

# Walter Reed National Military Medical Center



## Psychology Internship

The Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) is the "flagship" of military medicine. It is located in Bethesda, MD, just outside of Washington, DC.

Nicknamed "The President's Hospital," WRNMMC treats the President of the United States, members of the President's Cabinet, Congressmen, Senators, and all branches of the armed services.

Distinguished neighbors and valuable resources include the [National Institutes of Health \(NIH\)](#) and the [National Library of Medicine](#).

WRNMMC offers over sixty accredited medical and dental residency and fellowship programs, including our psychology internship.

### WRNMMC Doctoral Internship in Clinical Psychology

Our internship has been fully accredited by the [American Psychological Association \(APA\)](#) since 1964. It has been cited as a "model program" by the APA.

The internship has two broad goals:

- Provide the intern with experiences and competencies needed to function as a broadly trained clinical psychologist
- Equip the intern with program-specific military competencies needed to practice as a psychologist in the United States Navy

## **Major Rotations**

Based on a generalist model, the internship exposes interns to a wide variety of patient populations and treatment modalities. There are four major rotations:

### **Adult Outpatient Rotation**

Our adult outpatient clinic provides services to a diverse patient population, giving trainees a broad array of assessment and treatment experiences. Interns will have opportunities to demonstrate skills and experience in:

- Diagnostic interviewing, treatment planning, and short-term psychotherapy.
- Military-specific activities such as security screenings and fitness-for-duty evaluations.
- Supervision of graduate students from the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USUHS).

### **Health Psychology Rotation**

During this rotation, interns work in our Primary Care Clinic and Women's Health Clinic, serving as consultants to the multi-disciplinary treatment team. Interns provide brief, targeted interventions to address patient needs regarding both chronic health and behavioral health conditions. Problems addressed include headaches, pain, anxiety, insomnia, weight reduction, treatment adherence, and lifestyle management. Interns also have the opportunity to learn about Behavioral Sleep Medicine (BSM). They are trained in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Insomnia, and work closely with providers in our Sleep Disorders Center. Finally, interns will have the opportunity to rotate to the Pain Clinic where they will learn about and treat patients with chronic pain. Interns will conduct individual evaluations, and see patients in both individual and group settings.

### **Inpatient Rotation**

As part of a multidisciplinary treatment team, interns participate in the daily operations of a psychiatric inpatient unit and a neuro-behavioral inpatient unit. The treatment team consists of psychologists, psychiatrists, neurologists, nurses, social workers, enlisted hospital corpsmen, and civilian hospital staff. Interns conduct daily group therapy sessions, provide individual treatment, and provide consultation to patients, their military leaders, and family members. Interns gain experience with a wide range of psychopathology, including severe depression, psychosis, substance abuse, dementia, and traumatic brain injury. Interns also gain first-hand experience in neuropsychological screening and testing, with a particular focus on patients with mild to moderate traumatic brain injury and co-occurring psychiatric conditions.

### **Psychological Assessment Rotation**

Our Psycho-Diagnostic Assessment Service provides interns an opportunity to perform psychological

testing in response to a variety of referral questions, in both inpatient and outpatient settings. Interns gain proficiency in the administration, scoring and interpretation of various psychological assessment instruments. These include objective personality tests, projective personality tests, and cognitive ability assessments. Interns on this rotation are also members of the Psychiatric Consultation and Liaison team, providing brief evaluations in the Emergency Department and in a variety of inpatient medical settings. Interns are frequently called upon to provide education and training to medical interns and psychiatric residents regarding topics specific to clinical psychology.

### **Trans-rotational Clinical Experiences**

In addition to the four major rotations, interns have several year-long training experiences. These include:

#### **Long-term Psychodynamic Psychotherapy**

Interns are assigned psychotherapy cases to be seen across the various rotations. These cases typically employ a psychodynamic model, and weekly supervision is provided.

#### **Trauma Therapy**

Interns also have opportunities to employ empirically supported therapies to treat patients with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. Weekly supervision is provided for these cases as well.

#### **Navy Leadership Seminar**

Interns meet for lunch twice a month with the senior active duty Navy psychologist at WRNMMC. These informal discussions are focused on issues pertinent to the Navy psychology community. Interns also meet once a month with a senior civilian staff psychologist for a seminar on non-specific factors in psychotherapy.

#### **Didactics**

Didactic training is offered in the form of half-day seminars and one or two-day workshops throughout the internship year. These didactic activities are also attended by interns from nearby programs, and by graduate students and faculty members from universities and professional schools throughout the National Capital Area. These events provide rich opportunities to interact with psychologists at various levels of professional development. Interns also attend and participate as presenters in our weekly, hour-long Grand Rounds sessions, which address a wide range of clinical and research-related topics.

#### **Operational Experiences**

The major operational experience of the internship is a deployment, lasting approximately one week, aboard a Navy Aircraft Carrier. Through this training, interns experience shipboard living conditions and stresses, work in the ship's Medical Department, interact with Sailors, and learn about the industrial and psychological demands of working and living aboard a large Navy ship. This deployment and training experience is supervised by the Navy Psychologist assigned to the carrier. A second operational experience is held at the Marine Security Group (MSG) in Quantico, Virginia. During this training, emphasis is placed on gaining familiarity with the organizational structure of the Marine Corps, understanding the unique stressors Marines face, and developing skills for effective assessment and consultation with Marine Corps leaders. When possible, interns also spend a day visiting the Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery (BUMED), and a day at the United States Naval Academy (USNA). These visits provide exposure to the unique command and training environments in the National Capital Area.

## Supervision

Most of the ongoing case supervision will be provided by designated privileged staff psychologists on the rotation to which the intern is assigned. Privileged psychiatrists also serve as adjunct supervisors and provide additional supervision, particularly on the Psychiatric Consultation Liaison Service (PCLS) and on the inpatient rotations. Interns may also be assigned to different staff members for supervision during trans-rotational cases. Over the course of the year, interns receive supervision from several of the psychology faculty and some of the psychiatry staff. It is important to note that in addition to scheduled supervision times (at least four hours per week), the faculty is available for and strongly encourages additional supervision and consultation as needed.

## Class Adjutant

Each intern serves as class adjutant for a designated period during the internship year. The adjutant role in the Navy is traditionally an administrative role, working with senior department leaders to ensure adequate communication within their department or division. In our internship program, the adjutant serves as an assistant to the Program Director, ensuring communication between the faculty, the intern cohort, the rotation directors, and the Service and Department Chiefs. Additional duties include organizing and coordinating with guest lecturers for didactic presentations, working with administrative personnel to assist with work or social functions, and completing other duties as assigned. This role is considered a program-specific (military) competency.

For more information on our internship, please see our [Training Manual](#)

## Important dates:

- Deadline for submitting APPIs: **8 November 2021**
- Deadline for completing Navy commissioning application: **15 December 2021**
- Application interviews will be conducted between **7 and 9 December 2021**. We do not yet know if these interviews will be in-person or virtual. That information will be communicated to applicants in the late summer/early fall of 2021.

## Contact:

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