

VA BOSTON ADVANCED FELLOWSHIP IN HEALTH PROFESSIONS EDUCATION, EVALUATION, AND RESEARCH ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Fellows are to be prepared for career positions in educational leadership roles and as specialists responsible for education program evaluation and improvement. Fellows can be clinicians or non-clinical scientists. While it is likely that fellows will typically come from a health professions background, others with relevant backgrounds (e.g., graduate degree in education) interested in focusing on health professions education are also appropriate applicants.

Clinical applicants will be eligible to participate in this program provided they have completed all requirements needed to be a fully credentialed independent practitioner in their field at a VHA facility (with the exception of certain associated health disciplines that require fellowship training prior to licensure). Applicants from clinical disciplines requiring doctoral level education to qualify as an independent practitioner must possess the required degree (e.g., DDS, DPM, PhD, etc.). Clinical fields that recognize independent practitioners possessing degree levels below that of Master's degree (e.g., Registered Nurse or Registered Dietitian) *must have completed a Master's degree to be eligible for participation in this program*. Social workers and health care administrators must possess at least a Master's degree. Applicants who are in non-clinical associated health professions must possess at least a Master's degree (e.g., MHSA, MPH, etc.). Applicants who were doctorally prepared as a clinician but who have relinquished licensure and are not currently or planning to be clinically active in the future will be considered as post-doctoral non-clinician scientists. All applicants should demonstrate interest in pursuing a VHA career with Health Professions Education as a significant focus. Fellows are appointed for two years.

Physician Fellows

Prior to beginning the fellowship, physician fellows must meet the following criteria:

- i.** Completed a residency program that is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) or the Bureau of Professional Education (BPE) of the American Osteopathic Association.
- ii.** Fellows may not be enrolled simultaneously in any accredited physician residency/fellowship program without a specific waiver provided by OAA.
- iii.** Have active, full and unrestricted license(s) to practice in the U.S. and any of its territories.
- iv.** Be board certified or eligible with demonstration of active pursuit of board certification.
- v.** Be appropriately credentialed and privileged for clinical practice at the local VHA facility.
- vi.** Be a U.S. citizen or possess a current visa suitable for participation in this paid educational activity. U.S. citizens shall be given priority in selection.

Nurse Fellows

Prior to beginning the fellowship, nurse fellows must meet the following criteria:

i. Either

- a. Be enrolled in an accredited PhD or Doctorate of Nursing Practice Program, and have completed sufficient didactics to be able to fully participate in the experiential learning provided by this program

OR

- b. Completed a Master's or Doctoral Degree in Nursing from a recognized academic institution.
- ii. Have a Nursing license (e.g., RN, NP) and either credentialed or boarded with a scope of practice consistent with their licensure and prior training. The license must be maintained throughout the fellowship to maintain eligibility for participation.
- iii. Be a U.S. Citizen.

Psychology Fellows

- i. Prior to beginning the fellowship, psychology fellows must meet the following criteria:
 - a. Possess an advanced degree from an accredited doctoral program that would make them eligible for VHA hire. Fellows can begin if the degree is not yet conferred if they have met all requirements (including dissertation defense) and it is in writing from the fellow's graduate program. Doctoral programs must be American Psychological Association (APA), Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) or Psychological Clinical Science Accreditation System (PCSAS) accredited. The applicant's degree must be in a specific specialty area recognized by one of these accreditation bodies and meet VHA hiring eligibility requirements. **Note:** an applicant with a degree from a program accredited for a school psychology specialty is not eligible for the fellowship because this specialty is ineligible for VHA hire.
 - b. Be a U.S. Citizen.
 - c. Have completed all requirements to become a staff psychologist at a VHA facility, either as a licensed independent practitioner or as a graduate psychologist subject to supervision.
 - d. Graduate psychologists subject to supervision must meet the following additional requirements:
 - Completed an APA or CPA-accredited internship (or a new OAA funded, VHA-based internship that is not yet accredited).
 - If the candidate is enrolled but has not yet completed internship, the Director of Clinical Training at the candidate's graduate school and the Director of Training at the internship must submit a statement indicating that completion of all degree requirements is expected before the proposed start date of the fellowship.
 - The local program must develop a written supervision plan, starting on the first day of training. This plan must include at least 4 hours of supervision weekly, of which 2 hours must be individual, face-to-face supervision by a licensed and privileged psychologist. In addition, the written supervision agreement should meet jurisdictional requirements for licensure in any state.

Associated Health Fellows (other than Psychology)

Prior to beginning the fellowship, associated health fellows must meet the following criteria:

- i. Possess an advanced degree from an accredited masters or doctoral program in their respective profession and meet the qualification standards that would make them eligible for VHA hire.
- ii. Have completed all requirements to become a fully credentialed independent practitioner (or the equivalent for that profession) at a VHA facility.
- iii. Have an active, unrestricted license to practice in the U.S., if such licenses are required for entry-level VHA employment in the candidate's profession.

- iv. Be a U.S. Citizen.
- v. Not be simultaneously enrolled in any other accredited clinical training program.
- vi. Chaplaincy Fellows must possess 4 units of accredited clinical pastoral education in addition to the above requirements.

Applicants who are in non-clinical associated health professions must possess at least a Master's degree (e.g., MHSA, MPH, M.Ed., etc.).

APPOINTMENT AND COMPENSATION

A. Physician Fellows

- i. Appointments will be made under 38 U.S.C. 7406.
- ii. Accepted candidates are identified for the personnel management data systems and for cost accounting purposes by specific assignment codes. Fellows are eligible for health and life insurance benefits.
- iii. The Office of Academic Affiliations will consider requests to appoint fellows through a disbursement agreement executed in collaboration with a VHA/OAA approved academic affiliate.
- iv. Stipend Rate. The stipend rate will be based on years of previously completed ACGME or AOA accredited residency training and equivalent experiences as determined by OAA and index rates approved at the affiliated university and the respective VHA facility. The appointment level cannot exceed PGY-8. OAA reserves the right to use a different mechanism to establish fellow pay rates in the future. Fellows shall be paid directly by the VHA facility unless OAA provides written approval for another payment mechanism.
- v. Stipend Supplementation. Fellows shall not receive additional revenue from any source in compensation for their duties in this program. This prohibition does not include possible supplemental funding for travel or research, if available.

B. Nursing and Associated Health Fellows

- i. Appointments will be made under 38 U.S.C. 7405 (a)(1)(D).
- ii. Stipend rates will be determined by OAA, depending on the discipline and previous education of the trainee. Current rates are listed at <http://vaww.oaa.med.va.gov/DBReports/LocBasedStipends.aspx> as of the time of publication of this document. Approved sites with potential fellows from disciplines not on the table should contact OAA for salary rates.

C. Full time appointments are preferred, but sites may request an exception to full time appointments by making a formal request to OAA and the Coordinating Center stipulating the part time appointment is not less than half-time and that such an appointment is appropriate for the program mission and the fellow's learning plan. All part time appointments must be completed during the fellowship appointment period.

D. Full-time fellows from clinical professions are expected to spend at least 80 percent of their time in training, development, and implementation of projects related to the practice and advancement of healthcare education. No more than 20 percent time should be spent in direct

clinical care unless there is specific educational justification. Fellows may spend less than 20 percent in clinical activities, but such decisions must take into account each fellow's career plans including requirements for licensure (when applicable).

E. Educational Details. Fellows directly paid by VHA may be detailed to other educational institutions without loss of pay, but under no circumstances may the total time spent in non-VHA institutions exceed one-sixth of the total hours a fellow is in a pay and training status with VHA. Guidance on educational details for fellows is available in the VHA Handbook 1400.07.

Education of Advanced Fellows. Advanced Fellows paid via disbursement cannot receive VHA pay for educational details away from Federal locations. Should a program wish to have fellows conduct clinical activities at non-VHA sites, prior written approval from the Office of Academic Affiliations must be obtained.