

PRIMARY NEED.

EXTRAORDINARY OPPORTUNITY.



- 64 million: The number of Americans who lack adequate access to primary health care.
- 30,583: The number of clinicians from all primary care disciplines needed to help them.
- 8,955: The approximate number of primary care job vacancies available on the National Health Service Corps (NHSC) Job Opportunities List.

It all adds up to an extraordinary opportunity to make a difference in your career, and there's only one place to start: the National Health Service Corps.

Primary Care Behavioral and Mental Health

The NHSC recognizes that States have varying educational, experience and testing requirements for the licensing of behavioral and mental health clinicians. It is important to note that the purpose of the NHSC LRP is to ensure an adequate supply of health professionals to provide primary health services to populations located in health professional shortage areas (HPSAs) throughout the United States. Consequently, the NHSC adheres to national certification and licensing standards detailed below to assure that its clinicians have the ability to obtain licensure in multiple States throughout the country as community needs dictate or arise.

Although general psychiatrists must meet the above qualifications for physicians, psychiatrist must serve exclusively in mental health HPSAs.

- **Health Service Psychologists (HSP)** (*formerly Clinical and Counseling Psychologists*) must have:

- 1) a doctoral degree (Ph.D. or equivalent) directly related to full professional work in clinical or counseling psychology from a school accredited by the American Psychological Association, Committee on Accreditation, **AND**
- 2) a minimum of one year of post-graduate supervised clinical experience, **AND**
- 3) successfully passed the Examination for Professional Practice of Psychology (EPPP), **AND**
- 4) the ability to practice independently and unsupervised as a health service psychologist, **AND**
- 5) a current, full, permanent, unencumbered health professional license (or if applicable, a current, unencumbered certificate or registration) to engage in the independent and unsupervised practice of clinical or counseling psychology in the State in which they intend to practice to fulfill their NHSC LRP service obligation.

Individuals practicing solely as educational psychologists are not eligible to participate in the NHSC LRP.

- **Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSWs)** must have:

- 1) a master's degree or doctoral degree in social work from a school accredited by a recognized accrediting body approved by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, **AND**
- 2) two years post-graduate supervised clinical experience, **AND**
- 3) successfully passed the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) Clinical or Advanced licensing exam prior to *July 1, 1998*, or the ASWB Clinical exam on or after *July 1, 1998*, **AND**
- 4) the ability to practice independently and unsupervised as a licensed clinical social worker, **AND**
- 5) a current, full, permanent, unencumbered health professional license (or, if applicable, a current, unencumbered certificate or registration) to practice, at the level of licensure that allows them to practice independently and unsupervised as a Clinical Social Worker, in the State in which they intend to practice to fulfill their NHSC LRP service obligation.

- **Psychiatric Nurse Specialists (PNSs)** must be registered nurses, **AND**

- 1) have a master's degree or higher degree in nursing from an accredited program with a specialization in psychiatric/mental health **and** 2 years of post-graduate supervised clinical experience in psychiatric/mental health nursing, **OR**
- 2) have a baccalaureate or higher degree in nursing from an accredited program, **AND**
- 3) be certified by the American Nurses Credentialing Center as a Psychiatric and Mental Health Nurse, Clinical Specialist in Adult Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing, or Clinical Specialist in Child and Adolescent Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing, **AND**
- 4) must be licensed as a registered nurse (or a PNS if applicable) in the State in which they intend to practice, **AND**
- 5) have a current, full, permanent, unencumbered health professional license (or if applicable, a current, unencumbered certificate or registration) to practice in the State in which they intend to practice to fulfill their NHSC LRP service obligation.

Nursing programs must be accredited by the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission or the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education

- **Marriage and Family Therapists (MFTs) must:**

- 1) have completed a master's or doctoral program in marriage and family therapy from a program accredited by the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE) or earned a graduate degree in another mental health field (psychiatry, psychology, clinical social work, psychiatric nursing, etc.) and completed a COAMFTE accredited post-graduate degree clinical training program in marriage and family therapy, **AND**
- 2) have at least 2 years of post-graduate supervised clinical experience in practice as a marital and family therapist, **OR**
- 3) be clinical members of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT), **AND**
- 4) have a current, full, permanent, unencumbered health professional license (or if applicable, a current, unencumbered certificate or registration) to practice independently and unsupervised as a MFT in the State in which they intend to practice to fulfill their NHSC LRP service obligation, **OR**
- 5) if such licensure is not available in the State of intended practice, have a current, full, permanent, unencumbered health professional license (or if applicable, a current, unencumbered certificate or registration) to practice independently and unsupervised as a MFT in a State.

- **Licensed Professional Counselors (LPCs) must:**

- 1) have a master's degree or higher degree with a major study in counseling from a school accredited by a U.S. Department of Education nationally recognized regional or State institutional accrediting agency, **AND**
- 2) have at least 2 years of post-graduate supervised counseling experience, **AND**
- 3) be certified as a National Certified Counselor (NCC) or a Certified Clinical Mental Health Counselor (CCMHC) by the National Board for Certified Counselors, **AND**
- 4) have a current, full, permanent, unencumbered health professional license (or if applicable, a current, unencumbered certificate or registration) to practice independently and unsupervised as an LPC in the State in which they intend to practice to fulfill their NHSC LRP service obligation, **OR**
- 5) if such licensure is not available in the State of intended practice, have a current, full, permanent, unencumbered health professional license (or if applicable, a current, unencumbered certificate or registration) to practice independently and unsupervised as an LPC in a State.

NOTE: School and Career LPCs are not eligible to participate in the NHSC LRP.

c. Medicare/Medicaid/State Children's Health Insurance Program Participation

Applicants to the NHSC LRP must participate in or be eligible to participate as a provider in the Medicare, Medicaid and State Children's Health Insurance Programs. All NHSC community sites and clinicians must accept assignment under the Medicare Program and enter into appropriate agreements with the State Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Programs. Therefore, all NHSC community sites and their clinicians (NHSC and non-NHSC) must be eligible to receive Medicare/Medicaid/State Children's Health Insurance Program payment for any items or services they furnish, order or prescribe.

d. No Other Service Obligations

Applicants who have an outstanding contractual obligation for service to the Federal Government (e.g., an active military obligation or a Nursing Education Loan Repayment Program obligation), a State (e.g., State Loan Repayment Program or Scholarship Program obligation) or other entity may apply; however, are not eligible for award and participation in the NHSC LRP until the existing service obligation has been fully satisfied. Be aware that certain bonus clauses in employment contracts may impose a service obligation. The applicant is required to submit a letter, on business letterhead, indicating the date the service obligation will be completed.

Exception: Members of a Reserve Component of the Armed Forces. Individuals in a Reserve component of the Armed Forces or National Guard are eligible to participate in the NHSC LRP. However, reservists should understand the following:

- Placement opportunities for reservists may be limited by the NHSC in order to minimize the negative impact that a deployment would have on the vulnerable populations served by the reservist.
- Military training or service performed by reservists will not satisfy the NHSC service commitment. If a participant's military training and/or service, in combination with the participant's other absences from the service site, will exceed 7 weeks (35 workdays) per service year, the participant should request a suspension. See Sections H (full-time clinical practice) and K (suspension of the NHSC LRP obligation for military active