



Iowa Psychologist Internship Training Program

**Iowa Psychological Association
and the
Iowa Department of Public Health
Bureau of Oral and Health Delivery Systems**

Access to Psychological Services

In 2006 a report by the Iowa Department of Public Health described the critical mental health workforce shortage. The report cited federal Health Resources Services Administration data that ranked Iowa 46th in the nation for psychologists per capita. State data revealed that in 2005 47% of licensed psychologists were age 55 or older. In 2010 this number increased to 53%; a 6% increase in a span of five years. Access to services is impacted by the number of psychologist retirees.

In order to be licensed as a psychologist in Iowa an applicant must have earned a doctoral degree from an accredited university and complete one year of postdoctoral training under the supervision of a licensed psychologist. On average it takes a psychologist 11 years to complete this training process. Postdoctoral training positions are limited because of funding difficulties.

Solutions

- Since 2008 the Iowa Department of Public Health has contracted with the Iowa Psychological Association to develop psychologist postdoctoral training programs in rural and underserved areas. Total funding for this program beginning in fiscal year 2007/2008 through the end of June 2012 is \$243,318. The appropriation for 2011/2012 is \$38,263. The initial appropriation level in 2007-2008 was \$50,000.
- Funds have allowed the IPA to secure the services of a Training Development Director, contract with mental health agencies in rural and underserved areas to implement training programs, offer consultation to training sites in urban areas and to develop and implement recruitment and retention programs for license eligible psychologists
- Two postdoctoral training sites have been developed in Health Professional Shortage Areas. Poweshiek County Mental Health Center in Grinnell serves as one of the sites. By the fall of 2012, six psychologists will have completed training at this site. All continue to provide psychological services to Iowans. Central Iowa Psychological Services in Ames is the most recent training site and will select its first trainee next month.
- IPA has extended consultation and limited administrative support to other sites, such as Innovative Learning Professionals in Des Moines. Owner/psychologist Dr. David Beeman contracts with Polk County Juvenile Justice to fund a postdoctoral position.

By the fall of 2012 two psychologists will have completed training with Beeman and will continue practice in Iowa.

Indicators of Success

- Estimates show that by June of 2012 at least 5,000 Iowans will have benefitted from services provided by psychologists who have completed the training program.
- By the fall of 2013 the internship program will have trained 11 psychologists who remain in Iowa providing services to its citizens.
- Applications to the three sites are at an all time high for positions in the 2012-2013 training year. With present funding levels, each site can only take one trainee; a total of three training positions for 12 applicants. This is unfortunate because nearly all applicants have a previous connection with Iowa, such as growing up in the state or receiving their education in the state and want to practice in Iowa.
- When Iowa educated psychologists leave the state to complete postdoctoral training they are less likely to return to Iowa because during the postdoctoral year they integrate into professional networks and begin to put down roots in their new communities. Many receive job offers from their postdoctoral training sites because the sites see an advantage in retaining a candidate they have already devoted resources to.
- IPA maintains a list of other sites interested in serving as postdoctoral training sites if funding becomes available.
- IPA, with the support of the IDPH, has engaged in recruitment and retention projects at the University of Iowa and Iowa State University where practicing Iowa psychologists meet face to face with doctoral students to share professional information, including information about Iowa practice opportunities.
- Information from the Poweshiek County Mental Health Center program indicate that approximately \$12,000 - \$15,000 is needed to support each trainee in addition what the trainee can generate in revenues providing services. These limited funds offset the costs of supervision (both for supervisor and supervisee), program administration, and time devoted to training instead of billable services.

We welcome questions to be addressed to:

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