Postdoctoral Fellowship Description: CLINICAL FOCUS

Title: Postdoctoral Fellowship in Behavioral Health Treatment of Children with Autism and Developmental Disabilities

APA-accredited: YES  x  NO __

Site: Bradley Hospital

Supervisor(s): Karen Cammuso, Ph.D. (Verrecchia Clinic Primary Clinical Supervisor)
Giulia Righi, Ph.D. (CADD Partial Supervisor & Primary Research Supervisor)
Valerie Vorderstrasse, PsyD (Verrecchia Clinic Supervisor)
Shivali Sarawgi, PhD (Verrecchia Clinic Supervisor)

Description of Site

The Emma Pendleton Bradley Hospital, founded in 1931, is the nation's first psychiatric hospital devoted to children and adolescents. Its services include a 72-bed acute inpatient program for children and adolescents with emotional, behavioral, and developmental disorders; day/partial hospital and intensive outpatient programs for children ages newborn to eighteen years with a range of emotional and behavioral issues; and a large and active outpatient treatment program offering individual, family, and group psychotherapy, medication management, occupational and speech/language therapy, and neuropsychological evaluations to children and adolescents with complex mental health needs.

The Verrecchia Clinic for Children with Autism and Developmental Disabilities provides outpatient clinical services for children and teens aged 5-18 who have behavioral health challenges, as well as a developmental condition such as autism or intellectual disability. The clinic provides psychotherapy services as well as psychiatry consultation, medication management, and genetic psychiatry consultation. Therapies are supported by evidence-based practices to make interventions accessible to the clients. Clinical assessment is an optional experience in this fellowship, to be determined based upon the fellow’s training goals. The fellow will have an opportunity to provide individual, group, and family therapy, and to participate in multidisciplinary clinic meetings as well as collaborate with general outpatient providers.

The Center for Autism and Developmental Disabilities (CADD) partial hospital program provides day treatment services to children and adolescents with autism and developmental disabilities who have acute psychiatric needs. The postdoctoral fellow has the opportunity to develop competency in clinical assessment, treatment, and consultation with children who have a developmental disability and present with serious emotional and behavioral challenges. The children (ranging in age from 5-18 years old) display a broad range of clinical conditions, and typically remain in the program for 3-5 weeks. The program aims to provide intensive therapeutic interventions with children and their families. Clinical psychology fellows will participate and receive supervision in all aspects of the partial hospital program. They will complete clinical evaluations of patients and their families, as well as providing family, group, and, when applicable, individual therapies. Fellows may have opportunities to consult to program staff regarding appropriate milieu interventions and the outcome of evaluations. Fellows will also participate in planning and consultation regarding patient transition back to community settings (school and outpatient therapies). Clinical psychology fellows gain experience working collaboratively with a multidisciplinary
treatment team that includes milieu associates, nurses, teachers, psychologists, social workers, psychiatrists, and consulting speech/language and occupational therapists.

**Fellowship Aims**

1. To provide the fellow with broad post-doctoral training in assessing and treating psychiatric illness for children and adolescents with developmental disabilities across partial and outpatient levels of care.

2. To enable the fellow to gain experience in the delivery of individual, family, and group evidence-based interventions for children and adolescents with developmental challenges and their families.

3. To provide the fellow with a strong working knowledge and training on skills necessary to conduct research on the intersection between developmental disabilities and psychiatric disturbance, and acute care treatment outcomes.

**Fellowship Timeline**

The duration of the fellowship is 2 years contingent upon satisfactory progress. Only the first year is APA accredited. The second year is intended to provide additional experience. Though not an “APA accredited” fellowship year, the second year is designated as a Brown postdoctoral fellowship year. The anticipated start date is either July or September 2020.

Note: The fellow and the mentor will notify each other in December 2020 whether the commitment will be made for a second year.

**Clinical Activity Plan**

70% of the Fellow’s time will be devoted to clinical activities in above described service areas, with half of the time in each program. In order to ensure that the fellow receives a high level of clinical training in the area of clinical treatment of children with developmental disabilities, the following activities will be required during the fellowship:

- **Treatment services**: The Fellow will conduct evidence-based individual, group, and family therapy in both partial and outpatient programs for 60% of their clinical activities. The fellow may also supervise the provision of skills based groups for patients in the partial program. The fellow’s time will be evenly split between the two programs. In addition to activities related to clinical case management, psychotherapy hours will include group, individual, and family psychotherapies.

- **Clinical assessment**: The fellow will conduct clinical and diagnostic evaluations of children and adolescents as part of each program’s intake processes. The fellow may also conduct clinical assessments to evaluate for autism spectrum disorders. An average of 10% of clinical time can be devoted to clinical and diagnostic evaluations.

- **Clinical administration**: The Fellow will participate in rounds, staff meetings, teams, and will be actively involved in treatment planning and program development activities in addition to completing all required documentation and clinical administrative duties. Approximately of 30% of clinical activities will be devoted to team and to clinical administration and program development activities.

- **Licensure**: The Fellow will apply for licensure as a psychologist in the State of Rhode Island.
**Research Activity Plan:**
The fellow will spend 20% of their time involved in research activities focused on investigating the presentation of psychiatric disturbance in the context of developmental disabilities. This is achieved via participation in the following activities:

1) **Study coordination:** The fellow will collaborate with Dr. Righi to coordinate a large multi-site study of autistic individuals with co-occurring psychiatric disturbances treated in acute care settings. The fellow will have the opportunity to develop new research questions in the context of existing data.

2) **Review of relevant literature:** The Fellow will be provided with relevant literature in the area of developmental disabilities and co-occurring psychiatric disturbance to support the development of new research questions.

3) **Manuscript preparation and submission:** The fellow will be encouraged to collaborate with Dr. Righi on the development of manuscripts and poster to divulge the findings of research questions of interest.

4) **The Fellow will have the opportunity to attend regular research meetings conducted at Bradley Hospital.**

**Didactics & Supervision**
10% time (4 hours/week) is available for supervision and mandatory didactics. If the optional didactic (Academic Friday) is chosen, this time will come out of the 20% research time.

**Didactics**
Postdoctoral Seminars: The fellow will participate in postdoctoral seminars through the Postdoctoral Fellowship Training Program.

**Mandatory Didactics:**
- Core Seminars (1 per month).
- DPHB Academic Grand Rounds (1 per month).
- Clinical Ethics (1 per month)
- Child Track Seminars

**Optional Didactics:**
- Academic Friday–Grantsmanship, Special Topics in Statistic and Alcohol Center Seminars.
Supervision and Evaluation

Supervision: The Fellow will receive 2-3 hours per week of individual supervision with supervising clinicians on treatment services, including 2-3 licensed psychologists, and 2 hours/month for individual supervision with supervising psychologist on research. Supervision will be provided in the form of both weekly individual supervision (based on clinical experiences, including Drs. Cammuso, Righi, Vorderstrasse, & Sarawgi) and bi-monthly research supervision (Dr. Righi). Dr. Cammuso serves as the primary clinical supervisor for the fellowship, and Dr. Righi as the primary research supervisor.

At every 6 months for the duration of the fellowship, the fellow and the supervisors will provide formal evaluations, and evaluations of the program relative to the goals and learning objectives of the fellowship.

Resource Requirements
The fellow will be provided with the following resources:

- Access to space appropriate for clinical care
- A computer and project specific software
- Internet access
- Telephone
- Individual office space for personal use

Reporting and approval
This fellowship will be part of the Child track. The position has been discussed and approved by the Child track faculty in their monthly meeting of 10/30/18.

Postdoctoral Fellowship Track Coordinator

Director, Clinical Psychology Program (CPP)

Director, Postdoctoral Fellowship Training Program