Community Psychological Service Self-Study

Overview

The Community Psychological Service (CPS) is a non-profit outpatient mental health clinic established at the University of Missouri - St. Louis in 1977. The threefold mission of the agency is to:

- Serve as the primary practicum training site for graduate students in the Doctoral Program in Clinical Psychology.
- Provide psychological services to citizens from throughout the St. Louis metropolitan area.
- Further the research mission of the Department of Psychology by offering faculty and graduate students opportunities to conduct basic and applied research.

CPS is located in North St. Louis County. Clinicians provide services to clients from St. Louis and surrounding counties. Most (95%) CPS clients come from the community-at-large. The clinic is open year-round. Students carry a caseload of two to three clients and are supervised by licensed psychologists on the Clinical faculty.

Administration

The clinic's training mission is outlined by the Clinical Psychology program faculty. Specific direction, both short- and long-term, is decided and implemented by the Clinic Director and Team Leaders in consultation with the Director of Clinical Training.

The agency has a variety of manualized resources to guide intake procedures, clinical operations, and its outcomes assessment project. The agency does not bill electronically for insurance reimbursement and as such, is not a “HIPAA covered entity”. Just the same, CPS operations are HIPAA consistent. The agency’s annual budget guides fiscal operations. The agency holds weekly staff meetings to address operational issues and to assure the quality of administrative operations. In addition, the Director meets with the Director of Clinical Training on a weekly basis in order to address administrative and clinical service delivery issues that impact the clinical training program.

Departmental/Campus Administrative Support for Agency Operations

The Department Chair is regularly available for consultation regarding agency operations and the Department Administrative Assistant supports agency operations with human resource support and through the provision of fiscal data relevant to operations.

Short-Term (One Year) Administrative/Operational Goals

1. Although the agency has a well-developed policy and procedures manual, within one year, the agency will implement a formal quality assurance plan to assist with measuring and enhancing the quality of services and liability risk.
2. The agency will be fully HIPAA compliant within one year.

3. The agency will implement a formal evaluation process with its stakeholders (faculty, graduate students, patients, referral sources) in order to obtain regular feedback regarding agency operations with a goal of enhancing the quality of services and administrative operations.

4. The agency will re-design its waiting room and other clinic space, within budgetary constraints in order to enhance its attractiveness to patients and referral sources.

5. CPS will enhance efforts to assure clinician compliance with its existing outcomes measurement system.

6. The agency will evaluate the possible implementation of electronic record-keeping for patient services.

Services

Clinical Training
The clinic provides doctoral students opportunities to offer a range of professional services including individual, marital, family and group psychotherapy to child, adolescent, adult and geriatric clients. Students learn a diverse range of therapeutic orientations including cognitive-behavioral, interpersonal, emotion-focused, psychodynamic, existential, play and family systems approaches. In addition, students provide psychological evaluation services to private clients and to clients referred by community and state agencies and local school districts.

CPS serves a vital training function in the doctoral program. The “in-house” clinic allows faculty to play a central and critical role in professional skill development (and control/monitor quality) while keeping students “close to home” and sustaining progress on their research. Clinical psychology graduate students spend three or more years in training at CPS.

In addition to training doctoral students, CPS serves as both a major and minor rotation in the St. Louis Psychology Internship Consortium (SLPIC). All four SLPIC interns rotate through CPS and see patients for psychotherapy and assessment. The agency initiated its involvement with SLPIC at the direction of the Clinical Faculty to support its graduate students by maintaining the viability of this internship which was slated for closure.

CPS also has an active program for training post-doctoral fellows with one or more post-doctoral trainees receiving supervision towards licensure each year. Further, undergraduate students play a vital role in CPS operations, serving on our intake staff and assisting with clinic operations. This provides a solid developmental experience for these students who are considering graduate school in a mental health field.
Clinical training is provided by the Team Leaders and Clinic Director through a combination of individual and group supervision. In addition, the CPS director leads a weekly assessment case conference with didactic and case presentations provided to the CPS staff and available to other clinical psychology graduate students.

**Short-Term (One Year) Training Goals**

1. CPS will re-design procedures for graduate student “Team Evaluations” in consultation with the clinical faculty in order to enhance the quality of this developmental experience for trainees.

2. The agency will implement formal performance evaluation procedures for undergraduate and graduate student staff. These are already in place for the Director, Staff Psychologist, Office Manager and Interns.

3. CPS will work with the clinical faculty to re-design procedures for case assignment and the transfer of students between clinical teams each spring.

**Service to the Community**

Professional psychological services are provided by graduate students, psychology interns, postdoctoral fellows and Clinical Psychology faculty members. These services include individual, family and group counseling to child, adolescent, adult and geriatric clients, psychological evaluations and consultations to local schools and various state and community agencies. In any given year, over 1000 individuals and families from throughout the St. Louis metropolitan seek services at CPS. CPS provides affordable psychological services to the community. The clinic's sliding fee scale with fees as low as $11 per hour allows individuals who would otherwise be unable to afford psychological services to receive such care. The average fee for sliding scale clients this past year was $22/hour, a fee well below the typical private practice charge of $90-$120 per hour. CPS' primary market is lower income individuals with no health insurance. CPS continues to serve this needy segment of the population; during the past year, fifty-six percent of psychotherapy clients had total family incomes below $15,000/year.

During FY 2005-2006, a total of 2,788 client contacts was made, 349 for psychological assessments (2,792 hours of professional service), 1902 for individual therapy, 40 for marital therapy, 107 for family therapy, 29 for group therapy and 361 for other services (staffings, interpretation of test results, conferences, etc.).

**Clinical Psychology Faculty Professional Practice Plan**

Since June, 1988, Clinical Psychology faculty members have been eligible to provide direct services to CPS clients. The plan enables faculty to maintain and enhance their own professional skills and provides increased opportunities for faculty to model clinical skills to students. This year, one tenured and one non-tenure track faculty member participated in the plan. Twenty percent of collected practice plan revenue is contributed to CPS operations to offset the costs of administering the plan. Average activity per participating faculty member was less than three hours per week during the past academic year.

**Sources of Referral**
CPS receives referrals from a wide variety of referral sources including other mental health providers and agencies, former clients, school systems, physicians, probation and parole officers, and the juvenile court. Information regarding recent referral patterns is reported in Table 1.

Client Demographics
CPS provides psychological trainees with opportunities to work with clients from diverse backgrounds. Over the past six years, Caucasian and African-American clients have represented the majority (59.8% and 33.8% respectively) of psychotherapy clients treated at CPS. CPS clients present with a range of diagnostic conditions. CPS actively manages the acuity of its client population at intake in order to provide appropriate training cases for graduate students. CPS clients present with a range of diagnostic conditions. CPS staff does not treat clients for whom chemical dependency is the primary presenting concern. In addition, we do not treat actively psychotic clients who have not been evaluated for psychotropic medication nor does its staff treat clients who are not appropriate for outpatient care.

Research and Client Outcomes Assessment
CPS offers faculty and graduate students opportunities for conducting applied research with its patient population and the physical space is also available for use with various research studies. During the past year, CPS participated in a multi-site project to assess the incidence of autistic-spectrum disorders in community treatment settings.

In addition, as a scientist-practitioner training program, CPS measures clinical outcomes and client satisfaction to continually evaluate the services we provide. Satisfaction assessment procedures are designed to help ensure that CPS delivers high quality services. The information collected is used to identify and modify aspects of services that are in need of improvement. The information yielded by ongoing client outcome assessment provides therapists with additional ways to track their clients' progress and identify client problems that require attention. Finally, we maintain a database of client demographics and outcome assessment data to provide psychology faculty and graduate students with opportunities to conduct applied clinical research.

Description of Resources

Staff
CPS staff include the Director (.5 FTE), Staff Psychologist (.6 FTE), Secretary, undergraduate clinic assistants (3 @ .375 FTE), 2 GTA’s (.5 FTE), unpaid graduate student trainees (~20), team leaders (4), Post-Doctoral Fellow (1.0 FTE), SLPIC interns (2@ .80 and .20 FTE) and five additional paid trainees who provide assessment services (5@ .20 FTE)

Robert Harris, Ph.D., Clinical Professor/Clinic Director: is the Clinical Psychology faculty member responsible for the overall operation of the clinic and for the supervision of the clinic administrative staff.
Deana Jefferson, Ph.D., Clinical Assistant Professor: coordinates services at a local school with which we have a contract for psychological evaluations (.60 FTE). She also teaches five undergraduate courses per year in the psychology department (.40 FTE).

Intake Assistants (3): These staff members include two paid, undergraduate psychology majors and an advanced graduate student in counseling psychology. These staff members assist with client intakes, scheduling and other aspects of clinic operations.

Graduate Clinic Assistants (2): are department-supported, advanced Clinical Psychology graduate students who are responsible for assisting with clinic administration. The Clinic Assistants must have completed at least one year in the clinical program. They are selected by the Director in consultation with the Clinical Faculty.

Clinic Secretary: is the CPS office manager, responsible for all phases of day-to-day administration including billing, reception, maintaining client files, etc.

Team Leaders: are clinical psychologists who provide clinical supervision of student therapists in weekly team and individual supervision.

Clinic Development Committee: A voluntary group of ten graduate students was recently cultivated under the direction of Dr. Laurie Greco, Assistant Professor. The group’s mission includes enhancing the quality and scope of services delivered, extending agency development activities and assisting with re-designing the physical space of the agency.

Facilities
CPS is housed in approximately 3200 sq ft of space on the second floor of Stadler Hall. CPS space includes professional offices, a waiting room, a secretary/receptionist office, a restroom for children, a large storage closet, offices for the Clinic staff, interns, post-doctoral fellow and staff psychologist, the clinic director's office, and a common work-room (used for consultations, storage of equipment and office supplies). The clinic has some special design features including two one-way mirrors that allow for the observation/supervision of psychotherapy. In addition, most rooms have special acoustic tile that limits the transmission of sound from one room to the next. Most therapy rooms have video recording capabilities. CPS has four dedicated parking spaces in front of Stadler Hall for use by its patients.

Technology
Eight computers are on the campus network with six of these connections paid through CPS funds. Two of the eight machines are desktop plan machines (Director, Senior Secretary). Additionally, the agency owns two laptops and two additional desktop machines that connect to campus resources via wireless.

Financial Overview

Funding Sources
CPS receives no rate funds from UMSL. The agency does not pay rent, heat, light, building maintenance or janitorial services. The College and Department support CPS with the allocation of one GTA per nine-month academic year and the provision of a computer and network access for the clinic secretary. In the past two years, the Department has paid the APA accreditation fee on behalf of the agency and its telephone line/equipment expenses. During the current year, the Department/College paid for two nine-month, .5 FTE GTA positions at CPS to support the psychotherapy treatment teams and practicum courses offered at CPS.

In addition to revenues generated through private services to individuals and families from the community, CPS currently has service contracts to provide psychological services to clients referred by:

- Missouri Department of Social Services/Children’s Division
- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education)
- Special School District of St. Louis County
- Comprehensive Mental Health Center of St. Clair County, IL.
- UM – St. Louis Department of Institutional Safety
- UM – St. Louis Student Support Services
- Imagine Schools/St. Louis Charter School
- Family Court of St. Louis City
- Confluence Academies
- Boys Hope/Girls Hope
- Ferguson-Florissant School District

In AY06, a total of $227,716 was collected from clients and from clinical services contracts/grants for services provided.

Other Contractual Arrangements
In 2006, CPS re-joined the St. Louis Psychology Internship Consortium (SLPIC). SLPIC is an affiliation of public, private-non-profit and private-for-profit mental health agencies that administers an APA-approved pre-doctoral internship program. CPS provides both a major and an adjunct rotation opportunity to SLPIC interns. The major rotation intern provides psychotherapy and assessment services and the adjunct rotation intern provides assessment services.

For 2006-2007, CPS contracted with the State Department of Mental Health to place two graduate students in “clerkship” positions at Hawthorn Children’s Psychiatric Hospital. Students in this placement provide psychotherapy and assessment services to children and adolescents in inpatient, residential and day treatment placements.

Relations with Partners
External constituencies include the client agencies with which CPS maintains service grants and/or contracts and the agency’s relationship with the public-at-large. In any given year, over 1,000 individuals/families request services at CPS. Internal partners include the
Clinical Psychology Program, Psychology Department, College and various campus agencies with whom the clinic regularly does business (Institutional Safety, UMSL Student Support Services). The agency maintains cross-referral relationships with the Center for Trauma Recovery, Children’s Advocacy Services of Greater St. Louis and the UMSL Student Counseling Service.

During 2006-2007, the Director supports the fiscal operations of Children’s Advocacy Services of Greater St. Louis and a portion of his salary that is paid by CPS is offset by CASGSL. In addition, the Director has supported the other department-affiliated agencies by managing its electronic billing/collections and intake resources.

CPS uses other campus resources as well. Agency finances are monitored by the College’s accountant. Other campus/system resources that support operations include accounting, human resources, the General Counsel’s Office, Business Services, Institutional Safety and Parking Services, Information Technology and campus libraries.

Expenses
Except as outlined above, CPS has historically been financially self-supporting. Staff salaries/benefits paid include one full-time Senior Secretary, 15% of the Director's salary/benefits, staff psychologist (.60 FTE), undergraduate and graduate clinic assistants, one .80 FTE psychology intern and one .20 FTE psychology intern from the St. Louis Psychology Internship Consortium, and one post-doctoral fellow. Overhead expenses paid by CPS include telephone, equipment, supplies, copying, furniture and fixtures, professional liability insurance on behalf of the clinical psychology program, repairs/maintenance, testing equipment, reference materials and postage.

In addition, CPS has historically paid a variety of expenses on behalf of the Clinical Psychology program including graduate student recruitment costs, APA accreditation and site visit fees, and equipment/supplies used in assessment courses and clinical practica.

FY 2005-2006 expenses were $256,138. Salaries/benefits continue to represent the bulk (85%) of CPS expenses. CPS paid the entire salary/benefits of the clinic secretary, and a portion of the salary/benefits of the Clinic Director. In addition, as funding for advanced graduate students is limited, CPS provided supplemental support to two undergraduate and a number of graduate students. In FY 2005-2006, graduate students earned a total of $78,166 at CPS. Five-year historical data of graduate student support is tabled below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>CPS paid wages of Undergraduate and Graduate Students</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>$78,166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>$113,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003-2004</td>
<td>$68,010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002-2003</td>
<td>$92,828</td>
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<tr>
<td>2001-2002</td>
<td>$65,980</td>
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Despite revenue growth of 325% during the twelve years of leadership of the current
director, the agency experienced a ~$28,000 deficit during the last fiscal year. This
deficit was offset by cash on hand, and accounts receivable were used to reconcile the
account deficit at year end. CPS began the current academic year with a shortfall of -
$16,090. The AY07 budget is for a shortfall of -$17,288. Mounting deficits reflect the
accelerated costs of doing business (increases in the costs of salaries and benefits,
supplies/equipment). Efforts to address the deficit include two fee increases over the past
twelve months and interventions to increase staff productivity as salary/benefit costs are
for the most part, not discretionary. Of other expenses, most are not discretionary except
supplies and these are tightly managed. Additional interventions to address the structural
financial problem include increased marketing efforts on behalf of couples and
children/families seeking counseling.

College/Campus Support Needed to Achieve the Goals Outlined in this Self-Study
CPS has a structural financial deficit. A critical long-term need of the agency is to
receive adequate campus support to secure its financial future. Two fee increases,
focused marketing, cautious spending and an increased focus on the productivity of its
graduate student staff will not address this deficit. The agency operates without rate
funding support.

The University’s commitment to the agency at inception included covering the entire
salary of both the clinic secretary and the Director. This support was withdrawn in
response to University budget cuts. Further, the limited financial support of CPS by the
campus is relatively unique for psychology training clinics affiliated with Doctoral
Training Programs in Clinical Psychology. A 2006 survey of ADPTC membership
indicates that in only 21% of the respondents’ clinics is a portion of the Director’s salary
paid by the agency and in only 43% of the cases is the secretary’s salary paid by the
agency. Both 15% of the Director’s salary/benefits and all of the salary/benefits of the
clinic secretary are paid by CPS. In addition, CPS has historically paid a variety of
Clinical Psychology program expenses (APA accreditation and site visit fees, recruiting
expenses for prospective graduate students, liability insurance on behalf of the program,
equipment/supplies used in practice-related courses).

The functional impact of the deficit on agency operations is an increase in demands
placed on graduate students for revenue generation which is antithetical to sound clinical
training and practice. In its policy statement entitled “Administrative Guidelines for
Psychology Training Clinics (Final Draft 8/01/06)”, the Association of Directors of
Psychology Training Clinics (ADPTC) asserted the following principle regarding
Financial Accountability and Service Expectations: “In general, it is very difficult for
training clinics to be self-supporting operations: strategies for generating revenue are
often antithetical to a training mission. Training clinics, therefore, should be supported by
the university department(s)/program(s) they serve.”

To summarize, CPS has a thirty-year history of service to the community with nearly
1,000 individuals and families seeking professional care each year. A number of non-
profit and state agencies, school districts and other community service organizations benefit from the services we provide and the agency helps to fulfill the University’s commitment to the community. In addition, the agency is an essential component of the highly successful Doctoral Program in Clinical Psychology, one of the University’s most productive doctoral degree granting programs. Moreover, CPS has provided substantial financial support to advanced Clinical Psychology graduate students beyond what the college provides during Years 1 and 2 of the doctoral program. We have accomplished these very worthy endeavors with little University support.

CPS submitted a fall 2006 request to CAS for rate funding to increase the number of Doctoral degrees granted by the Clinical Psychology program, to restore previous support for the agency and to redress the demands placed on graduate students for revenue generation which are antithetical to sound clinical training and practice. The Dean of the CAS did not forward this request for rate funding to the Provost.