia,

Bipolar Disorder, Depression, Anxiety, Dementia, and TBI. Referrals come from the medical team associated with the 80 bed unit. The patients served include male and females of Native American, Caucasian and other ethnic backgrounds.

Some patients have no psychiatric disorders, but require support and assistance in various life transitions, some created by their medical condition, including dying. Interns will be involved in the routine depression and mental status screening, participate in weekly team meetings, and work with patients with a wide range of issues as indicated above. They will provide a minimum of one in-service presentation to nursing staff (15-20 minutes) and may be given the opportunity to present in other settings.

The experience follows a model of gradually increasing involvement. It begins with the intern observing the milieu and the psychologist, then becoming co-assessor/so-therapist, and finally independent assessment and therapy under the supervision of the psychologist. The intern will relearn and explore the critical nature of the therapeutic relationship as it applies to life transitions.

### **Goals of the Extended Care Experience**

The extended care experience at the Fort Meade VAMC is designed to acquaint the intern with geropsychological assessment, support and intervention procedures, as well as consultation and membership in the treatment team. Interns completing the experience will have basic competencies in administering, scoring and interpreting assessment instruments appropriate to the setting.

### **Areas of Emphasis (Optional):**

Interns may choose from the following emphases throughout their internship year (and other emphases as they become available).

#### **Psychopharmacology Emphasis**

Interested interns may select an emphasis in psychopharmacology. Throughout each rotation they will have opportunities to observe various prescribing providers (psychiatrists, physician assistants, nurse practitioners) as they work with patients. Working directly with the prescribing providers affords the interns with a valuable experience in the processes of medication management and additional perspectives on diagnosis and treatment.

#### **Geropsychology Emphasis**

Interested interns may select an emphasis in geriatric psychology. As the U.S. demographics shift to an increasingly older population and demands for medical/psychological services increase among this population, experience and training specific to older adults has become more important. Although our internship does not have a formal geropsychology tract, the geropsychology emphasis allows the intern to obtain supervision and experience in the specialty area of geropsychology while maintaining the overall focus on generalist training. Throughout each rotation interns will have opportunities to work with patients in late adulthood to gain

experience in assessment and treatment that are unique to this population, and to gain an understanding of the similarities and differences in providing services to this culturally diverse age group.

## Supervision Model

The supervision arrangement described in this section is designed to assure a minimum of four hours of structured supervision weekly to interns.

### One-to-One Supervision

Each intern must receive a minimum of two hours of required, direct, individual supervision per week with his or her experience supervisor. For a split experience involving two supervisors, each supervisor provides a minimum of one hour of individual supervision per week. Activities such as case discussion, supervisory observation, critique of assessment or consultation/psychological report writing, discussion of professional/ethical issues, progress in clinical skill development satisfy the two-hour individual supervision requirement.

### Additional Required Supervision

In addition to the two hours of weekly required individual supervision described above, each intern must receive a minimum of two hours of supervision per week with a licensed psychologist or qualified mental health professional present in any combination of learning activities such as individual or group co-therapy, group therapy debriefing, individual supervision, group supervision, or case conferences or discussions involving cases in which the intern is actively involved. Supplemental required supervision is not satisfied by intern attendance at didactic seminars, workshops, presentations, etc.

Informal supervision is available as needed by the intern. Discussion sessions and coffee break discussions are readily available with most staff members.

### Intern Meeting/Peer Supervision

One hour per week is set aside for interns to meet together as a group, in order to provide peer supervision, a forum for mutual professional support, and as an opportunity to learn about the development of collegial professional relationships. Interns are released from competing activities at this time.

### Seminars

Seminars by internship faculty and guest presenters are held weekly for the benefit of interns. General topics, such as ethical and professional issues in the practice of psychology, diagnosis and management of mental disorders, interviewing techniques, psychological assessment, cross-cultural issues, model of supervision, rural ethics and many other specialty topics relevant to the professional practice of psychology are presented. Interns are free to suggest additional topics they would like to see addressed. In addition, interns are asked to evaluate the effectiveness of each seminar. At the beginning of the year and at the end of each trimester the interns are asked to make recommendations to the Clinical Training Committee for changes in the seminar schedule for the coming year. Attendance at seminars is required, although an intern may be excused by the Director of Clinical Training.

### **Other Educational Activities**

The VA BHHCS is affiliated with the University of South Dakota School of Medicine. On a periodic basis, consultants in psychiatry or psychology from the Medical School visit the Medical Center to deliver lectures and to engage in case consultation. The Mountain Plains Health Education Consortium hosts lectures and other staff development opportunities on a variety of topic areas in psychology, psychiatry, related medical disciplines and other areas of interest to professional psychology. Grand Rounds are held monthly during the lunch hour and may include topics of special interest to staff and students. Interns are encouraged to take advantage of these and other educational opportunities which are given priority over routine rotation duties whenever possible. The South Dakota Psychological Association holds an annual conference in May, and interns are encouraged to attend. Interns are encouraged to present at Grand Rounds on areas they identify as their specialty.

## **Administrative Policies and Procedures**

### **Remediation procedures**

The internship-training faculty makes every effort to keep interns informed as to the quality of their performance while in training.

1. Should an intern be functioning at a level of “Inadequate for an Intern in Training” according to rating scale criteria utilized by the training faculty, the supervisor may take the following measures:

- a. Inform the intern of the identified problem area(s).
- b. Formulate a contractual agreement with the intern to rectify the problem area(s). The contractual agreement will contain a minimum of the following elements.
  1. Definition or description of the problem area(s).
  2. Identification and description of specific behaviors comprising the problem area(s).
  3. Specific recommendations for rectifying the problem area(s).
  4. Criteria established to determine if the problem area(s) has been rectified.
  5. Procedures to be utilized to evaluate the intern’s performance.
  6. Time period for meeting criteria (minimum of one month).

2. Should an intern receive a trimester rating of “Inadequate for an Intern in Training” the following measures will be taken:

- a. The Director of Clinical Training will convene a meeting of the Training Committee to discuss the rating and determine what action might be taken to address the issues reflected by the rating.
- b. The Director of Clinical Training will advise the intern, in writing, of the date and time of the Training Committee meeting. The meeting will be held within ten (10) working days of the date of written notification to the intern. A copy of the letter will be forwarded to the intern’s graduate program.
- c. The intern will have seven (7) working days from the notification of the meeting to respond in writing to the rating and submit any materials on his or her behalf.

The intern may also request to personally address the Training Committee. A response to the rating by the intern is optional.

Upon review of the rating and any response by the intern, the Training Committee may act in accordance with the following notifications:

### **Notice of No Further Action**

The Training Committee has determined that no further action with respect to the rating is indicated. The rating will stand and the intern will proceed to the next trimester experience. The Director of Training will provide the intern and the intern's graduate program with a copy of the Training Committee's determination.

### **Notice of Acknowledgement**

This action consists of the following elements:

- a. A statement that a problem exists with respect to the intern's performance as reflected by the trimester rating.
- b. Identification of the problem behaviors associated with the rating.
- c. A statement the intern's next trimester supervisor will be apprised of the rating, and identified problem area(s) and behaviors.
- d. A statement that Training Committee will closely monitor the intern's next trimester activities with the expectation of improved performance.
- e. A statement advising the intern that he or she may be placed on probation should the level of performance not improve.

### **Notice of Probation**

This action indicates an intern is at risk for termination from the Internship-Training Program.

- a. The Notice of Probation will include a contractual agreement between the intern and Training Committee, comprised of the following elements:
  1. Definition or description of the problem area(s).
  2. Identification and description of specific behaviors comprising the problem area(s).
  3. Specific recommendations for rectifying the problem area(s)
  4. Criteria established to determine if the problem area(s) has been rectified.
  5. Procedures to be utilized to evaluate the intern's performance.
  6. Notification to graduate program.
- b. If the problem area(s) has been rectified within the time period specified in the contractual agreement, the intern will be removed from probationary status. The intern and the intern's graduate program will be advised, in writing, of termination of probationary status.
- c. If the problem area(s) has not been rectified within the time period specified in the contractual agreement, the Training Committee may take any of several courses of action. The Training Committee may:
  1. Continue probationary status for a specified period of time as the Training Committee continues to monitor the intern's performance. Upon

completion of this extension of probation, the Training Committee will meet to re-evaluate the intern's status.

2. Continue probationary status, not to exceed one (1) month. If the problem area(s) has not been rectified during this extension of the probationary period, the Training Committee may recommend to the Associate Chief of Staff for Mental Health that the intern be terminated from the Internship-Training Program.
3. Recommend to the Associate Chief of Staff for Mental Health that the intern be terminated from the training program.

The Director of Clinical Training will advise the intern and the intern's graduate program, in writing, of the Training Committee's decision, within five (5) working days of the determination.

### **Appellate Review and Adjudication**

An intern may appeal any decision or action taken by the Training Committee during Remedial Action.

### **Appeal Procedures**

- a. The intern must file a written appeal with the Director of Clinical Training within ten (10) working days from the date the intern received written notice of any Training Committee for decision or action. The appeal should include a restatement of the reasons given by the Training Committee for its decisions or actions, and why the decisions or actions should be reconsidered or withdrawn. To aid the intern in the appellate process, he or she will be provided access to all documentation used by the Training Committee in deriving its conclusions.
- b. Upon receipt of the written appeal from the intern, the Director of Clinical Training will appoint an Appellate Review Panel. The Panel will consist of the Supervisory Psychologist Consultant, one supervisory staff member selected by the Director of Clinical Training, and a supervisory staff member selected by the intern.
- c. The Appellate Review Panel must be convened within five (5) working days of receipt of the written appeal by the Director of Clinical Training. The Panel, to be chaired by a Supervisory Psychologist Consultant, will be empowered to secure all materials and documents related to Training Committee's actions or decisions under appeal, and to question persons who may have information helpful to the Panel in its deliberations. A simple majority will decide all decisions affecting the intern. In addition to the written appeal, the intern may make a personal appearance before the Appellate Review Panel to present oral and/or written testimony, or may choose to submit written testimony in lieu of a personal appearance.
- d. The findings and recommendations of the Appellate Review Panel will be presented in writing to the Clinical Training Committee by the Supervisory Psychologist Consultant within five (5) working days following adjournment of the Panel. If all recommendations are accepted by both the Clinical Training Committee and the

intern, the recommendations will be implemented and no further action will be taken. If resolution is not reached, then all documentation will be forwarded to the Chief of Staff for a final disposition.

### **Final Adjudication**

The Chief of Staff will respond to the Appellate Review Panel's recommendations within five (5) working days of receipt of the report. The Chief of Staff may accept, modify, or overrule any and all of the Appellate Review Panel's recommendations. However, the Chief of Staff cannot take any action affecting the intern that would be more severe than recommended by the Appellate Review Panel. Upon adjudication by the Chief of Staff, The Director of Clinical Training will advise the intern and the intern's graduate program, in writing, of the final decision.

### **Adverse Actions**

As employees of the Internship Program, psychology interns are expected to abide by all agency policies, regulations, and guidelines governing organizational practices and employee conduct. Alleged intern misconduct or violation of organizational practices will come under the jurisdiction of the program. Should an alleged violation or misconduct cross institutional lines of authority, Legal Counsel will determine jurisdictional responsibility. Interns are subject to corrective action and are protected by due process in the same manner as regular employees of the VA.

### **Intern grievances**

Interns may discuss any aspect of their intern training with their supervisor or mentor, the Director of Clinical Training or the Associate Chief of Mental Health. An intern is regarded as an employee and may file a grievance against any other employee for violation of civil rights, allegations of unfair treatment, harassment or discrimination. Alternatively, they may discuss any such issues with the Education Service Director of Nursing Supervisor of the Inpatient Mental Health Unit. Any of these individuals can assist with informal or formal resolution of complaint. In addition, peripheral sites will have their own personnel policies that may be consulted with supervisors at those sites. Most importantly, discrimination and abuse patterns will not be tolerated at this facility or at any other peripheral site. Interns are strongly encouraged to bring such complaints forward immediately to the attention of any of the above mentioned individuals for resolution.

A grievance against the internship program may be filed with the American Psychological Association Office of Accreditation directly at the following address: 750 First Street NE, Washington, DC 20002-4242. APA can also be reached at (202) 336-5500 or (202) 336-6123 TDD. APPIC Standards and Review Committee (ASARC) may accept complaints filed by an internship applicant, intern, internship staff/faculty or other interested party about violations of match policies, match agreements and other APPIC policies. Procedures for filing complaints with APPIC can be found on the AAPIC website:

[http://www.appic.org/problem\\_resolution/9\\_2\\_problem\\_formal.html](http://www.appic.org/problem_resolution/9_2_problem_formal.html)

### **Internal Grievance Policy**

If an intern believes his/her performance or ethical conduct has been judged unfairly or a staff member has behaved inappropriately, then he/she, has a right to make a formal complaint.

Formal consideration of intern concerns can be addressed by following the internal grievance procedure. Interns are free to use the grievance procedure any time they feel it is necessary. However, interns are encouraged to first attempt to resolve the issue directly with the individual(s) of concern. If an intern feels uncomfortable doing so, he or she should speak with the Director of Training, rotation supervisor, or with a training faculty member with whom the intern feels most comfortable.

If informal attempts to resolve the issue are not successful, interns should follow the procedure outlined below. In all cases, intern's case will be dealt with fairly and their grievance will be considered openly. Filing a grievance will not, in itself, jeopardize the intern's training status with the VA BHHCS.

**1. Report the grievance in writing to your rotation supervisor.**

An intern should report the grievance, in writing, to his or her rotation supervisor as soon as possible. The rotation supervisor will respond back to the intern in writing within ten (10) workdays of receiving the written grievance. (If the grievance involves the rotation supervisor interns may skip step 1.)

**2. Notify the Director of Training.**

If a resolution is not reached in Step 1, interns should report the grievance, in writing, to the Director of Training. The Director of Training will respond back to the intern in writing within ten (10) workdays of receiving the written grievance. The Director of Training will work to resolve the grievance as quickly as possible. If requested by either party, a meeting may be held as well. (If the grievance involves the Director of Training, interns may skip Step 2.)

**3. Notify the ACOS Mental Health**

If a resolution is not reached in Step 2, the intern should appeal, in writing, to the ACOS MH. The ACOS MH will work to resolve the issue as quickly as possible and will respond, in writing, to the intern, intern supervisor, and the Director of Training within fourteen (14) workdays of receiving the grievance. If requested by either party, the ACOS MH may hold a meeting to include "neutral" parties to address the issue. The ACOS MH decision is considered final and binding.

**Outplacement Grievance Procedures**

If a problem occurs between an intern and a staff member of an outplacement facility the intern should notify his or her rotation supervisor and the Director of Clinical Training as soon as possible. If the situation warrants, the rotation supervisor and Director of Clinical Training will assist the intern in filing a grievance through the facility at which there is a concern.

## Meet the Psychology Internship Staff

### *Dr. Hilary Kindsfater, Training Director*

#### **Ph.D. Clinical Psychology, University of South Dakota, 2008**

Dr. Kindsfater is a clinical psychologist currently working with the Multidisciplinary Pain Team and Primary Care Mental Health Integration (PC-MHI) program. She has received specialized training through the VA Evidence Based Therapy Training Initiative in the following therapies: Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Chronic Pain (CBT-CP); Prolonged Exposure Therapy (PE) for PTSD; Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT) for PTSD; Interpersonal Psychotherapy for Depression (IPT); and Integrated Care for Smoking Cessation. She provides clinical consultation to the Rapid City Vet Center. Dr. Kindsfater also serves as the Training Director for the Psychology Internship.

### *Dr. Shirley Herbel*

#### **Ph.D., School/Clinical Psychology, Texas A&M University, 1996**

Dr. Herbel is a clinical psychologist with training in neuropsychology. Her theoretical orientation is cognitive-behavioral from a developmental perspective. She has seven years working experience with the Cheyenne River Sioux tribe and is interested in TBI, dementia, and LD/ADHD. Specialized training and/or certifications include CPT, MST, Biofeedback, and C&P. Dr. Herbel also is a member of the Clinical Training Committee.

### *Dr. Michael Huxford*

#### **Psy.D. Counseling Psychology, University of Northern Colorado, 2008**

Dr. Huxford is a psychologist currently working in the Home Based Primary Care (HBPC) program. He works mainly in the field of health psychology and is in close collaboration with departments of health education, primary care, and health promotion and disease prevention where he employs cognitive behavioral and motivational interviewing techniques towards the alleviation of psychological and behavioral problems peripheral to primary health care concern. He has specialized training in integrated psychological assessment, PTSD, and assessment and treatment of traumatic brain injury. In addition, Dr. Huxford has many years experience as a licensed professional counselor and enjoys working in direct individual, family, and group psychotherapy.

### *Dr. Patrick J. Keohane*

#### **Ph.D., Clinical Psychology, University of Maine, 1995**

Dr. Keohane is a clinical psychologist who provides outpatient psychological services at the Rapid City VA Clinic and serves as the primary clinical supervisor for the Independent Mental Health Clinic Experience offered at the Rapid City clinic. He is interested in cognitive behavioral and humanistic approaches to psychotherapy.

***Dr. Daniel Kim***

**Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology, Biola University, 2014**

Dr. Kim is a clinical psychology postdoctoral fellow working as part of the Outpatient PTSD Clinical Team (PCT) at Fort Meade. He is currently serving as the PTSD/SUD Specialist in the PCT. Dr. Kim practices an integrative approach, utilizing a psychodynamic conceptualization of his patients and incorporating various modalities (CBT, Gestalt, ACT, PE, CPT, Mindfulness) to best address the needs of Veterans presenting with PTSD and associated trauma related conditions.

***Dr. Scott Krebs***

**Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology, University of North Dakota, 1994**

Dr. Krebs is a clinical psychologist associated with the PTSD Clinical Team (PCT) in the Rapid City CBOC and also conducts an outreach clinic serving veterans at the Pine Ridge Reservation. Dr. Krebs has served as an active duty military psychologist for over 21 years, working with service members in war zones/deployed settings and stateside locations. He utilizes a cognitive behavioral approach in treating PTSD and associated trauma related conditions.

***Dr. Thomas P. Schwartz***

**Ph.D. Clinical Psychology, Fairleigh Dickinson University, 2006**

Dr. Schwartz is the Associate Chief of Staff for Mental Health, Clinical Neuropsychologist, and Neuropsychology Program Manager. He provides neuropsychological assessment, individual and family psychotherapy, cognitive rehabilitation and inter-departmental consultation services. Clinical interests include working with individuals presenting with neurodevelopment, medical/neurological and neurodegenerative disorders. This includes, but is not limited to; TBI, cerebral vascular accidents (e.g. stroke), seizure disorders, toxic/metabolic conditions, demyelinating disorders (e.g. MS), neuro-oncology, developmental disorders (e.g. intellectual limitations, ADHD, learning disorders), dementia, and primary or secondary psychiatric disorders. His clinical approach involves an integrative neuropsychological assessment coupled with the holistic rehabilitation of the individual in order to optimize functional independence, quality of life and well being. Dr. Schwartz also has specialty training and clinical interests in special education, rehabilitation/health psychology and psychopharmacology. Dr. Schwartz is a member of the Clinical Training Committee.

## General Description of the Area



The VA BHHCS is located in a region encompassing the historic and beautiful Black Hills of Western South Dakota. The Fort Meade campus was originally established as a frontier cavalry post, named after General George Meade, leader of the Union Forces at the Battle of Gettysburg. The first troops were the remnants of General Custer's command following his defeat in the Battle of the Little Big Horn. Most of the post's approximately 89 original buildings are fully restored and serve as administrative offices for the Medical Center, and as on-station housing for Medical Center employees. Many of the buildings are on the Historical Register. Fort Meade was deactivated as an Army Post in 1945 and the facilities transferred to the Veterans Administration, now the Department of Veterans Affairs. The Hot Springs Campus was originally constructed in 1907, as the Battle Mountain Sanatorium. The hospital and sanatorium were later transferred to the Veterans Administration. It too has the distinction of being placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The town of Sturgis is located one mile from Fort Meade and has a population of approximately 6,000 people. Bear Butte State Park, located just outside of Sturgis, is a lone mountain that is considered sacred by many Native American tribes. A small bison herd roams the base of the mountain. Sturgis is also the home of one of the most popular motorcycle rallies worldwide. During the first part of August, the rally draws thousands of bikers for a first class motorcycle rally.

[Rapid City](#), located approximately 30 miles south-east of Sturgis via interstate 90, with a population of approximately 70,000 people provides large shopping centers, parks, and recreational facilities, and offers live theater, a symphony orchestra, and other cultural events and entertainment, and some excellent dining. [Ellsworth Air Force Base](#), just east of Rapid City, is a major military installation.

Black Hills area educational facilities include elementary and secondary schools in Sturgis, Rapid City, Spearfish, Belle Fourche, and Hot Springs. Additional postsecondary educational facilities include vocational technical schools and four year universities in Spearfish and Rapid City.

Agriculture, ranching, tourism, and logging are primary area industries, but mining and other mineral technologies are major contributors to the economy. The Homestake Mine in nearby Lead was the largest operating gold mines in the Western Hemisphere and has ceased operations. It is now the site of a national underground physics laboratory conducting research on subatomic particles.

Gold, gambling and gunpowder were the three ingredients that combined in explosive proportions in 1876 to create two of the most notorious towns in the Black Hills - the sister cities of [Deadwood](#) and [Lead](#) in the Northern Black Hills. The area is in the heart of controversy and

reconciliation inherited over the past 100 years between the White settlers and the Sioux Nation. This conflict historically brings to mind the names of George A. Custer, Sitting Bull, Crazy Horse, Wild Bill Hickok, Calamity Jane, and places like the Little Big Horn and Wounded Knee. The area continues to search for reconciliation through the courts, the arts, the schools, provision of health services, and economic development. The cultures of the Great Plains are easily explored and savored through literature, art, rodeos, pow-wows, traditional practices, and touring. Many aspects of the Great Plains culture are incorporated into treatment modalities; these include extensive outreach opportunities to area reservations as well as ongoing efforts to bring the dimension of spirituality into health care.

The greater Black Hills area offers a variety of year-round outdoor activities, including hunting and fishing, water and snow skiing, snowmobiling, golfing, camping, horseback riding, gaming, gold panning, mountain biking, and sightseeing. The VA BHHCS is within 100 miles of Mount Rushmore National Memorial, the Badlands National Park, Wind Cave National Park, Jewel Cave National Monument, Devil's Tower National Monument, Crazy Horse Monument, Custer and Bear Butte State Parks, and the Big Horn Mountains.

The area has churches of most denominations. A small Jewish community in Rapid City holds biweekly services at Ellsworth Air Force Base. Daily and weekly newspapers, four network TV stations, national public television and radio, cable TV, and numerous radio stations serve the area. Most areas are served by fiber-optic cable permitting fast Internet access.

Climate in the Black Hills region tends to be temperate. Midsummer daytime temperatures can be quite warm but comfortable due to low humidity. Evenings are pleasantly cool as a result of light breezes from the cooler higher hills. Winter temperatures overall are moderate, although the mercury occasionally dips to zero and below. Cold days are often tempered by warm Chinook winds, which earn the area the distinction of being known as the "Banana Belt of the Midwest." January temperatures of 60° F occur frequently.

## Housing and Community

Moderately priced housing is available in Rapid City, Sturgis, and Spearfish. Rapid City offers a variety of apartment styles, locations, and homes for rent. Although greater effort is required to locate optimal living quarters in Sturgis, many past interns have been satisfied by these efforts. Commuting time between Rapid City or Spearfish and the Fort Meade Campus is between 30-40 minutes. The Hot Springs Campus is located approximately 60 miles south of Rapid City. At times, carpooling with other interns and/or staff is available. The entire area has seen steady moderate growth, which has spurred recent development of housing units in Rapid City, Sturgis, and Spearfish.

The Ft. Meade location has an oncampus daycare. The Stepping Stones Daycare Center at Ft. Meade is a licensed and insured daycare. For more information, please access the following website: [http://vaww.blackhills.va.gov/Stepping\\_Stones\\_Daycare.asp](http://vaww.blackhills.va.gov/Stepping_Stones_Daycare.asp)