

## Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP) Fellowship Program

The PMHNP Fellowship is supported by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts from the U.S. Department of the Treasury under Section 9901 of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (“ARPA”), which established the Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund (“FRF”).

### Frequently Asked Questions for CHCs:

If you have questions related to applying as a Fellow (student & graduate ), please visit the [UMass Chan GSN Website](#)

#### Request for Proposals and Proposal Material Questions

Last updated 9/18/24

All questions that are submitted by Community Health Centers (CHCs) related to the Request for Proposals (RFP) will be found in this section. Any questions related to the RFP must be submitted by 9/13/24, and answers to these questions will be posted by 09/20/24.

#### General PMHNP Fellowship Program Questions

Last updated 9/18/2024

Questions related to the PMHNP program can be found in this section. If you have questions that are not answered here, please email [pmhnpfellows@massleague.org](mailto:pmhnpfellows@massleague.org)

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## Request for Proposals and Application Material Questions

1. When is the application period?

The Request for Proposals (RFP) will open on 8/28/2024 and will close on 9/30/2024 at 11:59 PM.

2. Which CHCs are eligible to apply?

To be eligible to apply, a CHC must be located in Massachusetts, operated by an organization that meets the criteria to qualify as a Federal Qualified Health Center (FQHC)<sup>1</sup>, a hospital-licensed health center<sup>2</sup> or FQHC look-alike. CHCs that serve diverse communities, rural communities<sup>3</sup>, or are in a federally designated Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) or a Mental Health Professional Shortage Area<sup>4</sup> are strongly encouraged to apply. Priority will be given to CHCs located in rural ([State Office of Rural Health Rural Definition | Mass.gov](#)) and AHEM areas ([EOHHS' Advancing Health Equity in MA \(AHEM\) Areas](#)).

At least one rural CHC will be funded during each program year.

3. Can Community Health Centers (CHCs) receive help or feedback from the MLCHC regarding their proposals prior to submitting them?

No. All questions related to the RFP may be submitted to [pmhnpfellows@massleague.org](mailto:pmhnpfellows@massleague.org). Questions can be submitted until 9/13/2024 and answers to questions related to the RFP and application will be answered by 9/30/2024.

4. What materials are required for submission?

Health centers are required to submit a completed application and budget as indicated within the RFP released on 8/28/2024.

CHCs can apply by completing the CHC proposal application which is a [fillable PDF](#) located on the MLCHC website. The application includes CHC applicant information, Fellowship slots requested, a narrative response detailing the Fellow's integration into the care team and specialty rotations, a staffing plan, and a budget. Please review the scoring rubric and criteria on pages 12-13 of the [RFP](#).

5. Will CHCs that have participated in cohort 1 and/or cohort 2 need to reapply if they are interested in Fellows for Cohort 3?

CHCs that previously applied and received an acceptance notice can submit a letter of intent signed by the PMHNP Director indicating the number of graduates and/or student Fellow slots are requested, and a description of the specialty clinic practice plan/rotation. Additionally, a completed budget and staffing plan using the templates provided within the CHC application.

Signature on letter of intent indicates acknowledgement and acceptance of updated information within the Cohort 3 PMHNP program requirements

6. How are budgets determined?

Budgets are determined by the number of PMHNP Fellows (graduates and students). CHCs must indicate in the space provided within the budget template how many PMHNP Fellows (graduates and students) they are requesting. The total funds will auto-populate based on these numbers. The budget template is posted along with the RFP on the [MLCHC website](#). Please email the MLCHC at [pmhnpfellows@Massleague.org](mailto:pmhnpfellows@Massleague.org) if you are unable to download the budget template. **Budgets must be submitted with the application.**

7. How will CHC proposals be scored?

All CHCs must meet the minimum eligibility criteria for funding. Beyond the minimum eligibility criteria, CHCs will receive priority for the below criteria:

- Located in an AHEM region – 5 points
- Located in a rural level 1 or rural level 2 city or town, as defined by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) State Office of Rural Health – 5 points

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.healthcare.gov/glossary/federally-qualified-health-center-fqhc>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/health-care-facilities-in-massachusetts>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.hrsa.gov/rural-health/about-us/what-is-rural>

<sup>4</sup> <https://bhw.hrsa.gov/workforce-shortage-areas/shortage-designation>

At the conclusion of the scoring process, if there are multiple CHCs with the same score and the total possible award to eligible CHCs still exceeds the total amount of available funds, CHCs that were not funded in previous UMass Chan/MLCHC PMHNP cohorts will be funded prior to CHCs that have received funding in previous cohorts.

CHCs should clearly demonstrate their capacity to provide a non-prescribing preceptor for all Fellows, a prescribing preceptor to graduate level Fellows, and infrastructure to support the PMHNP Fellows requested.

Please see page 6 in the [RFP](#) for licensure requirements of clinical support staff for the Fellow.

**For additional scoring information, please refer to the scoring rubric and criteria on pages 12-13 of the [RFP.PMHNP Program Questions](#)**

**Eligibility**

8. Who is eligible to apply to be a Fellow?

Student-level Fellows are registered nurses licensed in Massachusetts in good standing, and currently enrolled in a full-time or part-time PMHNP academic program. To participate, students must provide written approval from their school's program director or coordinator. Qualifying PMHNP programs may provide a master's in science (MS) with PMHNP specialization; a Doctor of Nursing (DNP) with PMHNP specialization; or a post-graduate certificate (PGC) with PMHNP specialization for board-certified NPs in a specialty other than psychiatry and mental health (e.g., family nurse practitioners).

Graduate-level Fellows are registered nurses licensed in Massachusetts in good standing, currently board certified as a PMHNP, and hold an APRN license in Massachusetts OR who are eligible and will soon sit for board certification as a PMHNP and receive an APRN license in Massachusetts once they have passed the PMHNP national certification exam.

A Graduate Fellow is defined by at least one of the following descriptions:

- Completed a PMHNP program within 18 months of the release of the RFP
- Completed a PMHNP program within 18 months of the release of the RFP and hired by an approved community health center (CHC) between the release date of this RFP and 6/30/25 with an employment start date no later than 7/1/25

All Graduate Level Fellows must complete exams & licensing requirements, be onboarded by the CHC and be ready to start as a PMHNP no later than 7/1/25 to fulfill the 12 month service commitment by 6/30/26.

*\*While anyone who meets one of the above requirements is eligible to apply, priority is given to those who are multilingual and/or reflect the population served.*

**All Fellows (graduates and students) must complete an application [here](#) or by visiting the [UMass Chan GSN website](#)<sup>5</sup> to be considered for the Fellowship. Acceptance into the Fellowship program is not guaranteed.**

**Fellowship Structure**

9. Are CHCs required to host both graduate and student Fellows? Is there a maximum number of Fellows each CHC can host?

No. There is no requirement that health centers host both student and graduate Fellows. Funding is limited so CHCs requesting more than one Fellow are not guaranteed to receive more than one Fellow.

CHC must request slots with the understanding that the graduate Fellow must start work on-site as a PMHNP no later than 7/1/25; to meet the 12-month service obligation.

10. Do student and graduate Fellows need to be current employees of the CHC? Or are all matches made through outside applicants?

No, there is not a requirement that Fellows of the PMHNP Fellowship program are current employees within an awarded CHC. All PMHNP students and graduates are eligible to apply for a Fellowship position through the UMass Chan GSN website.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.umassmed.edu/gsn/residences-and-fellowships/psych-mhnp/>

Please refer to questions 7 & 13 within the FAQs for more information surrounding Fellow eligibility as well as the matching process.

11. What is the process for paying the graduate Fellow salaries and student Fellow stipends?

Answer: The CHC hires the PMHNP graduate fellow. The graduate Fellow's salary and fringe and/or the PMHNP student stipends are funded through the grant. If awarded, the CHC will invoice MLCHC for funds on a cost reimbursement model.

Please refer to the budget template on the MLCHC website for further information regarding estimated funding amounts for awarded CHCs.

12. Are CHCs expected to provide formal evaluations and collect feedback from the Fellows?

CHC Fellowship staff should follow the evaluation and/or feedback processes required by the CHC in which the Fellow is working. CHCs should not submit the personal supervision evaluations to UMass Chan GSN or MLCHC.

13. What are the non-prescribing and prescribing Preceptor requirements for the CHCs?

To participate in this program, CHCs must have the capacity to provide an on-site non-prescribing Preceptor for all Fellows. Non-prescribing Preceptors must be licensed mental health providers (e.g., PMHNP, psychiatrist, psychologist, LICSW, LMHC, etc.). Requirements for PMHNP student preceptors will be based on the school's academic requirements however most PMHNP programs require a student's preceptor be a PMHNP or psychiatrist.

CHCs should have the capacity to provide prescribing preceptors for the clinical supervision of prescriptive practice to graduate-level Fellows. Remote precepting may be utilized for monitoring graduate Fellow's prescriptive practice when an on-site independently prescribing clinician is not available. Please review pages 5-6, CHC Preceptor Description in the RFP for more information.

14. Is funding available for a remote prescribing preceptor in the event the CHC cannot provide this support on their own?

Yes, the amount of funding for precepting support is based on the number of graduate Fellows. If a CHC is unable to provide their own prescribing preceptor, UMass Chan GSN will refer a prescribing preceptor consultant to the CHC. The CHC is responsible for contracting and paying the prescribing preceptor and may use grant funding allocated to the graduate fellow preceptor within the budget template.

15. What application materials are required for a CHC to request remote prescribing preceptor supervision?

If a CHC is unable to provide a prescribing preceptor, their application should indicate that if they are approved for grant funding, they will submit a written request for remote prescribing preceptor supervision.

16. Will a CHC be allowed to change the assigned preceptor after the Fellow begins working?

Yes, changes in preceptors and staffing are allowed. CHCs must notify the MLCHC in writing if the Fellows are being precepted by someone other than the preceptors listed on their application submission. Please note, student preceptors may have licensing requirements and all changes must be reported to their academic program.

17. What support will the MLCHC provide CHCs during the Fellowship?

The MLCHC will oversee the program and ensure smooth implementation across organizational partners and throughout all stages of the Fellowship.

18. What is the application process for Fellows?

Students and graduates must submit an application through the [UMass Chan GSN website](#). Please review the Fellow selection priorities on page 8 of the [RFP](#) for more information.

19. What is the matching process for Fellows?

CHCs approved for funding will be listed in the PMHNP Fellow application. Fellows will apply for their top three CHC choice(s). UMass Chan GSN and MLCHC will recommend Fellow matches for each CHC based on the Fellow's choice, their level of commitment to the treatment setting, and how closely they align to the population served.

20. What are the patient panel expectations for the PMHNP Fellows?

CHCs must demonstrate their ability to ensure adequate patient panels for Fellows in terms of size, diversity, and clinical complexity. CHCs should also plan to increase graduate Fellow's caseloads over the 12-month Fellowship. CHCs are expected to follow their own protocol for determining patient panels for Fellows.

21. Is preference given to FNP Residency-funded CHCs?

No, CHCs will be selected for funding based on the scoring rubric provided on pages 12-13 of the [RFP](#). Having previous experience with hosting FNP Residency programs does not guarantee funding.

#### Service Commitment

22. What is the service commitment for Fellows?

Graduate Fellows are required to complete a 12-month service commitment. Student Fellows are expected to complete a semester-long placement.

23. Can CHCs hire a Fellow once their service commitment is complete?

Yes, CHCs are encouraged to hire Fellows and may be eligible for additional funding and incentives to encourage Fellows to become permanent hires upon completion of their 12-month Fellowship. PMHNPs who were hired after 8/28/2024 but before 6/30/2025 may be eligible for retention incentives to maintain their employment beyond their 12-month Fellowship. Please review Table 3, Graduate Retention Incentives in the RFP found on page 8 of the RFP for more information.

24. Can students continue their placement after their first semester is complete, and become a graduate Fellow or new hire?

Only students who graduate their PMHNP program prior to 12/31/24, complete their licensure exams, and receive a start date before 7/1/25 are eligible to apply to become a PMHNP graduate Fellow. Prior placement as a student Fellow does not guarantee placement as a graduate Fellow upon graduation from a PMHNP program.

#### Award Notifications

25. When will award notifications be sent to CHCs?

Anticipated award notifications are scheduled for January 2025.

26. When does the Fellowship begin?

The Fellowship will begin upon execution of the CHC contract, **no Fellow start date will be later than 7/1/25 to meet program requirements. Fellows must begin their Fellowship as soon as they are certified regardless of credentialing status with the CHC.**