



LEADERSHIP EDUCATION IN NEURODEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES (LEND PROGRAM)

The LEND PROGRAM AT THE INSTITUTE FOR COMMUNITY INCLUSION AT CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL BOSTON provides advanced interdisciplinary training to health and counseling professionals and to families to improve their knowledge in working with children, adolescents and young adults with developmental and related disabilities. This training is multi-focused and ranges from policy issues and team collaboration to specific clinical practice and support models. Trainees develop their leadership potential to improve the status of infants, children, and adolescents with (or at risk for) neurodevelopmental disabilities and to enhance systems of care for these children and their families.

THE MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH BUREAU of the US Department of Health and Human Services provides funding for LEND programs. Each LEND program provides long-term, intermediate-term and short-term graduate level interdisciplinary training opportunities to health and education professionals as well as to families. The program is appropriate for students in any professional discipline who work with children with developmental disabilities and their families, including but not exclusive to audiology, creative arts, dentistry, education, family medicine, health administration, law, nursing, nutrition, occupational therapy, pastoral counseling, pediatrics, physical therapy, psychiatry, psychology, public health, rehabilitation counseling, social work, and speech therapy. Family members who wish to advance their knowledge in these areas and who are working toward leadership roles in the field of maternal and child health are encouraged to apply and become fellow as well.

LEND program objectives include: (1) advancing the knowledge and skills of the full range of child health professionals and family members to improve health care delivery systems for children with developmental disabilities; (2) providing high-quality interdisciplinary education to health and allied professionals that emphasizes the integration of services supported by state, local agencies, organizations, private providers and communities; (3) providing a wide range of professionals and families with the skills needed to foster a community-based partnership of health resources and community leadership; and (4) promoting innovative practice models that enhance cultural competency, partnerships among disciplines, and family-centered approaches to care.

Long-term LEND fellows spend approximately 400 hours in our program. There is an expectation that fellows commit to 1 ½ days per week from September through the middle of May, with Fridays being the dedicated training day. The additional half day is negotiated with the fellow and is dependent on other obligations. Each fellow is expected to participate in all the various training activities during the year. These activities include:

DIDACTIC CURRICULUM: A weekly core seminar covers the developmental disabilities field and may be taken as accredited coursework at six universities (BC, BU, HSPH, Simmons, Emerson, and Brandeis). This is scheduled each Friday from 8:00-10:00 a.m. There are also six seminar series that are required. They provide focused attention on public health, cultural diversity, public policy, technology, evidence-based practice, and management skills.

THE ACADEMY: Fellows develop a project with an affiliated community based organization. This experience requires field visits to the CBO's and allows the students to better understand the meaning that neurodevelopmental disability has for families and communities across cultures. Students also work with the CBO to develop small projects in the community. This culminates in a year-end report.

COMMUNITY VISITS: Working with our faculty and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health each fellow chooses a Title V agency for visitation and program review. A second community obligation of our program allows the fellows to conduct home visits to a family with a child with a developmental disability. These visits are scheduled at the convenience of the fellow and family or professional involved.

LEADERSHIP SEMINAR: A monthly series gives philosophic consideration to leadership characteristics and opportunities and looks at specific skill sets needed for leadership in maternal and child health. The series is part of the Friday schedule.

INTERDISCIPLINARY CLINICAL TEAMS: A monthly interdisciplinary evaluation offers fellows the experience of participating in or observing a large team assessment. A second, off-site clinical affiliation is also provided for many fellows. In addition, a clinical seminar series precedes each of the monthly team evaluations. These seminars address a broad range of clinical issues ranging from detailed review of specific conditions to ethical principles.

DISABILITY POLICY CONFERENCE: Each year fellows are strongly encouraged and supported to attend a national policy conference in Washington, D.C. This three-day conference provides the trainees with up-to-date policy considerations on the national political arena, and concludes with visits to Capital Hill with legislators.

Additional LEND fellowship activities include meetings with mentors, hospital and departmental conferences, research opportunities, and information on local and regional activities of interest. Stipends are available to many qualified LEND fellows.

INTERESTED APPLICANTS SHOULD SEND LETTERS OF INTEREST, RESUME, AND REFERENCES TO:

David Helm, Ph.D.
Institute for Community Inclusion/LEND Project
Children's Hospital
300 Longwood Avenue
Boston, MA 02115

Inquires can be made to David Helm at 857-218-4327 or david.helm@childrens.harvard.edu