

Tewksbury Hospital
Department of Mental Health
Advanced Adult Clinical Psychology Practicum
2024-2025

Overview:

The clinical psychology practicum is a 24-hour per week training experience that runs from September 3, 2024 through June 27, 2025. It is estimated that students will work 42 weeks for approximately 1000 hours total.

Of note, the practicum is separate from the APA-accredited pre-doctoral internship program offered through Tewksbury Hospital.

About Tewksbury Hospital:

Tewksbury Hospital was established in 1852 and opened on May 1, 1854 as one of three state almshouses built to care for an influx of immigrants and tuberculosis patients. Over the decades Tewksbury Hospital changed names and its mission varied to serve those with infectious diseases, persons with mental illness, and those recovering from surgery. Tewksbury Hospital has been involved in educational training for medical professionals for over a century. In 1959, the administration of the hospital was transferred from the Department of Public Welfare to the Department of Public Health and the current name, Tewksbury Hospital, was adopted. The psychiatric units, administered by the Department of Mental Health (DMH), were created in 1992 after the closing of Danvers State Hospital to provide care for individuals requiring inpatient hospitalization for reasons related to major mental illness.

At the present time, the Department of Mental Health psychiatric units serve adult female and male patients who have been diagnosed with a various psychiatric disorders, including psychotic spectrum disorders, major mood disorders, eating disorders, and also face challenges related to trauma, substance use, intellectual deficit, or comorbid cognitive (e.g. dementia, head injury) or medical conditions. Individuals are admitted to the psychiatric units following an acute admission at community-based private hospitals, under court order for evaluation or treatment, or as a “step-down” from

a state forensic unit. Patients of the psychiatric units are served by multi-disciplinary team involving psychiatrists, nurse practitioners, psychologists, social workers, nurses, occupational therapists, rehabilitation staff, and mental health workers. Daily rounds and regular team meetings provide respective teams with time to formulate problems and diagnoses, develop treatment plans, monitor treatment progress, and facilitate discharge planning. Treatment teams adhere to the recovery model, which emphasizes trauma-informed, person-centered planning. In addition to unit-based group therapy, patients may be referred to an off-campus Social Club and the on-campus Rehabilitation Center, which houses a variety of vocational opportunities, recreational therapy, music and art therapy, and occupational therapy.

Practicum trainees will have the opportunity to work with a diverse population of individuals who have been diagnosed with serious mental illness (e.g. schizophrenia, bipolar disorder), substance abuse, eating disorder, and traumatic brain injury. Most persons who are patients at Tewksbury Hospital have experienced trauma of one sort or another. In addition, Tewksbury Hospital receives admissions from various district courts for evaluations of competence to stand trial and criminal responsibility¹.

Program Description:

The philosophy of the program is one of moving practicum students from initially shadowing a supervising psychologist to more independent and autonomous practice over the course of the year, always maintaining supervision to support their learning, application of skills, and personal growth.

The general training goals of the Tewksbury Hospital Psychology Practicum are:

1. Develop skills in interventions with individuals diagnosed with serious mental illness.
2. Develop skills in psychological testing and psychological assessment.
3. Adapt learned skills and conceptualizations to an inpatient setting.
4. Learn about the institution of an inpatient psychiatric hospital unit and the role of a psychologist within an interdisciplinary team.

¹ These evaluations are completed by outside evaluators. This practicum should not be viewed as providing experience in forensic psychology.

Advanced Practicum Expectations:

Practicum trainees should plan that approximately 25% of their time will involve face-to-face contact with patients. Additionally, at least 50% of their time will be focused on activities related to provision of services as described below.

A written training plan will be developed in collaboration with the practicum trainee and their graduate program that will outline specific goals and objectives during the practicum, describe anticipated/ desired experiences during the practicum, and outline the structure of individual and group supervision.

Practicum training experiences will include:

Individual Therapy: Students will have a caseload of two to three individual therapy patients, with whom they will meet weekly.

Group Therapy: Students will co-facilitate two to three unit-based therapy groups with a full-time staff member. These groups may involve DBT skills training, relationship skills, substance use recovery, etc.

Psychological Assessment: Students will complete psychological screenings for new admissions and complete referrals for further testing or therapy when necessary. They will be expected to complete three psychological assessments under supervision. More assessments may be completed depending on a given student's interest and level of skill.

Risk Assessment: Practicum students will learn about methods for formal, in-depth assessment of violence, suicide, and fire-setting and assist in completing structured assessments related to risk in these areas.

Students are required to participate in the 6-day long Department of Mental Health orientation that will take place on the hospital grounds. Additionally, they will need to complete a one-day Tewksbury Hospital orientation. These orientations will count towards the overall hours of the practicum.

Additionally, practicum students will receive 6 days for time off during the training year (September to June). Practicum students will not work on all state recognized holidays.

Seminar:

Practicum trainees will participate in a bi-weekly seminar that will focus on a variety of topics related to their work at Tewksbury Hospital, including mental health law, orientation to other disciplines (nursing, social work, occupational therapy, psychiatry), trauma-informed care, cognitive and personality assessment, and violence risk assessment.

Practicum students will also be eligible to attend regularly scheduled continuing education events that cover topics such as trauma-informed care and substance use disorders.

Supervision:

Practicum students will receive two-hours of supervision per week from a licensed psychologist. Additionally, they may receive individual supervision from one of the residents in the Tewksbury Hospital APA accredited clinical psychology internship program.

Qualifications:

Applicants are expected to be currently enrolled in a clinical psychology doctoral program and have at least one year of clinical practicum experience. Additionally, it is expected that applicants have had coursework and some familiarity with basic cognitive and personality assessment measures. It is preferred that applicants have experience writing integrated assessment reports.

Application Process:

Please email by January 8, 2024 a letter of interest, copy of your curriculum vita, and two letters of reference to: Ben.Killilea@state.ma.us.

All application materials are required for consideration.

If you have any questions, please contact Ben Killilea, Ph.D. at 978-851-7321, x2722 or by email at Ben.Killilea@state.ma.us.

Interviews and notification of offers will be made in accordance with the Massachusetts Training Collaborative schedule and guidelines. It is anticipated that interviews will be held remotely via video or telephone.

Additionally, since the situation in regards to the COVID-19 pandemic is ever-changing, an update regarding considerations related to the pandemic will be provided at the time of interviews.