

**Primary Care Mental Health Integration (PCMHI)  
STAFF PSYCHOLOGIST (Colocated Collaborative Care)  
FUNCTIONAL STATEMENT**

Series: GS-0180

Position grade: GS-13

Full performance level of position: GS-13

**QUALIFICATIONS:**

- a. Doctoral degree in Clinical Psychology (American Psychological Association accredited)
- b. Internship in Psychology (American Psychological Association accredited)
- c. Psychology Licensure
- d. Experience: At least two years of experience as a professional psychologist, with at least one year equivalent to the GS-12 grade level

**GENERAL DESCRIPTION:**

This Primary Care Mental Health Integration (PCMHI) Psychologist position is administratively aligned with the Mental Health Service and is assigned as a Colocated Collaborative Care (CCC) behavioral health consultant in Primary Care. PCMHI is a component of the interdisciplinary Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT). The PCMHI CCC psychologist provides brief, evidence-based interventions, education, and consultation services to Veterans, Primary Care Providers (PCPs), and allied PACT members. The PCMHI psychologist works collaboratively within PACT to promote prevention, early identification, and treatment of most mild to moderate mental health and health behavior concerns as part of routine primary care. PCMHI visits are brief (generally, 30 minutes or less), limited in number (1-6 visits), and structured so that the patient views meeting with the behavioral health provider as a routine primary care service. PCMHI CCC psychologists integrate their practice into the fast-paced primary care clinic, engaging in a variety of team-based activities, including huddles, case review, consultation, and education. Direct service delivery occurs via brief, focused interventions for up to 8-10 patients daily, with a large percentage of those being seen via warm handoff within PACT to ensure same day access.

**FUNCTIONS:**

A. PCMHI Clinical Practice

The PCMHI psychologist provides functional assessment, triage, brief intervention, education, and consultative services regarding a wide range of possible concerns. Consistent with the VA Whole Health philosophy, the PCMHI psychologist promotes awareness of the important mental and behavioral aspects of wellness and overall health outcomes. The PCMHI psychologist utilizes a Population-Based Care and Public Health approach, recognizing the PCP as the overall leader of the treatment team and maximizing the reach of services to as many Veterans as possible. The PCMHI psychologist accepts referrals from PCPs and allied PACT members and supports guideline-concordant treatment within primary care. The PCMHI psychologist maintains competences in the following core domains:

1. PCMHI CCC Clinical Practice Management:

- Collaborates with PCPs and the interdisciplinary PACT to support high quality, effective, and coordinated service delivery at the patient and programmatic levels
- Maintains daily open access slots and encourages same day warm handoffs within PACT
- Completes most individual appointments (e.g., 75%) within 30 minutes
- Uses Measurement Based Care (MBC) in accordance with nationally recommended guidelines for PCMHI
- Conducts initial functional assessments that are focused on the main reason(s) for referral and are less extensive than traditional mental health intake evaluations (e.g., 30 minutes vs. 60 or 90 minutes for traditional evaluation)
- Supports Stepped-Care principles to facilitate “on-time, on target” services to Veterans, matching the intensity of services with the level of clinical need
- Refers Veterans with more severe or complex needs to the appropriate general or specialty mental health program
- Provides time-limited, brief, evidence-based, individual or group interventions (e.g., approximately 1-6 sessions) for a broad range of mental health and health behavior concerns within the primary care setting
- Utilizes intermittent visits and flexible patient contact strategies to support brief but longitudinal PCMHI care as part of PACT
- Ensures quality of care by successfully completing the national VA PCMHI Competency Training Program (or approved equivalent) and associated ongoing education modules

2. Documentation Skills:

- Writes clear, concise notes that are optimized for collaboration within PACT based on the PCMHI CCC functional assessment and follow-up visit guidelines
- Notes document important elements for team collaboration (e.g., MBC, curbside consultation/team care discussion, liaison with specialty care providers) as appropriate
- Notes are completed same day or within 24 hours

3. Consultation and Interdisciplinary Team-Based Skills:

- Engages in PACT huddles and meetings to cultivate collaborative team functioning and serve as a subject matter expert for behavioral health considerations
- Provides education to PACT on mental health and health behavior issues, as well as tips to promote effective patient communication, motivational enhancement, and behavior change
- Integrates self into routine workflow of Primary Care and seeks opportunities to offer expertise or direct patient care services to support team-based care
- Tolerates interruptions, demonstrates flexibility and adaptability, and maintains availability for ad hoc team discussion
- Accepts and encourages same day warm handoffs

- Routinely provides feedback (verbal and/or written) to PCP and other PACT members same day as referral
- Works collaboratively with other team members in PCMHI (e.g., PCMHI Health Technicians, Collaborative Care Managers, and Providers with Prescribing Privileges) ensure high quality, effective, Veteran-centered services at the patient and programmatic levels

B. Administration

- Serves on Medical Center or Healthcare System, VISN, and/or National VA committees or task forces, as endorsed by supervisors
- Participates in Psychology privileging, educational and peer review activities, in accord with Psychology and medical center policies
- Abides by applicable medical staff by-laws and participates accordingly
- Supports psychology administrative initiatives and performance improvement activities (e.g., by taking on assigned projects and serving on committees)
- Completes required clinical and administrative documentation in a timely manner and in accordance with governing regulations

C. Academic/Teaching/Training

- Supervises psychology predoctoral interns, practicum students and post-doctoral fellows in accord with training program policies and accrediting agency requirements
- Provides staff and student didactic training and consultation as requested in content areas of scholarly and/or clinical expertise
- May supervise or train allied health providers in accord with facility and regulatory standards regarding such training

D. Research/ Program Evaluation

- May participate in program evaluation and/or research activities

**SUPERVISORY CONTROLS:**

The psychologist practices independently, using professional judgment and data-based expertise to make decisions about services and treatment provided to Veterans and their families. The psychologist reports directly to the PCMHI Coordinator/Program Manager. For psychology practice issues, the PCMHI psychologist has access to the Chief of Psychology/Lead Psychologist as needed for complex and sensitive case situations. The Chief of Psychology/Lead Psychologist works in collaboration with the PCMHI Coordinator/Program Manager to complete annual PCMHI psychology evaluations. The PCMHI Coordinator/Program Manager provides administrative supervision, general instruction plans, and assigns work.

