

Title: Preparing the learners of today for the needs of tomorrow: A review of one pediatric psychology postdoctoral fellowship program

Authors: Katherine M. Burrell, Psy.D.  
Pediatric Psychologist  
Hurley Medical Center

Crystal Cederna-Meko, Psy.D.  
Pediatric Psychologist  
Hurley Medical Center

**Background:** Today's training programs must consider their impact upon the direction of the profession as a whole, while adapting to the needs of patients in a changing climate. Individuals trained in clinical health psychology are uniquely prepared to contribute to primary care medical homes, participate in biopsychosocial approaches to care, and answer calls for their services in medicine at large. Pediatric psychology, a subspecialty within clinical health psychology, targets children and adolescents specifically, and emphasizes health promotion, illness prevention, and adaptation.

**Aim:** In what follows, one pediatric psychology training program will be reviewed in detail.

**Methods:** Michigan State University's Consortium for Advanced Psychology Training offers 2-year, APA accredited, postdoctoral fellowship training in Clinical Health Psychology. Within the consortium, a position with a pediatric psychology emphasis is offered. Clinical activities span clinical and health psychology presentations, exclusively in the birth to young adult population. Pediatric psychology fellows train alongside pediatric medical residents, share faculty, and learn from them while simultaneously teaching the psychosocial aspects of health care.

Activities shared with all fellows of the consortium include routine individual and group supervision; a longitudinal clinical health psychology curriculum; didactics in psychopharmacology, rehabilitation psychology, leadership and management, and pathophysiology; participation in a diversity and inclusion council with related experiential activities; teaching; and engagement in scholarly activity.

**Results:** Pediatric psychology fellows are exposed to extensive breadth and depth, owing to a reliance upon evidence-based practices tailored to the unique sociocultural needs of the population served, scope of practice, educational climate, and many innovations employed. Consequently, knowledge and skill acquisition is considerable, and pertinent to the roles of clinician, supervisor, teacher, administrator, and scholar.

**Conclusions:** Pediatric psychology fellows graduate with knowledge, skills, and attributes applicable to a variety of high-demand vocational pursuits, along with the capacity to both thrive in, and enrich, pediatric health care settings.