Community Psychiatry in Western Pennsylvania

The rich tradition of community psychiatry in the City of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania dates back to the Community Mental Health Centers Act of 1963. At that time our department was lead by the late Jack Wolford, MD, one of the icons of community psychiatry in this country. He served as the voice of public psychiatry throughout the latter part of the 20th century.

That tradition continues. The core faculty of the Center has a wealth of experience providing care to diverse populations in a variety of community and public sector settings. Several faculty members have had prominent roles in planning system transformation efforts at the county, state, and federal levels of administration. There are also strong ties to professional and advocacy organizations such as the American Association of Community Psychiatrists and the Pennsylvania Psychiatric Leadership Council.

Since 2009, Allegheny County has operated without a state mental hospital. As a result, it has relied on comprehensive community services to care for persons with severe mental illness. This provides a unique opportunity for fellows to collaborate in evaluating and developing new ideas for community based services.

http://www.wpic.pitt.edu/education/CPSP
The Training Environment
The University of Pittsburgh’s Department of Psychiatry offers an extremely rich academic and clinical environment for the Center for Public Service Psychiatry. For more than 40 years, the Department of Psychiatry has been a national leader in the diagnosis, management, and treatment of mental health and addictive disorders.

Over the past 15 years, the Department of Psychiatry and its community partners have contributed to the growth of Public Psychiatry and the vision of a recovery based approach to mental health.

For many years Allegheny County has benefited from innovations in community based behavioral health services. A rich network of both rural and urban providers, together with the Department of Psychiatry, has created nationally recognized services to deliver care to homeless, forensic, and substance using populations.

The region’s tradition of consumer provider collaboration has been strengthened in recent years with the establishment of the Allegheny County Coalition for Recovery (ACCR), a grassroots organization of stakeholders in behavioral health services focused on system transformation. ACCR is recognized across the state and the nation and receives substantial credit for the recognition that Allegheny County has received as a national leader in progressive thinking about recovery-oriented care.

Mission
The mission of the Center is to enhance the development and practice of the Public Service Psychiatry workforce through education, consultation, and leadership related to community based, recovery oriented services and research.

The Center
The Center offers an outstanding one year post-residency fellowship in Public Service Psychiatry. Two positions are available each year. The Fellowship enables fellows to acquire the skills and knowledge needed to assume positions of leadership in diverse systems of care.

The Center also enhances public service psychiatry education offered to medical students, psychiatry residents, fellows, primary care physicians, and other provider specialties.

The Center fosters partnerships with rural and urban communities throughout the region, supporting providers’ efforts to strengthen the quality of services and their responsiveness to the community’s needs. It emphasizes service development based on public health principles, diversity, and inclusiveness. The Center’s work is guided by recommendations from professionals, consumers and family members.

The fellows’ training in leadership, collaboration, and system dynamics equips them to make essential contributions to service administration and behavioral health policy across the nation.

Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh was recently voted “America’s most livable city” by Places Rated Almanac. It is a city of great vitality and variety. Its renaissance in recent times has made it safe, clean and fun. With a wealth of affordable housing options, it is one of the nation's most diverse architectural communities.

The city is the site of many major corporate headquarters, yet retains its small-town friendliness. Nestled in the Allegheny Mountains at the confluence of three major rivers, the “City of Bridges” abounds in natural beauty with many parks and recreational sites.

Pittsburgh is a place where young professionals can find a lifestyle that best fits their needs. Parks, hiking trails, water sports, microbreweries, restaurants, clubs and quaint stores are within walking or short driving distances.

As a center for culture and the arts, Pittsburgh is second-to-none for a city its size. For sports fans, the city offers the major league thrills of Steelers football, Penguins hockey, and Pirates baseball.

An ethnically rich urban environment, Pittsburgh has held on to its neighborhoods and small communities, offering pleasant surprises everywhere.

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