

## Professional Geropsychology Postdoctoral Competencies

### Research/Integration of Science & Practice

- Demonstrate ability to cite scientific evidence on aging to support professional activities in clinical settings
- Incorporate the above knowledge into geriatric health and mental health practice in clinic or research settings
- Apply review of available scientific literature in older adults to case conceptualization, assessment approaches, intervention, and policy planning
- Recognize strengths and limitations in knowledge base about older adults in application to individual case
- Understand the different research methods used in aging research and the strengths and limitations of each design to inform the evidence base

### Ethical and Legal Standards

- Ability to recognize ethical dilemmas most relevant to geropsychology (e.g., promoting autonomy vs. protecting safety in 'at risk' older adults) and to apply ethical decision-making processes in order to resolve the dilemmas
- Demonstrate knowledge of the APA Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct and ability to apply them appropriately, seeking consultation as needed
- Understand state and organizational laws and policies covering issues related to older adults (e.g. elder abuse, advance directives, conservatorship, guardianship, multiple relationships and confidentiality)
- Address decision making capacity and understand ways to optimize older adults' participation in informed consent process regarding a wide range of life decisions

### Individual and Cultural Diversity

- Adapt professional behavior in a culturally sensitive manner, as appropriate to the needs of older clients and the age cohorts they grew up in.
- Demonstrate self-awareness and ability to recognize differences between the clinician's and the patient's values, attitudes, and behaviors based in diversity factors
- Articulate integrative conceptualizations of gerodiversity factors that influence older clients, psychologists, and systems of care, including gender, age, cohort, ethnic/racial status, culture, linguistic, socioeconomic, religious, disability, LGBTQ status, gender identity, and urban/rural residence
- Demonstrate understanding of issues of social justice and equity as they affect older adults.

### Professional Values, Attitudes, and Behaviors

- Demonstrate awareness of personal biases, assumptions, stereotypes, and potential discomfort in working with older adults, particularly those of backgrounds divergent from the psychologist
- Engage in activities to maintain and improve performance, well-being, and professional effectiveness with older adults
- Openness and responsiveness to feedback and supervision.

### Communication and Interpersonal skills

- Use rapport and empathy in verbal and nonverbal behaviors to facilitate interactions with older adults, families, and care teams
- Form effective working alliance with wide range of older clients, families, colleagues, and other stakeholders

### Assessment

- Conduct differential diagnosis (e.g., dementia versus depression), including consideration of co-morbid medical issues that may influence an older adult's presentation
- Implement multi-method approach to assessing older adults (including cognitive, psychological, personality, functional capacity, and behavioral assessment drawn from self-report, interviews, observation and assessment methods)
- Integrate knowledge of normal and pathological aging, including age related changes in cognitive abilities, into geropsychological evaluations
- Evaluate older adults' understanding, appreciation, reasoning, and choice abilities with regards to capacity for decision making
- Communicate orally and in written documents the findings and implications of the assessment in an accurate and effective manner sensitive to a range of audiences

### Intervention

- Choose and implement evidence-based treatment for older adults, groups and family/caregivers of clients based on diagnosis, other relevant client characteristics, and settings
- Modify evidence-based interventions to accommodate the unique sensory, cognitive, and cohort variables in older adults.
- Evaluate intervention effectiveness and adapt intervention goals and methods consistent with ongoing evaluation.

### Supervision

- Apply the knowledge of supervision models and practices in supervision and teaching of psychology trainees and other health professionals
- Accurately assess a trainee's competency level in geropsychology and assign tasks consistent with that level as well as with the supervisee's learning goals
- Provide both positive and constructive feedback in an effective manner
- Attend to explicit and implicit ageism and its effects on psychological services in these interactions

### Consultation and Interprofessional/Interdisciplinary Skills

- Work with professionals in other disciplines to incorporate geropsychological information into team treatment planning and implementation
- Work to build consensus on treatment plans and goals of care, to invite various perspectives, and to negotiate conflict constructively
- Knowledge of and respect for unique roles of other professionals in a collaborative treatment approach
- Provide clear and concise written and oral communication of geropsychological conceptualizations and recommendations

### Advocacy

- Advocate for clients' needs in interdisciplinary and organizational environments when appropriate
- Collaborate with patients, families, and other organizational and community providers to improve older adults' access to needed health care, residential, transportation, social, or community services