

VISN 19 MIRECC Denver Postdoctoral Fellowship Fellowship Administration and Financial Assistance Policy

Fellowship Administration:

The VA VISN 19 MIRECC Advanced Fellowship Program in Mental Illness Director, Beeta Y. Homaifar, Ph.D., is a licensed psychologist who oversees all aspects of the training program. This includes oversight of supervision and licensing requirements, the training process, recruitment and selection of Fellows, and administration. Within Denver VA Medical Center, she reports to Chief of Staff, Ellen Mangione, M.D. Dr. Homaifar also Co-Directs the National VA Suicide Risk Management Consultation Program with Hal Wortzel, M.D. Dr. Wortzel is the Director for the VA Advanced Fellowship Program in Mental Illness – Psychiatry, as well as Director of Neuropsychiatry Consultation Services, Co-Director of the VISN 19 MIRECC Suicide Consultation Service, and a member of the VISN 19 MIRECC Fellowship Training Committee.

Other Training Committee members include: Nazanin Bahraini, Ph.D. (Director of Education and MIRECC's Compliance Officer); Peter M. Gutierrez, Ph.D. (Co-Director of the Military Suicide Research Consortium); Jennifer Olson-Madden, Ph.D.; Bridget Matarazzo, Psy.D. (Co-Director VISN 19 MIRECC Suicide Consultation Service); Gina Signoracci, Ph.D.; Sean Barnes, Ph.D.; James Pease, Ph.D.; and Ellyn Matthews, Ph.D. Dr. Homaifar administers the Fellowship program with regular input from the Training Committee on issues ranging from program competencies to individual Fellow performance. Formal Training Committee Fellowship meetings, held monthly, facilitate such discussion. Administrative Support is provided by Melissa McHarg.

Stipend/Benefits:

VISN 19 Postdoctoral Fellows receive the following stipends: first year, \$45,332; and second year, \$47,783. The VA annual stipend is set nationally by the Office of Academic Affiliations with pay distributed every two weeks. Fellows accrue 13 days of annual leave and 13 days of sick leave each year (four hours of annual and four hours of sick per pay period), and such leave can be requested throughout the Fellowship. Fellows also have ten paid holidays during the calendar year. The Fellowship Training Director, with input from the MIRECC Training Faculty, will approve Authorized Absence (leave that does not detract from annual leave hours) to encourage Fellows to attend educational and professional advancement seminars, conferences, and other meetings outside the DVAMC. MIRECC covers travel costs for various educational events and academic conferences at which the fellow has been accepted to present. Fellows receive FICA and comprehensive health benefits including dental, vision, and life insurance coverage. Professional liability coverage is provided as part of the Federal Tort Claims Act. It is anticipated that Fellows will receive faculty appointments at the University of Colorado School of Medicine during their fellowship.

VA conducts drug screening exams on randomly selected personnel as well as new employees. Fellows are not required to be tested prior to beginning fellowship, but once on staff they are subject to random selection for testing as are other employees.