

PSYCHOLOGY CLINICAL RESEARCH POSTDOCTORAL RESIDENCY PROGRAM BROCHURE

VA San Diego Healthcare System

2026-2027

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

VA San Diego Healthcare System

UC San Diego Health

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INTRODUCTION

The VA San Diego Healthcare System (VASDHS) Psychology Clinical Research Postdoctoral Residency Training Program is a two-year, interdisciplinary fellowship training program based on the clinician-scientist model. The primary goal is to train psychologists to become leading clinical researchers and advanced clinical providers in high priority areas of mental health relevant to Veterans. Upon completion, Residents are prepared for careers in VA or university medical center careers that integrate research, clinical service, teaching, and leadership.

The training program consists of four content areas:

- 1) **MIRECC Advanced Fellowship Program in Mental Illness Research and Treatment** is focused on schizophrenia and related psychotic disorders.
- 2) **CESAMH Advanced Fellowship Program in Mental Illness Research and Treatment** is focused on the integration of neurobiological and psychosocial science to develop, evaluate, and disseminate treatment for trauma-related disorders such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI).
- 3) **Advanced Fellowship in Women's Health** focuses on women's mental health concerns.
- 4) **Advanced Fellowship in Addiction Treatment** focuses on clinical care and research on substance use disorders.

All tracks are two-year fellowships funded through the VA Office of Academic Affiliates (OAA). Typically, one new psychology position is offered annually in each track, with occasional opportunities for a second position.

For more information, visit our website at:

[Psychology Internship And Fellowship Programs](#)
[| VA San Diego Health Care | Veterans Affairs](#)

Our APA-accredited program emphasizes training in the professional practice of general clinical psychology and clinical research and does not offer training in any APA recognized substantive specialty practice areas.

Questions related to the program's accredited status should be directed to the Commission on Accreditation:

Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation
American Psychological Association
750 1st Street, NE
Washington, DC 20002-4242
Phone: (202) 336-5979
Email: apaaccred@apa.org
Web: [APA Accreditation - Home](#)

FACILITIES

CLINICAL SERVICES AT VASDHS

VASDHS delivers comprehensive primary, specialty, extended, and mental health care services through an integrated healthcare system designed to improve the health and well-being of Veterans. With cutting-edge medical technology and a strong emphasis on training and research, VASDHS provides a robust learning environment.



The VASDHS Mental Health Care Line serves Veterans in San Diego and Imperial counties. Services include:

VISIT VA San Diego Healthcare System at:
<https://www.sandiego.va.gov/>

- 28 acute psychiatry beds
- 10-bed Neurobehavioral Assessment Unit
- A Substance Abuse Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program (SARRTP) for Veterans with substance abuse, including a co-occurring substance use and PTSD track
- The 40-bed Aspire Center, a Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program (RRTP) offering recovery-oriented PTSD treatment, housing, and vocational service for six months for Veterans with housing insecurity
- A Geriatric Psychiatry service
- A 20-bed Spinal Cord Injury Unit offering both inpatient and outpatient care
- A new Therapeutic Neuromodulation Program, which provides neurostimulation and ketamine-based interventions
- A robust tele-mental health program enhancing access to care

Outpatient care is available at seven locations, including five Community-Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs) and two smaller clinics. The Kearny Mesa CBOC houses a General Mental Health Clinic, the PTSD Clinical Team (PCT), and a Behavioral Medicine Clinic. The Rio Clinic includes the Center of Recovery Education (CORE) and the Wellness and Vocational Enhancement (WAVE) Program. Additional locations are in Chula Vista, Escondido, Oceanside, Sorrento Valley, and Imperial Valley.

Mental health services across sites include psychiatric admissions, crisis intervention, medication management, tele-mental health, and integrated primary care-mental health services. Residents provide comprehensive evidence-based psychological services including screening, assessment, consultation, individual and group therapy, and psychoeducation.

LOCAL DEMOGRAPHIC AND CLINICAL CONTEXT

LOCAL DEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXT

VASDHS serves a diverse Veteran population of 91,700 Veterans in FY24, including those from various age cohorts, cultural backgrounds, and military service branches. More than 31,000 of those Veterans were seen in mental health clinics for a total of about 250,000 mental health visits.

Understanding the diversity of the population we serve is essential to preparing Residents for effective clinical and research practice.

According to recent U.S. Census data:

- Less than half of San Diego County identifies as White, non-Hispanic (46%)
- Hispanic or Latino individuals represent approximately 33.5%
- Women make up 49.7% of the population

VASDHS Veteran demographics:

- 43% White, 18% Hispanic, 14% African American, 11% Asian, 2% Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 1% American Indian
- 84% male; 2% under age 25; 21% over age 65
- Navy Veterans and Persian Gulf Era Veterans (Iraq/Afghanistan) represent the largest subgroups

VASDHS serves all Veterans. All adult age groups, Veteran cohorts, and ethnic/racial/cultural backgrounds, sex/gender identities and expression are recognized and appreciated. We respect individual and cultural identity characteristics and consider the intersectionality of multiple individual factors, including Veteran culture, in all clinical and research activities.

TRAINING MISSION OF SAN DIEGO VA HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) is mandated to train healthcare professionals to meet the needs of Veterans and the nation. In partnership with the UCSD School of Medicine, VASDHS provides training for approximately 1,200 medical interns, Residents, and fellows, along with 500 trainees across other health professions such as nursing, pharmacy, dentistry, and dietetics.

For over 70 years, the VA has demonstrated a steadfast commitment to training and academic affiliation with the goals of:

1. Producing and retaining high-quality VA health care providers
2. Enhancing Veteran health care
3. Fostering a culture of scientific inquiry

RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

VASDHS hosts one of the largest and most well-funded research programs in the Department of Veterans Affairs, with more than \$44 million in annual research funding, 250+ principal investigators, and nearly 700 projects. Notable affiliated research centers include:

- **CENTER OF EXCELLENCE FOR STRESS AND MENTAL HEALTH (CESAMH)**
- **MENTAL ILLNESS RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND CLINICAL CENTERS (MIRECC)**
- **VA WOMEN'S HEALTH PRACTICE-BASED RESEARCH NETWORK (PBRN)**
- **MILLION VETERAN PROGRAM**

VASDHS also collaborates with the **Veterans Medical Research Foundation (VMRF)**, a nonprofit that administers over \$18 million in research funding and supports over 100 VA researchers, making it one of the largest VA-affiliated foundations nationwide.

VASDHS PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE

The Psychology Service at VASDHS is among the most academically oriented in the VA system. With over 100 staff psychologists, the service has rapidly expanded to meet the mental health needs of the Veteran population. Most psychologists hold academic appointments at the UCSD Department of Psychiatry, and all Clinical Research faculty hold joint appointments.

Staff psychologists represent a broad array of subspecialties, including:

- Neuropsychology
- Geropsychology
- Marital and Family Therapy
- Substance Use Disorder Treatment
- Behavioral Medicine
- PTSD Treatment
- Psychological Research

In addition to the Clinical Research Residency, the VASDHS Psychology also offers a one-year APA-accredited Clinical Psychology Postdoctoral Residency Program, which includes 13 positions focusing on

evidence-based psychotherapies in general mental health and specialties such as Mood Disorders, Geropsychology/Home-Based Care, LGBTQ+ Mental Health, PTSD/TBI, and Family Mental Health, Behavioral Medicine, and Psychosocial Rehabilitation. There are opportunities for both training programs to interact, making VASDHS a rich training environment.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO (UCSD)

The UCSD Department of Psychiatry is nationally recognized for its excellence in training clinical research scientists and clinicians. Psychologists are fully integrated into its research, education, and administrative missions.

UCSD is one of ten University of California campuses and consistently ranks among the top institutions nationally for research and academic excellence. Its Department of Psychiatry is strongly integrated with VASDHS, offering an outstanding environment for research and clinical training.

Joint programs under a formal interagency agreement include:

- ACGME-accredited four-year General Psychiatry Residency
- ACGME-accredited fellowships in Child, Geriatric, Addiction, and Consultation-Liaison Psychiatry
- APA-accredited Joint Doctoral Program in Clinical Psychology
- APA-accredited Pre-doctoral Clinical Psychology Internship

SPECIFIC CONTENT AREAS (TRACKS)

The overall structure of the VASDHS/UCSD Psychology Clinical Research Postdoctoral Residency Program is the same, but each track has a different content focus.



MIRECC (Barton W. Palmer, PhD, Director Psychology Training): The goal of the VASDHS MIRECC Psychology Residency, part of the mission of the MIRECC at VASDHS (in partnership with the Greater Los Angeles VA), is to improve the long-term functional outcome of patients with chronic psychotic mental disorders, including schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, and psychotic mood disorders. We approach this mission through an integrated program of research, education, and clinical programs aimed at translating findings from the research laboratory into improved clinical care. A primary goal of the MIRECC-sponsored Psychology Residency position is to train psychologists to become leading clinical researchers in psychosis and other major mental illnesses.

The fellowship combines individual mentored research and clinical training with state-of-the-art educational experiences.



CESAMH (Laurie Lindamer, PhD, Director Psychology Training): The goal of the CESAMH Advanced Fellowship Program in Mental Illness Research and Treatment is to launch the careers of Residents to be independent clinical researchers and leaders who conduct research in integrated neurobiological and psychosocial science to develop, evaluate and disseminate treatment for trauma-related conditions to optimize the well-being and functioning of Veterans. CESAMH's scope of research ranges from basic science, psychophysiology, and genetics through pharmacological and psychosocial interventions and their implementation. With this strength in multidisciplinary, translational research, CESAMH provides an ideal setting in which to train psychologists to become highly productive clinical researchers and leaders.



Women's Mental Health Fellowship (Julie Kangas, PhD, Director Psychology Training): The overall goal of the Advanced Fellowship in Women's Health is to provide interdisciplinary training to Clinical Psychology Residents to prepare them for careers as independent women's healthcare specialists. Through a combination of clinical, research, and teaching experiences, cross-disciplinary training opportunities, and supervision from women's health specialists, Residents will be prepared for

a career in the VASDHS that integrates clinical, research, and leadership activities related to women's health. Specifically, the fellowship provides clinical and clinical research training:

- 1) To provide coordinated, comprehensive, and evidence-based clinical care for women Veterans.
- 2) To translate the scientific literature into sound, evidenced-based practice for women Veterans,
- 3) Instructs Residents in the evaluation and dissemination of evidence-based practices; and
- 4) Provides mentored teaching and leadership experiences to impart skills and knowledge that will allow the Residents to ultimately serve as advanced clinicians and clinical researchers, advocates, educators, and mentors in the field of women's mental health within the VA system.



Advanced Fellowship in Addiction Treatment (Neal Doran, Ph.D. Director Psychology Training):

The over goal of the Interprofessional Advanced Fellowship in Addiction Treatment is to develop leaders with vision, knowledge, and commitment to develop, implement, teach, and evaluate addiction treatments to improve healthcare for Veterans and the nation. VASDHS, with UCSD as our affiliate, is one of 12 VA facilities/systems that was selected by the VA Office of Academic Affiliations (OAA) based on having excellent clinical

programs and a commitment to interprofessional training in substance abuse and addiction treatment. The Addiction Treatment Coordinating Center (ATCC) for the VA's Interprofessional Advanced Fellowship in Addiction Treatment is located at the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System. The ATCC is the education, coordination, and dissemination resource for all 12 fellowship sites. Residents participate in local addiction-related curriculum as well a unique two-year national seminar curriculum in interdisciplinary addictions research developed by the ATCC.

QUALIFICATIONS, FUNDING & BENEFITS

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Requirements for the VASDHS Psychology Clinical Research Postdoctoral Training Program include:

- 1) Completion of an APA-accredited doctorate in clinical or counseling psychology, an APA-accredited internship, and successful defense of the dissertation
- 2) US citizenship (required by VA)
- 3) registered for the draft by age 26 years (required by VA) for males born after December 31, 1959

Desirable qualifications include:

- 1) Experience using evidence-based interventions
- 2) Clinical research experience
- 3) Career goals involving clinical-research, clinical care, and leadership

FUNDING

All Residents are funded through postdoctoral stipends from the Office of Academic Affiliations (OAA) Department of Veterans Affairs. Stipends for the academic year are \$60,744 (for first year fellows) and \$63,618 (for second year fellows) with health, dental, and vision benefits. Funds from VASDHS

Mental Health Care Line and Education Service budgets are often used to cover program needs (e.g., office and testing supplies, on-site computers).

TELEWORK, TELEHEALTH, TELESUPERVISION

As per the Return to Office (RTO) Executive Order, **no telework (non-clinical activities) or telehealth (clinical activities) are permitted currently.** The program does not allow telesupervision.

APPLICATION & SELECTION PROCESS

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

The following should be submitted via APPA CAS by **11:59 PM EST/8:59 PM PST on November 17, 2025**:

- A letter of interest (max. 2 pages), specifying the special emphasis track(s) to which they are applying and their rationale
- A curriculum vitae or resume
- Three letters of recommendation, including one from a research mentor

The letter of interest should outline:

- Relevant educational, research, and clinical experience
- Training goals for the residency program
- Career objectives

An informational meeting will be held on November 6, 2025, 3:00 PST (Zoom meeting ID 553 207 8822).

Interviews will be held virtually on December 5, 2025. Late applications may be reviewed only if positions remain unfilled after the initial deadline. Offers may begin as soon as interviews are completed; research-oriented programs are exempt from the CHD.

SELECTION PROCESS:

Selection is based on a **holistic, comprehensive, merit-based review** of each applicant's training, professional accomplishments, and alignment with program goals. Factors considered in the selection process include (not in order of priority):

1. Breadth and quality of general clinical training
2. Depth and relevance of training in the track's specialty area (e.g., psychosis, trauma, women's health, addictions)
3. Quality and scope of scholarly activities (e.g., research, presentations, publications)

4. Integration of clinical and research interests and experience
5. Evidence of professional accomplishments and initiative
6. Ability to work effectively with diverse patient populations and interdisciplinary teams
7. Fit between the applicant's training goals and program resources and mission
8. Quality and thoughtfulness of the cover letter
9. Strength and relevance of recommendation letters

We are committed to fostering an inclusive, respectful, and supportive learning environment for all Residents; and therefore, we value a Resident cohort with a wide range of professional interests, training experiences, and perspectives relevant to the care of our diverse Veteran population. Applicants are welcome to describe how their personal and professional experiences have shaped their interests in advancing high-quality, ethical, and responsive mental health care for Veterans. No applicant is advantaged or disadvantaged on the basis of demographic characteristics or beliefs.

Top-ranked candidates in each track are invited to interview with the track director, program directors, primary supervisors, and other relevant faculty. Interviews are used to further assess the applicant's qualifications, clinical-research alignment, and interpersonal skills. Final selection is contingent upon VASDHS Human Resources Service approval, including federal background clearance and credential verification.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The VASDHS/UCSD Psychology Clinical Research Postdoctoral Residency Program is an **Equal Opportunity Employer** and complies with all federal regulations and VA directives regarding equal opportunity and non-discrimination. We do not engage in discriminatory practices or unlawful preferential treatment based on race, ethnicity, color, national origin, sex (including pregnancy, gender identity, and sexual orientation), religion, age, disability, genetic information, political affiliation, or veteran status. All program decisions that are related to

We uphold the highest standards of professionalism, non-discrimination, and respect for individual rights and dignity. The program strictly adheres to:

Executive Order 14151 and its implementation memorandum;

The **APA Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct**;

Federal civil rights laws, including Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Age Discrimination Act;

VA nondiscrimination and merit-based selection policies, including equal opportunity principles outlined by the Office of Resolution Management (ORM).

recruitment, evaluation, retention, and advancement are based solely on individual merit, qualifications, and demonstrated performance. All individuals are evaluated and supported based on their **professional competence, performance, and commitment to clinical and research excellence**. We do not tolerate harassment, discrimination, or bias in any form. Concerns about such behavior may be reported through established VASDHS and APA grievance procedures and will be addressed promptly and fairly.

TRAINING PROGRAM STRUCTURE

Our program is unique in that residents devote effort both to direct clinical research (75%) and direct provision of clinical services (25%) providing assessments or conducting therapy in VA clinics or research programs. One strength of the clinical research approach is that there is time allotted for the following clinical research-specific activities:

- Identification of VA clinical and research priorities
- Grant writing and navigation of career development award mechanisms (e.g., VA, NIH)
- Advanced training in research design, data analysis, and scientific communication
- Research ethics and responsible conduct
- Participation in didactics on research methods, professional writing, and ethics
- Formal presentations of research findings

The VASDHS Psychology Clinical Research Postdoctoral Training Program requires a two-year commitment from August of the first year to August of the second year. Residents work a 40-hour week thereby completing 2,080 hours of supervised training per year, which is well above the minimum of 1,500 postdoctoral Supervised Professional Experience (SPE) hours required for Psychology licensure in California. The VASDHS is a Business and Professions Code (BPC) Section 2910 exempt setting whereby all hours related to clinical care including clinical research can be counted as SPE for licensure in California.

General office hours are 8:00 a.m. 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday; any deviation from this schedule must be approved by the primary supervisor and Director of Training. **There are 11 federal holidays, 13 sick leave days, and 13 annual leave days per year. There are no part-time Residents.**

Each Resident is assigned to work with a primary clinical research supervisor who will work with the Resident, the Training Director, and delegated clinical supervisor(s) in developing, implementing, and overseeing of the Resident's training plan.

ORIENTATION

The program begins with 3-day orientation week, covering:

- Overview of program policy and procedures (including Due Process and Grievances)
- Training goals, competency objectives, and evaluation procedures.
- Required VA training module designed specifically for trainees.
- During the orientation period, the supervisors and mentors and Residents evaluate the trainee's strengths and weaknesses and develop an individualized training plan for the residency year. This plan outlines the Resident's responsibilities, including the proportion of time devoted to each training activity. Every Resident must have a training plan approved by the Training Director(s) by the end of the first month of training.

The VASDHS/UCSD Psychology Clinical Research Postdoctoral Training Program also allows an opportunity for "supervised supervision" of psychology interns, practicum students and graduate and undergraduate students; formal presentations and lectures to academic, medical, and community audiences; and program administration and leadership training.

SUCCESSFUL PROGRAM COMPLETION

- Minimum of 2 publications submitted for publication by completion of program.
- Scores of "C" (Competency Achieved) on all skills.
- Successful completion (via formal evaluation with supervisor) of clinical service placements.
- Successful completion (via formal evaluation with research mentor) of clinical research.
- Successful completion of required didactics (via formal evaluation of mentor / supervisor).
- Maintenance of consistently professional and ethical conduct in professional setting throughout duration of training (via formal evaluation with research mentors and clinical supervisors).

PETITION TO GRADUATE IN LESS THAN 24 MONTHS

Under certain circumstances, a fellow may petition to graduate from the program in less than 24 months. If a fellow receives a grant or job offer, a successful outcome that is consistent with the program goals, and if he or she must initiate the grant or begin the job within months of his/her end date, the fellow may petition to graduate early.

- Resident will provide a written request to graduate early that includes the notice of grant award or job offer and the start date.
- Resident will provide documentation that MLA's have been achieved, including an evaluation by the supervisor.
- The fellow's request will be reviewed by the Training Directors, who will determine if the fellow has successfully completed the MLA's and if he/she will be allowed to leave the program prior to 24 months.

TRAINING ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURE

The program fosters a learning environment that promotes respectful dialogue, scientific integrity, and ethical responsiveness to cultural context. These values align with APA Principle E (Respect for People's Rights and Dignity) and Principle D (Justice) and support our mission of preparing psychologists to provide high-quality, competent care to a diverse Veteran population and conducting ethically responsible clinical research.

Our use of the cultural humility framework (Tervalon & Murray-García, 1998) reflects a clinical stance intended to enhance ethical and effective service delivery. This approach encourages all trainees to:

- **Engage in professional self-reflection** regarding how their values, training, and background may inform clinical care and research with diverse Veteran populations;
- **Treat all individuals with fairness, empathy, and professionalism;**
- **Develop awareness of factors that impact health outcomes**, such as military culture, access to care, disability status, and social or geographic context;
- **Apply culturally responsive approaches** to psychological assessment, intervention, and program evaluation, consistent with APA ethical standards and evidence-based practice;
- **Participate in didactics and supervision** that explore a range of psychological and multicultural frameworks relevant to working with historically underserved or complex populations;

- **Foster a respectful, collegial, and professional learning environment** that supports collaboration, intellectual curiosity, and ethical service delivery.
- **Seek consultation and continued learning** in areas where additional cultural knowledge is needed for competent service delivery (APA Ethics Code Standard 2.01b and 2.03).

SUPERVISION

Residents receive at least four hours of supervision per week, and at least two of these hours are individual supervision with a qualified psychologist.

At least one hour of weekly individual supervision comes from the primary clinical supervisor, and one from the primary clinical research mentor (if the research mentor is a California-licensed psychologist). Additional individual supervision comes from secondary supervisors, who may be selected for individual cases or projects or to provide regular supervision throughout the year and may include group supervision. Individual supervision involves direct observation of clinical care or use of video/audio recording. Supervision assignments are documented in each resident's individualized training plan.

Residents also have an opportunity for training in providing supervision by spending one hour per week supervising the clinical work of a psychiatry resident, clinical psychology intern, clinical psychology practicum student, or other trainee, to gain experience supervising others. The clinical psychology resident's primary supervisor will supervise this supervision experience.

Program faculty are expected to model ethical and inclusive supervision, in accordance with the **APA Code of Ethics** and VA standards. Supervisors support the development of all Residents, regardless of background, and promote scholarship and practice that improve access, engagement, and outcomes for Veterans. Faculty participate in ongoing professional development to ensure the program maintains high standards of clinical and scientific excellence.

SEMINARS

REQUIRED

1. Clinical Mental Health Research Seminar

When: third Wednesday of the month from 8:30-9:30 (virtual)

All residents are required to attend the Clinical Mental Health Research Seminar. It covers topics important to the conduct of clinical research and serves as a mechanism for fellows to provide feedback to the program. It is organized by Drs. Lindamer and Correa.

2. Advanced Case Conceptualization

When: 2nd Tuesday of each month (in person, 3-4 pm)

All Residents are required to attend an advanced case conceptualization seminar for the first year only. All trainees receive an education in **culturally responsive and contextually informed care**, and they are expected to demonstrate professional competence, respect, and adherence to legal and ethical standards in their interactions with all patients, colleagues, and staff. Training content is developed and delivered in accordance with APA guidelines, current clinical research, and VA policy. This seminar is led by Drs. Castriotta and Ortiz. Topics may include:

- Clinical implications of cultural and individual differences (e.g., age, disability, military culture, rurality, family systems, religious beliefs)
- Ethical responsibilities in working with underserved populations
- Evidence-based adaptations to care when warranted by contextual or cultural variables

3. Laws and Ethics Seminar

When: Usually during Orientation (in person) RM 2011

All Residents are also required to attend a Laws and Ethics Seminar. The ethics portion of the seminar covers: 1) code of conduct, 2) avoiding ethical complaints, 3) patient-therapist relationship issues, 4) record keeping guidelines, 5) forensic issues, and 6) research ethics. The legal portion of the seminar covers: 1) informed consent, 2) HIPPA, 3) confidentiality, 4) reporting laws, and 5) an individual's access to their own medical record. It is organized by the VA psychology training directors.

4. Substance Use Disorders Seminar

When: Wednesdays @ 1pm (virtual)

All residents are required to attend the Substance Use Disorders Seminar (unless they already have fulfilled this California licensure requirement). This seminar meets weekly for 60 minutes for a total of 15 meetings. The content of the seminar covers the areas to meet the California Board of Psychology

licensure requirement on the evaluation and treatment of alcohol and substance use disorders. It is organized by John Correa Ph.D.

OTHER SEMINARS

Fellows are expected to achieve competence in multiple domains of clinical and research training. The following seminars are offered to assist in building competence in several of these domains and can be incorporated as needed into each individual training plan. Note that some seminars also fulfill the California Board of Psychology licensing requirements.

5. V-Tel Core Didactic Series Seminar

When: 1st & 3rd Wednesdays from 10am-12pm (virtual)

This seminar serves as the primary seminar for the MIRECC and CESAMH fellows. Fellows are linked to other sites participating in the VA Advanced Fellowship Program in Mental Illness Research and Treatment virtual seminar hosted by the Fellowship Hub Site (Palo Alto VA). This seminar provides an in-depth overview of key topics in mental health research and clinical practice by experts in the field. Each site contributes to one or more of the seminars, and the associated modules, in which they have significant expertise. ***This seminar is mandatory for MIRECC and CESAMH***, and it is optional for all other Residents. Additional supplemental seminars are also offered by the Advanced Fellowship Program in Mental Illness Research and Treatment in biostatistics, grant preparation, and manuscript writing, which are optional for all Residents.

6. Addiction Treatment Coordinating Center Fellows' Curriculum Call

When: 1st Wednesday @ 11am-12:30pm (virtual)

This is a monthly teleconference call that includes presentations on state-of-the-art research and practice in addictions for all interprofessional fellows from the seven Addictions Fellowship sites. This seminar provides an in-depth overview of key topics in addictions research and clinical practice by experts in the field. This seminar is ***mandatory for Residents in the Advanced Fellowship in Addictions*** and is open to all other Residents. It is organized by the Addiction Treatment Coordinating Center (ATCC) located at the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System.

7. Women's Mental Health Teleconference Training Series

When: 2nd Thursday @ 3pm (virtual)

This is a monthly teleconference call that includes presentations on state-of-the-art research and practice in women's health by each of the Women's Health fellowship sites. Topics include but are not limited to interpersonal trauma sequelae and treatment issues; sexual dysfunction; lesbian, bisexual and trans-identifying persons' issues in mental and medical care; behavioral medicine for eating disorders; obesity; chronic pain; homelessness in women Veterans; and postpartum depression and chronobiological basis of mood disorders specific to women. This seminar is ***required for Residents in the Advanced Fellowship in Women's Health*** and is open to all other Residents.

8. UCSD/VASDHS Biobehavioral Addictions Research Seminar

When: 2nd & 4th Wednesday @ 4pm (virtual)

Professional development and research presentations facilitated by addictions research faculty.

9. UCSD Psychiatry Department Grand Rounds

When: 4th Tuesday @ 8am (hybrid)

Range of topics from molecular biological approaches for psychiatric disorders to public policy implications of psychiatry.

10. UCSD Biological Psychiatry and Neuroscience Fellowship Seminar

When: Thursdays @ 1pm (virtual)

Recent advances in biological psychiatry and neurosciences and professional development topics.

OTHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Residents may elect to pursue optional professional development opportunities aligned with their clinical and scholarly interests. Examples include:

- Rotations in Women's Mental Health, LGBTQ+ Affirming Care, Geriatrics, or Trauma-Focused Therapy
- Participation in VASDHS or UCSD institutional committees (e.g., Department of Psychiatry's Chair's Advisory Committee)
- Attendance at local or national meetings focused on Veteran mental health

Participation in these activities is voluntary and not a condition of program completion. No Resident will be evaluated or advantaged based on participation in or abstention from these optional experiences.

CORE COMPETENCIES

Core competencies are those skill sets that are essential to all practicing academic psychologists and that address the professional psychological competencies, skills, abilities, proficiencies and knowledge in the content areas outlined in the APA *Standards of Accreditation (SoA)*. Residents are expected to develop expertise in the core competencies by the end of the program and are the same in all four programs, and are listed below:

Goal 1: Scholarly Inquiry:

Residents will acquire competencies in clinical research and scholarship.

- a) ***Integration of Science and Practice:*** Residents will learn to utilize the scientific literature to guide their clinical practice and will use “lessons learned” from clinical practice to foster and shape their scientific hypotheses. Residents will learn to use their emerging competencies in clinical science to identify solutions to emerging clinical problems they encounter in practice and will systematically evaluate the effectiveness of their clinical work (e.g., monitoring patient outcomes).
- b) ***Conducting Clinically Informed Research:*** Residents will gain advanced skills in conducting clinical- research pertinent to the mental health needs of today’s veterans.

Goal 2: Professional, Ethical, and Legal Issues:

Residents will become competent (as appropriate for an entry level professional) in professional and collegial conduct, knowledge of the ethical guidelines of clinical psychology, and those ethical guidelines that govern the appropriate conduct of human subject’s research. They will also become appropriately familiar with the wide array of legal issues pertinent to the proper conduct of clinical psychology and human subjects related research.

Goal 3: Cultural and Individual Diversity Issues:

Residents will further develop their awareness and appreciation of cultural and individual differences and will attain cultural competence regarding the delivery of mental health services to a diverse cadre of veterans.

Goal 4: Assessment, Diagnosis, and Intervention:

Residents will develop advanced competencies in the use of empirically derived treatments and systemic means of psycho-diagnostic and neuropsychological evaluation of patients.

Goal 5: Consultation, Supervision, and Teaching:

Residents will gain advanced skills in delivering consultation to inter-professional teams, develop advanced skills in the supervision of psychology trainees including interns and practicum students; gain experience providing psychoeducation to patients, family members and providers; and gain experience presenting clinical research findings.

Goal 6: Organization, Management, Administration, and Program Evaluation:

Residents will gain experience pertinent to organizational management and administration pertinent to the career development of clinical psychologists and scientists. Residents may choose additional training experiences that facilitate the development of advanced competencies in program evaluation.

EVALUATION PROCESS

The Residency uses a **developmental and competency-based model** to assess Resident progress in both clinical and research domains. Feedback is frequent, formative, and designed to foster skill acquisition and professional growth.

Evaluation Methods

- **Formative feedback** is ongoing and embedded in weekly supervision sessions, seminars, and mentorship meetings.
- **Summative evaluations** occur **semi-annually** (every six months), with ratings provided by all relevant supervisors. . Evaluation of the supervisors and program occurred annually.
- **Individual Training Plans** are also completed and reviewed jointly with supervisors to support self-reflection and individualized goal setting.

Residents are evaluated on multiple domains of competency aligned with APA's Standards of Accreditation and VA/OAA expectations.

As part of a continual quality improvement plan, the Training Directors conduct a self-study with Residents at mid-year and at the conclusion of each training year. The areas reviewed are balance of activities (clinical, teaching, research), amount, and quality of supervision, adequacy of facility resources, and professional relationships between the Residents and other healthcare professionals. The findings and minutes are distributed to the entire faculty for review and action when appropriate.

CONTACTING MENTAL HEALTH CARE LINE

The VASDHS Mental Health Care Line Administration is open for business Monday through Friday, 8AM-4:30PM Pacific Standard Time, except on Federal holidays. The Psychology Training Program can be reached at the following address and contact information:

VASDHS Mental Health Care Line Training Programs (116B)
VA San Diego Healthcare System
3350 La Jolla Village Dr
San Diego, CA 92161
Telephone: (858) 552-8585 2649
Email: Laurie.Lindamer@va.gov

Questions related to the program's accredited status should be directed to the Commission on Accreditation:

Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation
American Psychological Association
750 1st Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002
Phone: (202) 336-5979 / Email: apaaccred@apa.org
Web: www.apa.org/ed/accreditation

POSTDOCTORAL PROGRAM INFORMATION & OUTCOMES (IR-C-23)

Date Program Tables are updated: 07/29/2025

PROGRAM DISCLOSURES

Does the program or institution require students, trainees, and/or staff (faculty) to comply with specific policies or practices related to the institution's affiliation or purpose? Such policies or practices may include, but are not limited to, admissions, hiring, retention policies, and/or requirements for completion that express mission and values?

☒ Yes

☐ No

If yes, provide website link (or content from brochure) where this specific information is presented:

As per VA policy postdoctoral fellows must be US citizens and if male gender born after 12/31/59, must have registered for the draft by age 26 years.

Please see the brochure for more details:

[Psychology Internship And Fellowship Programs | VA San Diego Health Care | Veterans Affairs](#)

POSTDOCTORAL PROGRAM ADMISSIONS

Briefly describe in narrative form important information to assist potential applicants in assessing their likely fit with your program. This description must be consistent with the program's policies on intern selection and practicum and academic preparation requirements:

Program Overview

The **VASDHS/UCSD Psychology Clinical Research Postdoctoral Residency Program** is a two-year training program grounded in the **clinician-scientist model**. Its primary objective is to prepare psychologists for leadership roles in high-priority areas of mental health relevant to Veterans. Over the course of the program, Residents receive approximately 75% training in clinical research and 25% training in advanced clinical service delivery, with additional opportunities in program administration and evaluation within an interdisciplinary setting.

At the conclusion of training, Residents are well-prepared for careers in **VA or academic medical centers** that integrate clinical care, research, training, and leadership activities.

The program consists of four tracks, all supported by the VA Office of Academic Affiliations:

1. **MIRECC Advanced Fellowship in Mental Illness Research and Treatment**
Focus: Schizophrenia and related psychotic disorders
2. **CESAMH Advanced Fellowship in Mental Illness Research and Treatment**
Focus: Stress- and trauma-related disorders such as PTSD and TBI
3. **Advanced Fellowship in Women's Health**
4. **Interprofessional Advanced Fellowship in Addiction Treatment**

Each track is a two-year training program. Typically, one psychology Resident is accepted per track each year; occasionally, a second position may be available.

Resident Selection Process

Resident selection is conducted by the **Postdoctoral Selection Committee**, which includes the training director, program directors, and supervisors from each track. The committee also seeks input from other psychologists affiliated with the program.

Selection is based on a **holistic, comprehensive, merit-based review** of each applicant's training, professional accomplishments, and alignment with program goals. Factors considered in the selection process include (not in order of priority):

1. Breadth and quality of prior general clinical training
2. Depth and relevance of training in the track's specialty area (e.g., psychosis, trauma, women's health, addiction)
3. Quality and scope of scholarly activities (e.g., research involvement, publications, conference presentations)
4. Integration of clinical and research interests and experiences
5. Evidence of professional accomplishments and initiative
6. Ability to work effectively with diverse patient populations and interdisciplinary teams
7. Fit between the applicant's training goals and the resources of the program
8. Quality and thoughtfulness of the cover letter
9. Strength of letters of recommendation from professionals familiar with the applicant's work

Top-ranked candidates in each track are invited to interview with the track director, program directors, primary supervisors, and other relevant faculty. Interviews are used to further assess the applicant's qualifications, clinical-research alignment, and interpersonal skills. Final

selection is contingent upon VASDHS Human Resources Service approval, including federal background clearance, credential verification, and a physical examination.

The current Equal Employment Opportunity policy (<https://help.usajobs.gov/equal-employment-opportunity>) for the VA states: Candidates will not be hired based on their race, sex, color, religion or national origin.

Describe any other required minimum criteria used to screen applicants:

Desirable qualifications include experience using evidence-based interventions and career goals involving clinical-research, clinical care, and leadership in university-affiliated, VA, or other medical center setting. Recruitment of men and women from diverse demographic groups (e.g., social, economic, and cultural) is a high priority. We strive to foster a climate of cultural humility and inclusivity; we are committed to a professional environment that is positive, respectful, and supportive of cultural and individual differences; and we value the wide range of diversity and intersectionality represented by our faculty and trainees.

1. Completion of doctoral degree, including defense of dissertation, from a clinical or counseling psychology doctoral programs accredited by the American Psychological Association (APA) or the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) before the start date of the residency
2. Completion of an APA-accredited psychology internship program
3. U.S. citizenship
4. Matched postdoctoral Residents are subject to fingerprinting, background checks, and a urine drug screen.
5. Male applicants born after 12/31/1959 must have registered for the draft by age 26

*** Failure to meet these qualifications could nullify an offer to an applicant.

FINANCIAL AND OTHER BENEFIT SUPPORT FOR UPCOMING TRAINING YEAR*

Annual Stipend/Salary for Full-time Residents	Year 1: \$60,744 Year 2: \$63,618	
Annual Stipend/Salary for Half-time Residents	NA	
Program provides access to medical insurance for resident?	☒ Yes ☐ No	
If access to medical insurance is provided:		
Trainee contribution to cost required?	☒ Yes ☐ No	
Coverage of family member(s) available?	☒ Yes	☐ No
Coverage of legally married partner available?	☒ Yes	☐ No
Coverage of domestic partner available?	☐ Yes	☒ No
Hours of Annual Paid Personal Time Off (PTO and/or Vacation)	104	
Hours of Annual Paid Sick Leave	104	
In the event of medical conditions and/or family needs that require extended leave, does the program allow reasonable unpaid leave to interns/residents in excess of personal time off and sick leave?	☒ Yes ☐ No	
Other Benefits (please describe): Vision and Dental benefits are offered.		

* Note. Programs are not required by the Commission on Accreditation to provide all benefits listed in this table

INITIAL POST-RESIDENCY POSITIONS

	2021-2024	
Total # of residents who were in the 3 cohorts	14	
Total # of residents who remain in training in the residency program	4	
	PD	EP
Academic teaching	PD = 0	EP = 0
Community mental health center	PD = 0	EP = 0
Consortium	PD = 0	EP = 0
University Counseling Center	PD = 0	EP = 0
Hospital/Medical Center	PD = 0	EP = 0
Veterans Affairs Health Care System	PD = 4	EP = 7
Psychiatric facility	PD = 0	EP = 0
Correctional facility	PD = 0	EP = 0
Health maintenance organization	PD = 0	EP = 0
School district/system	PD = 0	EP = 0
Independent practice setting	PD = 0	EP = 2
Other	PD = 0	EP = 1

Note: “PD” = Post-doctoral residency position; “EP” = Employed Position. Each individual represented in this table should be counted only one time. For former trainees working in more than one setting, select the setting that represents their primary position.