

**VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System, VISN 4 MIRECC
(Mental Illness Research, Education, and Clinical Center)**



**Physician Track Directors: *Isabella Soreca, MD, and David Volk, MD*
Fellowship Program Director: *Gretchen L. Haas, PhD***

Overview: The Mental Illness Research, Education and Clinical Center (MIRECC) at the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System (VAPHS) is recruiting physicians, clinical psychologists and other associated health clinicians for a 2-year clinical research fellowship program. The primary goal of the fellowship program is to train MD and PhD postdoctoral fellows to become leaders in Precision Mental Health Care research—including basic and clinical sciences, and health services research with the aim of enhancing the efficacy and impact of evidence-based treatments for Veterans with mental illness. Within the broad scope of Precision Mental Health Care, our MIRECC focuses on research that targets: 1) identification, validation and incorporation of putative biomarkers/other measures of disease, disorder and problems for incorporation in evidence-based care, 2) development of intervention tools, treatment algorithms and decision aids, to influence treatment choice, treatment planning and program management (integral to precision mental health care), and 3) the incorporation of implementation science in the translation and implementation of the products of precision mental health science to practice. The long-term mission of MIRECC-funded research and training is to improve the mental and physical health, quality of life, and outcomes of healthcare services for Veterans with mental illness.

Program Description: This interdisciplinary program aims to train physicians, clinical psychologists, nurses, social workers and other associated health graduates to become outstanding clinical researchers in high priority areas of mental health. Individualized, mentored research and clinical training is combined with a state-of-the-art curriculum that emphasizes research methods, statistics, epidemiology, mental health systems, quality improvement methods, education, and service delivery. Training in professional skills includes manuscript preparation, grant writing, project management, networking and the responsible conduct of research. Fellowship sites across the national network of VA Advanced Fellowship training sites are linked electronically for didactic, academic, and research efforts. Fellows devote the majority of their time to patient-oriented research and education activities and 25% to direct patient clinical care. In collaboration with their mentors, fellows will develop and implement a research project, publish and present findings, participate in grant writing, and utilize the latest technology for educational activities and clinical service delivery. MD applicants must have completed ACGME-accredited residency training, be board eligible or board certified, and have an active, unrestricted U.S. license to practice. The VA funds fellows' stipends in amounts based on previously completed ACGME accredited residency training. Fellows will also receive a secondary appointment at the University of Pittsburgh.

Faculty: Mentees often have dual mentorship including a mentor from the University of Pittsburgh in addition to VAPHS. Available research mentors (and interests) include: Howard Aizenstein, MD (neuroimaging, late-life mood disorders), Charles Atwood, MD (diagnosis and treatment of sleep disorders), Meryl Butters, PhD (late-life cognition and dementia), Daniel Buysse, MD (sleep interventions, neurobiology of sleep), Matthew Chinman, PhD (implementation research, peer support, recovery), Steven Forman, MD, PhD (neurobehavioral studies, neuroimaging of addictive disorders), Zachary Freyberg, MD, PhD (biochemical basis of antipsychotic drug-induced metabolic disturbances), Ariel Gildengers, MD (late-life bipolar disorder), Gretchen Haas, PhD (suicide, social cognition and psychotic disorders), Martica Hall, PhD (behavioral health assessment methods, sleep), Vishwajit Nimgaonkar, MD (genetics of mental illness), Konasale Prasad, MD (neuroimaging, genetics, immunology of schizophrenia), Armando Rotondi, PhD (e-health, SMI), Dean Salisbury, PhD (neurophysiology, schizophrenia), Greg Siegel, PhD (neuroimaging, cognitive interventions for depression), Isabella Soreca, MD (sleep and severe mental illness), Stuart Steinhauer, PhD (psychophysiology), Robert Sweet, MD (neurobiology of psychosis), Katalin Szanto, MD (late-life suicide) and David Volk (cortical circuitry dysfunction in schizophrenia).

Application Due Date: Review of applications will start Dec. 7, 2020, with an application deadline of **Dec. 21, 2020**. **The program is observing COVID-19 travel and workplace restrictions. Interview arrangements will be made accordingly.** All research activities are governed by VHA and hospital policies and procedures that may restrict in-person interventions, as needed, to maximize the safety of trainees, staff and Veterans.

How to Apply: Interested physicians who meet eligibility requirements should send a cover letter, curriculum vita, transcripts, and three letters of recommendation to Gretchen L. Haas, PhD (haasgl@upmc.edu) and Sara Chapman, MS, OTR/L (sara.chapman@va.gov). The cover letter should specify the reasons for your interest in this particular fellowship training program, a brief overview of your previous clinical and research experiences, and how you see this program promoting your professional and career goals. Contact Gretchen L. Haas (haasgl@upmc.edu) to discuss any questions you may have.