

Speech Language Fellowship Program Description

August 7, 2018 | Megan K. Tobar M.S., CCC-SLP

Staff Speech Pathologist

Speech pathologists are required to complete a 36-week post-graduate clinical fellowship under the direct supervision of a mentor in order to obtain a certificate of clinical competence (CCC) and full professional certification.

VA Boston offers two full-time fellowships for speech pathology trainees. These 2080- hour fellowships are offered in Geriatric Care and in Rehab/Acute Care. This opportunity fulfills the 36 weeks and 1,260-hour minimum clinical fellowship mandated by the American Speech-Language Hearing Association (ASHA).



The VA Boston Fellowship offers a number of training opportunities including:

- Instrumental assessment of swallowing – including endoscopy and fluoroscopy
- Instrumental assessment of speech and voice – including acoustic and stroboscopy
- Special populations: palliative care, head and neck cancer, neurologic disease, polytrauma and spinal cord injury (SCI), acute REHAB (CIIRP), Communication group, view OR surgery, transgender, GRECC (geriatric research education clinical center)
- Comprehensive language assessment and treatment
- Augmentative Alternative Communication (AAC) assessment, treatment and device procurement
- Cognitive Rehabilitation in interdisciplinary collaboration with other professionals (e.g., Rehab, Neurobehavior, SCI)
- Education of veterans, families, healthcare professionals, students-in-training in aspects of communication, swallowing assessment, care and clinical research, we service veterans at all levels of care
- “Just in cases” review where fellows, along with their supervisors, identify complex clinical cases (on caseload) and discuss patient status, Plan Of Care and review relevant evidence-based literature to support their clinical decisions. There is an emphasis on the case study approach and creative thinking and reasoning.
- Opportunity to participate in Interprofessional Education Unit where fellows and graduate students have opportunity to interact more with other health professionals and learn their roles.

We hope to offer additional fellowship training opportunities in the future, particularly in Acute Rehab, SCI Rehab, and in other specialty Clinics. Following completion of their fellowship year, many individuals have taken full-time positions in other acute care or rehab hospital settings both within the Boston area and around the country. Several former Fellows have continued their careers working with veterans at other VA Medical Centers.

We have also hired a number of our own Fellows to work at VA Boston. 4 of the 6 current staff were once Clinical Fellows at VA Boston!