



Health Career Directory

Psychologist

Overview

Clinical psychology is concerned with the assessment, diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of mental disorders. While clinical psychologist often works in medical settings, they are not medical doctors and cannot prescribe medications.

Clinical psychology is the largest subset of psychologists. Specialty areas within clinical psychology include:

- child mental health
- adult mental health
- learning disabilities
- emotional disturbances
- substance abuse
- geriatrics
- health psychology.

Clinical psychologists are health care professionals in the mental health care field. They are trained in a range of techniques and theoretical approaches. Some specialize in treating certain psychological disorders, while others work with clients suffering from a wide variety of problems. Clinical psychologists also treat some of the most severe psychiatric disorders, such as schizophrenia and depression.

In addition to working with clients, clinical psychologists have to keep detailed records of client assessment, diagnosis, therapeutic goals, and treatment notes. These records help clinicians and clients keep track of progress.

Main roles and responsibilities:

Some of the main duties of a clinical psychologist include:

- assessing and diagnosing psychological disorders
- treating psychological disorders
- drug and alcohol treatment
- teaching
- conducting research
- creating and administrating program to treat and prevent social problems.

Who is suited for this type of occupation?

The person suited for this occupation is someone who is genuinely interested in caring for others through education and counselling. If you work in this area, most of your time will be spent working one-on-one with individuals and/or group sessions to change maladaptive behaviors or to teach life skills. If you enjoy working with people and are able to handle stress and conflict well, clinical psychology may be the right choice for you.

Psychologists are most effective when they have the following skills and characteristics:

- a genuine interest in caring for people
- enjoy working one on one with people to help them overcome problems
- enjoy understanding the human mind and behaviour
- enjoy solving theoretical problems as well as practical "real life" problems
- see themselves working in a hospital setting, clinic setting, or mental health clinic
- able to deal with high stress situations with people who may be psychologically or emotionally unstable
- can work alone and as part of a team
- have good listening skills, patience, emotional stability, and analytical skills
- are willing to learn, train and do internships in mental health field
- a clean record, no prior criminal background.

Who employs psychologists?

Most psychologists work for BC's Health Authorities (health employers in BC). They work in a variety of settings such as:

- rural or urban schools
- hospitals
- community health centers as part of the team of mental health practitioners
- physicians' clinics
- correctional facilities
- rehabilitation centers
- outpatient mental health and substance abuse centers.

In addition to the above settings, many psychologists also teach at colleges and universities, do research work, or work as high school psychology teachers. Others have their own private practice and work for businesses and private health care providers.

Their working hours can vary from casual, part-time, or full-time of 30-40 hours/week. They mostly work during the day and sometimes do group sessions in the early evening. They manage their own appointments in terms of when they see clients.

Most often, a clinical psychologist is a member of an interdisciplinary health care team. They work with doctors, nurses, mental health workers, addiction counsellors, dieticians, social workers, and other health or social welfare professionals to provide a holistic treatment approach to their clients.

This occupational group is a small one, with most practitioners working part-time throughout the year. Currently, women make up the majority of the workforce in this occupational group.

There are opportunities available at various levels of clinical psychology, depending on what kind of degree you have. Those who hold a bachelor's degree in psychology can work as community mental health workers in health centers and in hospitals. They, however, cannot work unsupervised with patients. A doctoral degree is required for anyone who wants to open a

private practice. Teaching is also an option for those who have obtained a PhD in psychology. Clinical psychologists who have earned a Master Degree can treat patients in a hospital and clinic, but they cannot become licensed to start their own practice.

Salary

Salary Range - \$20 - \$50 per hour

Required Training and Education to Become a Clinical Psychologist

Clinical psychologists usually have a doctorate in psychology, and have training in clinical settings. The educational requirements to work in clinical psychology are quite hard, and most clinical psychologists spend between four to six years in graduate school after earning a bachelor's degree in psychology.²

There are two different types of degrees available in clinical psychology - a PhD, and a PsyD. Generally speaking, Ph.D. programs are centered on research, while Psy.D. programs are practice-oriented. Some students may also find graduate programs that offer a terminal master's degree in clinical psychology.

Before choosing a clinical psychology program, students should always check to be sure that the program is accredited by the Canadian Psychological Association. After completing an accredited graduate training program, prospective clinical psychologists must also complete a period of supervised training and an examination. Students must meet specific licensure requirements in order to practice.

Average Program Costs

According to Statistics Canada, on average, the tuition fees for a bachelor's degree were \$5,138 in 2010/2011

Graduate students paid an average of \$5,182 in tuition fees in 2010/2011

Resources

Educational Programs

Kwantlen University

<http://kwantlen.ca/calendar/2011-12/socialsciences/psychology-applied-deg.htm>

University of British Columbia

<http://www.psych.ubc.ca/ug-pgm/pup.psy>

<https://you.ubc.ca/ubc/okanagan/admissions.ezc>

University of Victoria

<http://web.uvic.ca/psyc/>

<http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2011/FACS/UnIn/UnAd/AdRe.html>

Vancouver Island University

<http://www.viu.ca/calendar/UniversityDegreeCompletion/bamajorsminors/psychology.asp>

<http://www.viu.ca/mba/admit.asp>

Thompson Rivers University

<http://www.tru.ca/distance/programs/arts/degree/bachelor-psychology-major.html>

Financial assistance and bursaries:

For information about Canada student loans and grants, please visit:

http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/learning/canada_student_loan/index.shtml

Associations

BC Psychological Association

<http://www.psychologists.bc.ca/>

Canadian Psychological Association (CPA)

<http://www.cpa.ca/aboutcpa/>

Canadian Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology (CRHSPP)

<http://www.crhsp.ca/>

College of Psychologists of British Columbia

<http://www.collegeofpsychologists.bc.ca/>