



## Potential Applicants

### Applicant Requirements:

- United States Citizenship
- Graduates, or expected to graduate, from ACOTE accredited OT Master's or Doctorate program
- 3 months experience in mental health or geriatric clinical practice setting
- Proficient in English
- Fully licensed by the start of the fellowship year

### Benefits:

Fellows are temporary employees of the Durham VAMC for a one year appointment.

- Competitive salary
- Health insurance
- Paid leave and sick days
- Federal holidays
- Authorized absence to attend approved didactics/trainings
- Access to online journals
- Comprehensive learning experience with dedicated mentoring opportunities

## How do I apply?

Submit the following items electronically to [Valerie.fox@va.gov](mailto:Valerie.fox@va.gov)

- Letter of interest that describes (a) how you envision this training furthering your professional development, (b) your prior training or exposure to geriatric and/or mental health practice, and (c) your professional and research interests. Letters of interest are typically 1 page in length.
- Current Curriculum Vitae or Resume
- Graduate transcripts
- 3 Letters of reference from individuals familiar with your clinical work
- Declaration for Federal Employment ([https://www.opm.gov/forms/pdf\\_fill/of0306.pdf](https://www.opm.gov/forms/pdf_fill/of0306.pdf))
- Application for Health Professions Trainees (<http://www.va.gov/vaforms/medical/pdf/vha-10-2850d-fill.pdf>)



### CONTACT US

Fellowship Director: Valerie Fox  
Phone: (919) 286-0411 ext. 174730  
Email: [Valerie.fox@va.gov](mailto:Valerie.fox@va.gov)  
[https://www.durham.va.gov/GMH\\_OTFellowship.asp](https://www.durham.va.gov/GMH_OTFellowship.asp)



# GERIATRIC MENTAL HEALTH (GMH) OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY FELLOWSHIP

*Durham VA Health Care  
System*



## Program Description

The purpose of the Geriatric Mental Health (GMH) OT Fellowship Program is to produce an OT Geriatric Mental Health specialist with skills and attributes to meet the unique needs of older adults with mental illness to enable them to perform the occupations that they need, want, or are expected to do, and to engage fully in daily life activities in the communities of their choice.

The fellowship will provide a challenging, diverse experience in varied geriatric programs that treat a range of mental health disorders, including depression, delirium, dementia, and accompanying physical or emotional comorbidities that impact occupational engagement.

Following completion of the fellowship program, fellows will be prepared for American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) Board Certification in Mental Health. Fellows who complete the fellowship program may apply for Board Certification with 3 rather than 5 years of practice.

---

*“This is a great program with a lot of opportunity to see various aspects of care related to geriatric mental health.”*

---

## Core Elements

- Specialized skills and knowledge in geriatric mental health
- Advanced clinical assessment, planning, and treatment to optimize geriatric health and well-being
- Care Planning and Coordination Across the Continuum of Care
- Systems competencies specific to Veterans Health, Veterans Benefits, and community mental health care
- Interdisciplinary collaboration and training
- Advancement of the OT profession via program development, advocacy, and research endeavors

## Fellowship Highlights

### Clinical Experiences

Clinical experiences are organized into rotations that allow for in-depth, progressive learning along the continuum of care for elders with mental illness.

Clinical rotations focus on 4 primary themes:

- Fundamentals of Geriatric Psychiatry and Mental Health OT
- Prevention, Management, and Treatment of Delirium and Dementia
- Transitions to Home
- Selective In-Depth Learning Experience

### Didactic Trainings

Key didactic trainings and learning opportunities will be provided throughout the fellowship year. Training in evidence-based health care is emphasized and will take advantage of didactics via the Duke Center for Aging, Geriatric and Mental Illness Research, Education, and Clinical Centers, and many others.

### Quality Improvement (QI) Project

Fellows are required to complete a QI project during the program, focused on the mental health needs of older Veterans. This project will encourage growth of program development and advocacy skills, as well as interdisciplinary collaboration.

### High Quality Mentorship

Fellows will receive at least 340 hours of mentoring over the course of the fellowship year. Mentors include instructional staff from OT and other disciplines to ensure a well-rounded, holistic learning experience.