

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Veterans Health Administration
Office of Academic Affiliations
Washington, DC

PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT

**ACADEMIC YEAR 2011-2012 OR FISCAL YEAR 2012
TRAINEE SUPPORT FOR ASSOCIATED HEALTH PROFESSIONS**

1. **OVERVIEW.** This program announcement provides instructions, policies, and procedures to Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) facilities for the preparation and submission of trainee requests to the Office of Academic Affiliations (OAA) for Academic Year 2011-2012 (Fiscal Year 2012). Associated Health Professions are defined as all health care professions other than allopathic and osteopathic medicine and dentistry.

a. **Submission and Due Dates.** Your request for training positions and your Standards of Excellence reports must be entered on-line into the OAA Web-based system by **Friday, October 15, 2010.**

b. **Funding Notification.** Decisions regarding funding support for trainees will be communicated to Directors of VA facilities and Veterans Integrated Services Networks (VISNs) by **January 24, 2011.**

2. **GENERAL BACKGROUND**

a. Funded associated health professions education and training programs and positions are a significant resource to VA. They address both the education mission of VA and the Veterans Health Administration's (VHA) goal of excellence in education.

b. VA facilities must demonstrate excellence in their training programs when competing for limited trainee funds. Standards of excellence in profession-specific clinical education and training, including interprofessional education, have been established and are designed to enhance excellence in education, training and practice in VA.

c. All training programs must also meet the following criteria:

(1) VA clinical education and training programs must meet or exceed standards established by accrediting agencies and adhere to VA's goal of providing Veteran-focused interprofessional education and training.

(2) The facility and VISN educational infrastructure (staff, education coordinator, and material resources) support excellence in clinical education and training.

(3) Training programs contribute to Veteran-focused care that reflect VA's health care priorities and to special emphasis programs such as Blind Rehabilitation, Geriatrics and Long-term Care, Homelessness, Palliative Care, Polytrauma, Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Recovery, PTSD, Serious Mental Illness, Spinal Cord Injury or Dysfunction, Substance Use Disorders, OEF and OIF Veterans, and Women's Health.

(4) If clinical training programs at the facility are affiliated with academic programs, the relationship should be enhanced through such activities as academic faculty appointments, membership in school or university academic committees, joint ventures in continuing education programs, research, and other scholarly activities.

(5) Interprofessional education addresses knowledge, skills, and attitudes appropriate for successful collaboration and teamwork in clinical settings.

(6) Results of evaluations are used to plan and implement program improvements that promote quality educational experiences for trainees.

3. **POLICY**

a. All funded associated health trainees must be U.S. citizens. No waivers will be granted based on inability to recruit citizens.

b. Education and training funds generally will be provided only for those trainees where clinical experience is needed to fulfill education requirements to meet qualifications for VA employment. Exceptions to this policy are residencies and fellowships in Audiology, Health Services Research and Development (HSR&D), Nursing, Optometry, Palliative Care, Pharmacy, Psychology, Psychosocial Rehabilitation, PTSD, Rehabilitation Research, Social Work, Speech-Language Pathology, and Substance Use Disorders.

c. Where nationally recognized accrediting bodies exist, only trainees from programs that are accredited will receive funding. Exceptions must be approved by OAA.

d. Properly executed Affiliation Agreements and supporting materials must be on file at the VA facility prior to the appointment of trainees.

e. Stipend rates are established by the Office of Academic Affiliations, based on analyses of comparable private sector rates and federal locality adjustments. Stipend rates are not to be adjusted or supplemented locally.

f. Trainees who participate in funded VA-sponsored training requiring one-year (2080 hours or more) of training should be appointed for a period not to exceed (NTE) three years; this qualifies them to participate in Federal health benefits and insurance programs. The actual length of funded training depends on the requirements of the accrediting agency for the program, the program curriculum, and the number of hours approved by the Office of Academic Affiliations.

g. A completed "AY 2011-12 Profession-Specific Standards of Excellence in Clinical and Interprofessional Education/Training" must be submitted if funding is requested for the profession. Only **one** is required from a facility for each profession being requested. For example, if two psychology interns are requested in the **Regular Trainee** program and one is requested for **GRECC**, submit only one completed **Profession-Specific Standards of Excellence for Clinical and Interprofessional Education/Training for Psychology**.

h. If funded trainees rotate out of a special program at the VA facility, such as GRECC, for other required clinical experiences, it is expected that trainees funded by that profession's regular training program will rotate into the special program. In this way, the special program will receive the full training value of each position, even if that profession has requirements to rotate trainees to a variety of settings.

4. **ACTION**

a. A list of the "Education Programs Eligible for Trainee Funding Support" is provided in Attachment A.

b. The entire report will be entered on-line in a web-based system developed by the Office of Academic Affiliations. (See Attachment B for Instructions).

c. Following notification of approved trainee positions, OAA/14 must be notified as soon as possible if a facility is unable to recruit for any of the approved positions. Notification should be within 15 days for those trainees who are selected in a nationwide matching program. Only then will OAA/14 be able to re-

allocate positions to facilities that are able to recruit trainees. A consistent inability to fill trainee positions in a specific category will affect future allocations. Returning funds on the quarterly adjustment in lieu of notifying OAA/14 to withdraw funds for unfilled positions is not considered adequate notification. ***NOTE:** In the event that any funds become available for withdrawal during the course of the fiscal year, it is the program director's responsibility to have the Fiscal Officer or Service Chief notify OAA/14 and request withdrawal of the funds.*

d. Reminders:

(1) **Medical and Dental Resident** requests are **not to be included** in this report. They are requested through the RCS 10-0144 report.

(2) **OAA should be notified immediately of unfilled positions to ensure that positions can be temporarily reallocated to other facilities.** Failure to notify OAA in a timely manner of unfilled positions may be considered in future allocations. Failure to fill all positions will generally not be a negative factor in future allocations unless specific facilities have recurring unfilled positions. The positions are considered national assets for the specific discipline and all reallocations of unfilled positions should be made by the Office of Academic Affiliations.

(3) Unfilled positions may not be reassigned to another discipline at the facility. They must be returned to OAA/14 for reassignment.

5. **ATTACHMENTS**

a. Attachment A. Education Programs Eligible for Trainee Funding Support

b. Attachment B. Instructions for Completing the Trainee Request Forms and the Standards of Excellence

6. **OAA PROGRAM CONTACTS:**

Any questions concerning this program announcement or the process for requesting trainee positions should be directed to Debbie Hettler, OD, MPH, FAAO, at 202-461-9499, email Debbie.Hettler@va.gov, or to Robert Zeiss, Ph.D. at 202-461-9493, email Robert.Zeiss@va.gov. For questions related to Nursing, please contact Mary Dougherty, **DNSc, MBA, MA, RN**, 202-461-9492, email Mary.Dougherty@va.gov.

ATTACHMENT A

EDUCATION PROGRAMS ELIGIBLE FOR TRAINEE FUNDING SUPPORT

<u>Profession</u>	<u>Educational Level & Site Limitations</u>
1. Audiology	Au.D. Clinical Rotation – 2 nd & 3 rd year doctoral Au.D. Externship – 4 th year doctoral Predoctoral Fellow
2. Blind Rehabilitation	Master's only at VA blind rehabilitation centers or clinics.
3. Clinical Pastoral Education (Chaplain Residents)	Regular and Specialty – Only at sites accredited by the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE).
4. Nutrition and Food Service (Dietetics)	Post-Baccalaureate and Coordinated Master's. Priority will be given to programs accredited in the name of the VA or in which VA is a major participant.
5. Health Care Administration	Masters –Health Care Administration interns are not part of the year long VA Residency for the Graduate Health Care Administration Training Program (GHATP), but students completing a short practicum in their Master's program.
6. Health Services Research & Development	Postdoctoral – Only at HSR&D approved Centers of Excellence
7. Maxillofacial Prosthetic Laboratory Technician	Certificate – Only at Bronx VAMC
8. Medical Records Administration	Master's (Loma Linda and Muskogee)
9. Nursing (Specify type); a. Clinical Nurse Specialist b. Nurse Practitioner c. Nurse Anesthetist d. Nursing Administration e. Nursing Research Practicum (master's & doctoral) f. Clinical Nurse Leader	Master's Level; Post-Master's. Master's level Requires a minimum of 120 hours.
10. Occupational Therapy	Baccalaureate, Master's, Post-Master's
11. Optometry	Postdoctoral Residency; Research Fellow (Birmingham, Boston, and Palo Alto.
12. Pharmacy	Doctoral, Postdoctoral
13. Physical Therapy	Master's, Doctoral
14. Physician Assistant	Post-Baccalaureate Certificate, Master's
15. Podiatry	Postdoctoral
16. Prosthetics/Orthotics	Baccalaureate, Master's Dallas, Houston, Long Beach, New York, Oklahoma City, Seattle, Syracuse, Palo Alto, and Tampa.
17. Psychology	Predoctoral Interns and Postdoctoral Fellows
18. Social Work	Master's, Post-Master's, and Predoctoral
19. Speech-Language Pathology	Master's & Clinical Fellowship Year (CFY)

ATTACHMENT B

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING TRAINEE REQUESTS
AND THE STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE**

(MEDICAL and DENTAL RESIDENTS ARE NOT REQUESTED IN THIS PROCESS)

1. The facility Education Office, Education Coordinator, or person designated by the facility Director should send copies of the Program Announcement and Attachments to each clinical education coordinator or leader in disciplines that are eligible to apply.
2. Enter your requests on-line in the OAA web-based system **by October 15, 2010**. To access the OAA Support Center,
 - Enter: <http://vaww.oaa.med.va.gov>.
 - Select "Log In" and enter your User Name or Email and Password. If you have forgotten your password, select "I Forgot My Password." If you are a first time user, select "I Need to Register."
It is strongly recommended that the education coordinator at your facility, who already has access, be the focal point for completing this report. It should not be necessary to have multiple individuals applying for access to the Support Center.
3. Once you have logged into the DataCenter, select the Database titled **Trainee Support in Associated Health Professions**. Next, choose your facility from the Drop Down Box.

Trainee Requests

4. The specialties and the number of trainees that your facility was allocated in AY 2010-11 will appear under the AY 2010-2011 Approved Trainees Column. Your requests for AY 2011-2012 have been already pre-populated for you with the AY 2010-2011 numbers. **If you do not adjust these numbers, it is assumed that you wish to maintain the same numbers for the upcoming year.**
5. If you wish to print a worksheet, select the "View Printable Worksheet" button at the bottom of the page. After you print your report, select the "Close Window" button to return to your original screen. However, you must return to this page to enter your requests on line. Please do not send a hard copy of this report.
6. **NOTE**, Please NOTE the Drop Down Box titled "Program." You must enter trainee requests separately for each program you have listed in that box. If you fail to do so, you will not receive allocations for those positions. For example, if you have "Regular" Psychology Interns and also have "GRECC" Psychology Interns, you must enter each set of those interns separately.

Standards of Excellence

7. Each coordinator or leader of a discipline at each facility should complete the appropriate **Standards of Excellence in Clinical and Interprofessional Education and Training**. Please do not complete the Standards for disciplines that do not request funding for trainees. (Unlike previous years, this year you are asked to submit the completed Standards of Excellence electronically.)
8. The Program Coordinator, facility Education Office, Designated Education Officer, or person designated by the facility Director should upload all of the completed Standards of Excellence.
9. Please submit your Standards of Excellence on line by **October 15, 2010**. To access the OAA Support Center, follow the instructions in #2 above.
10. Once you have logged into the DataCenter, select Database **AH Standards of Excellence Upload Completed Forms**.
11. Follow instructions on the web page.