



## **Los Angeles Gay & Lesbian Center Mental Health Services Internship Program**

### **NATURE OF AGENCY/POPULATION SERVED**

The L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center (LAGLC) is a private, non-profit human services agency that provides a broad array of services designed specifically for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community. Through its Jeffrey Goodman Special Care Clinic, Sexual Health Program, on-site pharmacy, Transgender Health Program, and Mental Health Services Department, the Center offers free and low-cost health, mental health, HIV/AIDS medical care, and HIV/STD testing and prevention as well as domestic violence and crystal methamphetamine recovery services. The Center also offers legal, social, cultural, and educational services with unique programs for seniors, families, and youth including a transitional living program for homeless youth. The Center welcomes nearly a quarter-million client visits from ethnically diverse youth and adults each year.

The Mental Health Services Department (MHS) is one of the Center's oldest programs, established in 1971. Initially providing predominantly peer counseling services, MHS has grown into a professional program utilizing the services of nearly 75 individuals, including paid staff clinicians and psychiatrists, professional volunteers and mental health interns and trainees. MHS is an important training site for future mental health professionals and enjoys the active support of the L.A. lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender (LGBTQ) mental health community.

The Center's mental health client population consists primarily of adults from diverse ethnic, social, economic backgrounds, *and* sexual orientations, who present with the full range of psychiatric issues and disorders (from "identity problems" to chronic mental illness). Many are economically disenfranchised.

### **DIRECT/INDIRECT SERVICES**

Psychotherapy services include individual, couples and, infrequently, family therapy. Modalities include crisis intervention, short and long-term treatment. Various groups are also offered, specializing in such areas as domestic violence, anger management, substance use recovery, crystal methamphetamine addiction, sexual compulsivity, men's and women's general and intimacy issues, female-to-male and male-to-female transgendered individuals, among others. Onsite consultations with psychiatrists and medical providers are available, including a monthly, multidisciplinary case conference, in which interns/trainees are invited to participate.

### **THEORETICAL ORIENTATION**

Eclectic: predominantly cognitive-behavioral, psychodynamic, post-modern, existential, and solution-focused. All interns also work with clients in crisis intervention. Regardless of the theoretical approach, all therapy is LGBTQ affirmative.

### **SUPERVISION**

One hour of individual supervision and two hours of group supervision each week. Individual supervision is provided by both licensed staff and licensed mental health professional volunteers. All supervision groups are facilitated by licensed staff clinicians. In addition, ongoing psychiatric consultation and specialized consultation regarding addictive behavior and domestic violence is provided.

## **TRAINING**

Initially, 44 hours of orientation and training are provided in September/October (for interns entering in the Fall/September and in the Spring/April, including presentations on gay/lesbian identity formation, gay and lesbian clinical issues, transgender issues, substance abuse, HIV, and LGBTQ domestic violence. In addition, monthly two-hour in-service trainings are provided.

## **TIME COMMITMENT**

A calendar year's commitment of a minimum of 15 - 20 hours a week (inclusive of supervision) is expected. (Note: Social Work students usually work 16 - 20 hours per week for the academic year while MFT interns and doctoral level practicum students work 15 hours per week for the calendar year.) While most interns enter the program in early September, to coincide with the academic year, a smaller number of interns begin their placement in April. Interns who start in the Spring (April) are expected to participate in September trainings for topics that are not offered during the Spring orientation training.

## **REQUIRED ATTENDANCE/HOURS OF OPERATION**

Required times for all interns include the initial 44 hour orientation, attendance at monthly in-service trainings, and a minimum of 15 - 20 hours a week for clinical activities. In the Fall, the orientation training generally includes two Wednesdays and the five-six consecutive Saturdays in September/October, from 9:00 AM to 4:30 PM. The Spring orientation is generally conducted on weekdays. In-service trainings are held on the first Wednesday of each month from 8:00 to 10:00 AM. MHS hours of operation are Monday through Thursday, from 9:00 AM to 9:00 PM; Friday, from 9:00 AM to 7:00 PM; and Saturday, from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM. Individual schedules vary and are established through negotiation with the Manager of Clinical Training & Education (Internship Program). **Note:** Individuals with erratic school or work schedules need to be able to identify and commit to the *same* hours every week.

## **VACATION**

Two weeks plus major holidays.

## **APPLICATION PROCEDURE**

Prospective interns/trainees complete an application form, which includes a two-page biographical statement (addressing their interest in becoming a therapist, *as well as their particular interest in LAGLC as a training site, their interest in working with the LGBT population, and how personal therapy impacts one as a clinician*), after which interviews for selected candidates are scheduled. Applications for the Fall Program are accepted January through April 30 of each year. However, applications from students attending colleges and universities that observe Uniform Notification Day must submit their application(s) by March 1 of each year. Because the selection process is highly competitive, it is recommended the applicants submit the required documentation prior to the established deadline(s). Applications for the Spring Program are accepted in January and February of each year. Contact Susan Holt, M.A., CCDVC, Manager of the Internship Program/Clinical Training & Education, for application materials (323-993-7645 or [sholt@lagaycenter.org](mailto:sholt@lagaycenter.org)) **Note:** individuals who have been clients of MHS within the past four years are not eligible to apply to the Internship Program.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Bilingual students and people of color are especially urged to apply as are heterosexuals interested in developing their clinical experience with the LGBT community.

*Note: The term "intern" and "internship" is inclusive of trainees, interns, and students applying for a practicum.*

