

Integrated Primary Care/Mental Health Program Internship

What is the Integrated Primary Care/Mental Health program?

Also known as the Integrated Care Program (ICP), the ICP provides on-site mental health and substance abuse interventions at the two local safety net primary care clinics. Services offered by the team include therapy, case management, brief assessments, screening, diagnostic evaluations, addiction counseling, psychological testing, behavioral medicine and psychiatric services. In addition, we also provide immediate consultation, collaboration and training to the medical and clinic staff.

We can provide therapy to individuals, couples, families and groups. We offer case management services on site, in patients' homes and in the community. We also offer more intensive case management services to those patients who are high utilizers of the various agencies in the community, including the hospital and jail.

The patients we serve may struggle from a variety of issues, ranging from someone with mild impairment and psychosocial difficulties all the way to someone with a serious and persistent mental illness who also may have an addiction problem and/or a chronic medical illness.

The ICP works closely with a variety of partner agencies to provide comprehensive, quality care to the patients we work with.

Background and History of the ICP:

The ICP started in late 2004, as a result of the Community-wide Mental Health and Substance Abuse Partnership of Larimer County. It is widely known that a high percentage (up to 70%) of people who seek care in primary care clinics have an underlying psychosocial and/or psychological problem. In addition, there are a significant number of patients with substance use disorders. Approximately half of all patients with psychological symptoms receive their mental health care in primary care clinic settings. Many people with serious mental health problems receive

their mental health care exclusively from their Primary Care Provider (PCP), and often refuse referrals for more specialized mental health care. The reasons behind this are many, including cost, stigma, access to care and relationships with PCP's.

As a result, the ICP provides direct clinical care to patients at the clinics and in the community. In addition, the ICP provides training, education and consultation to the clinic staff so that they may increase their knowledge and comfort in working with patients suffering from mental health and substance use disorders.

Internship opportunities:

Currently, master's level interns, and psychology interns are being placed at one of the safety-net clinics in the community, Salud Family Health Centers. Interns will work directly with the other members of the ICP from the very beginning, and become a member of the team for the duration of their internship. Interns will participate in training to help familiarize them with the team, the clinic and the population we serve. They will spend time shadowing various members of the team in addition to clinic staff. The intern will attend all appropriate meetings and trainings throughout the year as well.

Intern tasks will include, but are not limited to, providing therapy, case management, diagnostic assessment/testing, consultation, education and evaluation, and participation in the behavioral medicine clinic. They will work some "on-call" shifts during clinic hours where they will provide crisis and brief intervention, resource and referral information and case management to the clinic population. They will work closely with other agencies throughout the year and may participate in community projects and committees. They will have the opportunity to accompany staff on home visits, community outreach visits, as well as shadow staff at partner agencies, such as Connections and the Crisis Assessment Center.

Supervision:

Interns will receive weekly supervision from an on-site, clinical supervisor who is an appropriate match for the intern based on their program

requirements. There are two task supervisors at Salud Family Health Centers as well who may be part of the supervision team. In addition, we encourage interns to seek informal supervision from other team members as needed.

Who is a good match for an ICP placement?

A primary care clinic setting is dynamic, fast-paced and ever-changing. As such, a person would need to be very flexible to successfully function and thrive in this environment. While the ICP provides some traditional therapy services at the clinics, we do not work in a traditional setting, which means we can be interrupted by a clinic staff member even while in session. Although this may take some getting used to, it is quite an effective model and works well in primary care.

The ICP seeks interns who have experience in the areas of mental health and substance abuse, therapy, case management and crisis intervention. Other desired qualities are bilingual (Spanish), a working knowledge of the DSM-IV-TR and experience with patients who have co-occurring disorders. In addition, the individual should be very comfortable setting appropriate boundaries with patients, have an ability to connect with a variety of clientele, including those with very challenging diagnoses and personalities, and be quick learners.

Significant clinical experience is desired. However, we are interested in talking with students who may not have substantial clinical skills, but are motivated to work with this population, and are willing to learn.