

# **The APA Proficiency in Assessment and Treatment of Serious Mental Illness – Being in the Right Place at the Right Time:**

## **The Federal Initiative to Design Curricula for the Mental Health Professions**

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# **APA Proficiency in Assessment and Treatment of Serious Mental Illness: What's it all about?**

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- **Blueprint for training psychologists for specialized work:**
  - Adults with serious mental illness
  - Youth with severe emotional disturbance
- **Distinct core competencies because:**
  - People with serious mental illness are uniquely vulnerable
  - Often institutionalized, marginalized, segregated, victimized, subjected to seclusion and restraint
  - Subjected to treatments with significant iatrogenic effects
  - Attitudes and treatments often cause lasting trauma

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**– No other mental health disorders:**

- Typically strike during such a critical developmental period in middle to late adolescence**
- Have such profound effects, and**
- Potentially remain with the individual throughout his or her lifetime with such serious consequences.**

# **APA Proficiency in Assessment and Treatment of Serious Mental Illness: What's it all about?**

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- **Specialized Curriculum (internship and post doctoral):**
  - **Ideology and Attitudes:**
    - respect, sensitivity, understanding of burden, longitudinal and optimistic view of future
  - **Core Knowledge:**
    - biological, psychological, social perspectives
  - **Clinical Assessment and Interventions:**
    - functional skills assessment, neuropsychological assessment, skills training, evidence based practices, psychopharmacology, crisis intervention, trauma treatment

# **The Federal Initiative to Design Curricula for the Mental Health Professions: The APA Recovery to Practice Initiative**

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- **SAMHSA initiative to train mental health professionals in principles and practices of recovery and rehabilitation**
- **Major effort to reach most mental health professions**
- **5 year project**

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- **5 professional organizations awarded contracts:**
  - American Psychological Association
  - American Psychiatric Association
  - American Psychiatric Nurses Association
  - Council on Social Work Education
  - National Association of Peer Specialists
- **APA will:**
  - Develop a curriculum and marketing plan to train doctoral level psychologists
  - This is a major undertaking – work done on the Proficiency will be helpful

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- **Major Tasks:**
  - Determine existing knowledge of psychologists
  - Determine extent of current training
  - Determine extent of related licensing requirements
  - Develop curriculum
  - Field test curriculum
  - Identify barriers to implementation
  - Develop training materials for marketing and dissemination
  - Disseminate to training programs, encourage incorporation, monitor utilization effect

# **The Federal Initiative to Design Curricula for the Mental Health Professions: The APA Recovery to Practice Initiative**

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- **The APA Recovery to Practice Initiative promises to change the direction of training so that future psychologists are more responsive to the needs of people who are living with serious mental illnesses and severe emotional disorders.**
- **Given that many individuals with serious mental illnesses are now able to recover and live productive, satisfying lives in the community, this initiative will give psychologists the tools they need to help people with these illnesses recover.**
- **We are definitely in the right place at the right time!**