Predoctoral Internship in Clinical Psychology Brochure

Introduction to the Mount Sinai Adolescent Health Center

The Mount Sinai Adolescent Health Center (MSAHC) is the home of the Division of Adolescent Medicine of the Department of Pediatrics at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York City. The MSAHC is a freestanding outpatient facility, which provides confidential, comprehensive, medical, mental health, dental, optical, health education and wellness services to young people ages 10-24. The MSAHC was the first healthcare service in New York State created specifically to serve adolescents. Over the past 42 years, it has offered comprehensive care to children, adolescents and young adults throughout the city. Today, the MSAHC stands as the largest program of its kind in the country and is recognized as a successful model for other similar healthcare efforts around the world. The MSAHC sees approximately 11,000 adolescents each year and provides mental health services to about 1,000 adolescents each year. All of the services at the MSAHC are confidential, do not require parental consent (although family involvement is encouraged) and are provided regardless of ability to pay. In addition, the MSAHC serves as a training site for psychology interns and externs, medical residents, adolescent medicine fellows, psychiatry fellows, social work interns and legal interns. The multidisciplinary staff at the MSAHC also engages in applied research activities, presents widely in the community, and participates in numerous advocacy efforts.

Cores Values of MSAHC:
Adolescent Sensitive Care: The MSAHC is built upon respect for its patients. Care is provided to children, families, adolescents and young adults in a manner that
respects their rights to make informed decisions, to request confidential services and to be co-partners in their own health care. All MSAHC staff are trained in providing services in a developmentally-appropriate manner.

**Comprehensive Care:** The MSAHC ensures that every patient who visits the center receives comprehensive health care from a collaborative team of professionals. All patients can access primary medical, dental, optometric, mental health, reproductive health and health education services.

**Interdisciplinary Approach:** The Mount Sinai Adolescent Health Center brings together physicians, nurse practitioners, psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, health educators, peer educators, nutritionists, lawyers, researchers and other professionals to serve young people and their families, to teach and train students, to conduct scholarly research and to participate in advocacy efforts. In the clinical setting, professionals from multiple disciplines work in a team in order to address the holistic and often intertwining needs of young people.

**Accessible Services:** The MSAHC is committed to the notion that all young people deserve high-quality, comprehensive and accessible health care. All services are provided regardless of ability to pay.

**Population served at MSAHC**
The MSAHC is based in East Harlem, New York City and primarily serves a broad, otherwise underserved population of children, adolescents, families and young adults (ages 10 through 24). In a typical year, the MSAHC serves more than 11,000 patients, who log more than 50,000 visits. In addition to the "kids" from the neighboring communities, young people travel from throughout the five boroughs of New York City and even from neighboring states in order to benefit from the MSAHC's nurturing, comprehensive and affordable care. Patients at MSAHC are 49% Latino, 43% African-American, 5% Caucasian, 2% Asian and 1% Native American. The vast majority of our patients reside in low-income New York City communities such as Harlem and the South Bronx.

Additional information about the MSAHC can be found online at

http://www.teenhealthcare.org/

**AHC Mental Health Services:**
The MSAHC serves a culturally diverse population of young people, and they come with a variety of psychosocial difficulties, psychiatric diagnoses and severity of illnesses. The services offered include individual, group and family psychotherapy; psychological testing; psychiatric services; diagnostic and psychopharmacological services; and treatment for dually diagnosed mentally ill/chemically abusing and substance abusing teens. Importantly, mental health services are one piece of the comprehensive, integrated care that young people receive at MSAHC. Mental health
clinicians work closely with providers in other disciplines (e.g., physicians, psychiatrists, nutritionists, lawyers) in order to provide the most effective care.

The MSAHC provides specialized mental health services for a variety of often overlooked or underserved groups. For example, a large number of patients at MSAHC present with a history of exposure to potentially traumatic events, including incest and sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse or neglect, exposure to domestic violence, exposure to community violence, traumatic loss and commercial sexual exploitation. When appropriate, the program utilizes evidenced based interventions such as Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT).

The MSAHC’s “Project Impact” program provides intensive clinical services and case management for HIV+ adolescents. These adolescents also often receive psychological testing in order to plan for future educational and career training and to determine service needs. The MSAHC also provides integrated medical and mental health services to teen parents and their young children in the Teen Parenting Program. Physicians, psychologists, and social workers work together to provide medical care, case management, supportive therapy, parenting interventions and developmental screenings/needs assessments for parent-child dyads. The MSAHC provides individual and group therapy for a large number of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) adolescents. MSAHC’s Transgender Program, which involves both medical and mental health professionals, provides integrated care to transgender and gender non-conforming adolescents and young adults. Adolescents who are struggling to effectively manage emotions, effectively cope with difficult stressors, utilize appropriate interpersonal skills, and/or have significant conflict with their family benefit from the DBT Program. This program employs individual DBT, skills groups, and a consultation team for clinicians.

The MSAHC has multiple therapeutic groups including a sexual assault survivors group, a Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) skills group, an anger management group, a young girls group, a social skills group, multiple substance abuse groups, a group for young adults with chronic illnesses, a transgender support group and a multi-family skills-building group.

Importantly, mental health services at the MSAHC are not driven by one particular theoretical orientation or therapeutic approach. Rather, many clinicians strive to integrate various approaches to best match patients’ needs. Clinicians at MSAHC are trained in a variety of evidence-based interventions and are encouraged to use these interventions when applicable. Finally, an over-arching goal of MSAHC mental health services is to be ever mindful of sociopolitical and cultural factors and to consider and, when appropriate, intervene in all levels of a young person’s social ecology (e.g., individual, family, school, neighborhood, community).

**The Pre-doctoral Internship in Clinical Psychology**

The MSAHC provides a year long rigorous training experience for 3 psychology interns. The internship experience is divided among direct clinical service (25hrs),
didactic instruction (5 hrs), and supervision (7 hrs). An over-arching goal of the MSAHC and the MSAHC pre-doctoral internship is the provision of high-quality and integrated services to young people who are typically underserved or who have been impacted by societal neglect. More specifically, goals of the training activities of the pre-doctoral internship at the MSAHC are focused within five core competency domains.

1. **Professional Development**: Skill development in the following areas:
   - the awareness of and adherence to ethical conduct
   - the ability to use supervision
   - the ability to work collegially
   - the timely completion of all psychosocial reports, treatment plans and progress notes
   - the timely completion of all psychological reports
   - the ability to manage personal and professional stress without harm to patient care
   - the ability to establish a working relationship with patients

2. **Psychotherapy and Intervention**: Skill development in the following areas:
   - the formation of a collaborative working alliance
   - working with the patient to understand initial reasons for entering into treatment
   - construction of realistic treatment goals in collaboration with patient and in accordance with patient’s needs and wishes
   - utilizing collateral sessions with family members when appropriate
   - exposure to and a willingness to approach therapy from different schools of thought (depending on patient need), including but not limited to psychodynamic/psychoanalytic, cognitive behavioral, trauma focused, dialectical behavioral, developmental, family systems, etc.
   - developing crisis intervention skills, including an ability to develop a safety plan with patient when necessary as well as learning and following appropriate protocols for referral to an emergency room
   - developing a complete and succinct treatment formulation, which includes the emotional, cognitive, behavioral and biological functioning of the adolescent and focuses on treatment planning and outcome
   - developing competence in various treatment modalities, including individual therapy, group therapy, family therapy, as well as consultation services.
   - providing supervision to psychology externs

3. **Psychological Assessment**: Skill development in the following areas:
• Administering a standard psychological test battery including intellectual, cognitive, achievement, projective and personality measures
• Providing additional testing when necessary (i.e. assessing learning disorders, neuropsychological functioning)
• Developing the skills necessary to obtain a detailed clinical interview including: family, social, developmental, sexual/physical/emotional abuse and academic history; history of self-harm or harm to others and interaction with law enforcement
• Competence in test selection

4. **Consultation within Interdisciplinary Systems:** Skill development in the following areas:
   • the ability to determine need for collaboration and consultation with other disciplines or individuals involved in care when working on a treatment case
   • the ability to present opinions and expertise in written format
   • the ability to present opinions and expertise in oral format
   • the ability to integrate findings from other disciplines into one’s own work with patients

5. **The Provision of Culturally Competent Care:** Skill development in the following areas
   • the ability to understand patients through various lenses including, but not limited to, racial and ethnic diversity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and religion
   • the ability to apply interventions in a flexible approach that is cognizant of patients’ lived experience
   • the ability to reflect on one’s own world view and biases and how they may influence one’s work with patients

**Training Curriculum**

**Core Training Experiences (performed by all interns)**

**Mental Health Services**

Interns carry a caseload of patients through MSAHC’s mental health clinic. This caseload is comprised of a diverse set of individual and family therapy cases. Interns conduct intake evaluations, formulate treatment plans and work with patients to reach treatment goals. Interns participate in an interdisciplinary treatment team that meets each week to discuss patient progress. Each intern is also asked to lead or co-lead a group of his or her choice. Interns also have the option of creating their own group.
Psychological Assessment Service
The Mount Sinai Adolescent Health Center provides free comprehensive psychological assessments to its patient population. This service is a reflection of MSAHC’s belief that all young people deserve high-quality and comprehensive health care services. Psychiatrists, social workers and physicians refer patients for psychological testing in order to better understand educational, cognitive, developmental and psychiatric needs. Many of the patients at MSAHC are struggling with previously undetected learning disorders and testing can play an important role in their future educational success. Furthermore, the MSAHC clinicians rely on psychological testing to assist their therapeutic work and to refine their diagnoses. Interns typically perform 5-7 psychological assessments throughout the course of their training year. In addition to a thorough family and developmental history, psychological testing evaluations often include assessments of multiple domains of functioning, including cognitive assessments, achievement testing, social-emotional and personality assessments (both objective and projective), and attention, executive functioning and memory assessments, as needed. Assessment training emphasizes test selection as a key competency. As such, interns conduct a range of comprehensive and more targeted assessments.

Family Therapy Program
In collaboration with the Ackerman Institute for the Family (http://www.ackerman.org/), the MSAHC provides a live supervision family therapy program for families in need of help. Interns participate in this program for 3 hours each week. Each intern acts as the primary therapist for a family therapy case that is seen in front of a one-way mirror. Other trainees and staff, as well as a senior faculty member from the Ackerman Institute for the Family, observe the sessions and provide live supervision.

Elective Training Experiences
Transgender Therapy Elective
MSAHC has the largest integrated health care program for transgender adolescents and young adults in NYC. At MSAHC, transgender and gender non-conforming adolescents are provided with gender-affirming medical and mental health care. This includes mental health evaluations, individual therapy, family therapy, parental guidance and psychological testing. At times, mental health professionals are called upon to write letters documenting ability to consent to medical therapies such as hormone therapy and surgery. Transgender and gender non-conforming adolescents also receive primary care medical services and transition-related medical services (e.g., hormone therapy) at MSAHC. Lastly, a weekly support group is offered for these patients. Interns can elect to carry one or more mental health or psychological assessment cases in the transgender program.

Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT)
A large number of AHC patients have been exposed to one or multiple forms of potentially traumatic events in their life. For some of these patients, TF-CBT is the indicated treatment. TF-CBT is a manualized (but flexible) evidence-based treatment for children and adolescents who have experienced traumatic events and
are experiencing post-trauma difficulties. All interns will be asked to complete the
10-12 hour web-based TF-CBT training. Interns can then elect to carry one (or
more) TF-CBT case(s). In addition, interns will have the option of attending a
weekly TF-CBT supervision group.

**Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) Elective**

DBT is an evidenced-based treatment that was originally developed for adults with
borderline personality disorders. It is now being widely used for a range of
difficulties, particularly those associated with emotion regulation problems,
interpersonal difficulties and chronic self-harm/suicidality. This treatment has also
been adapted specifically for use with adolescents. The model used at AHC relies
heavily on the adolescent adaptation. Patients in DBT treatment attend weekly
individual therapy in addition to a DBT skills group. Interns in the DBT elective will
carry two individual DBT cases and will co-lead a weekly, 90-minute DBT skills
group for half of the training year. Interns will also be asked to attend a 1-1.5 hour
DBT consultation team meeting each week.

**Primary Care-Mental Health Integration Elective**

MSAHC has a primary care clinic that serves 10,000 adolescents a year, regardless of
ability to pay. Many of the patients who present for primary care appointments
have significant emotional and behavioral needs (typically related to a history of
trauma or maltreatment) that are going unmet. MSAHC is currently building an
innovative model of care that will better engage and then meet the emotional needs
of high-risk, multi-problem teens presenting to the medical clinic. Interns in this
elective will spend one half-day shift per week in the medical clinic. Interns receive
referrals from primary care providers, assess patients and work with social work
and medical staff to help patients meet existing emotional, behavioral and
psychosocial needs. Interns will gain experience in same-day assessments, trauma-
informed assessments and interventions, crisis intervention, and in working in a
medical setting. Interns in this elective will attend a weekly supervision/training
session focused on primary care-mental health integration and trauma-informed
services.

**Teen Parent Elective**

The MSAHC has a teen parenting program that provides care to parents under the
age of 24 and their young children. An interdisciplinary team of physicians,
psychologists, and social workers work collaboratively to provide medical care, case
management, supportive therapy, parenting interventions and developmental
screenings/needs assessments for parent-child dyads. Services include medical
appointments for parents and their children, case management, mental health,
parenting skills services for parents, developmental screenings of the children, as
well as nursery interventions. Interns in this elective will designate one half-day to
this program. Interns responsibilities include providing developmental screenings
for young children and work with parents to better understand their children's
parenting needs. In addition, interns run a parenting group for the teen parents.
The group is focused on bonding, attachment, and psychoeducation about typical
development. Interns make referrals to early intervention services when indicated. Interns also participate in a weekly huddle and monthly interdisciplinary case conference.

**Didactic/Training Experiences:**
The interns, externs, social work interns and adolescent medicine fellows attend two 60 minute weekly seminars conducted by the Mount Sinai staff and guest lecturers. The seminars focus on topics relevant to the treatment of adolescents and young adults. Particular attention is paid to developing culturally competent practices. Each intern is expected to present at one didactic seminar on a topic of their choosing. Interns also have the option of attending weekly seminars given through the adult neuropsychology clinical internship at Mount Sinai Medical Center and weekly psychoanalytic didactics at the Mount Sinai Medical Center. In addition, presentations on topics relevant to adolescent mental health care are given on a bi-weekly basis to the mental health staff at MSAHC.

All interns will receive additional training in the following areas:
- The Ackerman Institute model of family therapy
- Seven Challenges (an evidence-based substance abuse treatment for adolescents)
- Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
- HIV pre- and post-test counseling

Interns have the opportunity to be trained in several additional areas, depending on the elective experiences they choose. These include:
- Primary care psychology
- Dialectical Behavioral Therapy
- Assessment of and therapy provided to transgender individuals

**Supervision:**
The interns receive 2 hours of individual supervision each week for therapy cases. They also receive an additional individual supervision for their assessment cases. Interns also attend one hour of group supervision with all psychology trainees. In addition, interns attend supervision groups associated with their particular elective experiences (e.g., DBT consultation group, primary care supervision group). Interns will also provide clinical supervision to psychology externs.

**Stipends and Benefits:**
The internship begins the first week full week of July and goes for one full year. The full-time annual stipend is $20,000. Health insurance and other benefits are available as well as 19 personal-time-off (PTO) days, used for personal, sick or vacation time plus 8 major holidays.

**Evaluation of Intern's Progress:**
The intern’s performance is evaluated twice during the year (mid and end year). The primary supervisors will evaluate the intern’s progress toward competency goals. The supervisor will also speak with staff members the intern has had contact
with to gain additional information. An evaluation form will be completed for both evaluations. The information will be given to the intern.

In an effort to meet the needs of the interns and maintain a high level of quality and satisfaction in the program, the training staff seeks regular feedback from the interns concerning the quality of their training experiences and didactic information. The interns will also be given the opportunity to evaluate the internship content and supervision. An evaluation form will be completed and discussed with the supervisor at mid and end year.

**Intern Selection Policies and Procedures:**

**Completed Applications are due by November 2, 2015**

We are members of APPIC and fully abide by all of their policies. The program is listed each year in the APPIC Directory. To ensure accuracy, the information listed in the APPIC Directory is updated in a timely fashion. There are 3 funded internship positions in our predoctoral psychology program.

The Mount Sinai Adolescent Health Center of Mount Sinai Medical Center is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination in our recruiting of all staff and trainees. Candidates from minority and/or disability backgrounds are strongly encouraged to apply.

Candidates must be enrolled in an APA-Accredited clinical, school or counseling doctoral program (Ph.D. or Psy.D.). All formal coursework and comprehensive examinations must be completed by the start of the internship (September of each year) and they should be working toward completion of their dissertation. Applicants should have a minimum of 500 hours of intervention, 100 assessment hours and 1000 total practicum hours. We also take into account number of integrated reports completed by the applicants. All applicants should have endorsement/approval (noted on AAPI) from their programs in order to apply.

The candidates should have demonstrated interests and prior academic and practicum experiences that are appropriate for the internship. We pay careful attention to the goodness-of-fit between candidates and our program. Candidates’ cover letters and essays are reviewed for specific reference to interest in the training that we offer. Applications are reviewed for experience in treating patients similar to those found in our setting.

All interested applicants should submit applications using the AAPI online application process by **November 2, 2015**.

The intern application should include the following:
1. The APPIC completed application, which can be found online at "http://www.appic.org".
2. A curriculum vitae
3. Three letters of reference from supervisors or professors using the APPIC Standardized Reference Form
4. Official transcripts of all graduate work.
5. A psychological test battery
6. A letter describing your interest in working at the AHC

Please direct inquiries to the Co-Directors of Training:

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