

NICPP Policy Statement on Interns Who Experience Conflicts Working with Diverse Clients/Patients:

In our APA-accredited program we are committed to a training process that ensures that interns develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to work effectively with members of the public who embody intersecting demographics, attitudes, beliefs, and values. When interns' attitudes, beliefs, or values create tensions that negatively impact the training process or their ability to effectively treat members of the public, the program faculty and supervisors are committed to a developmental training approach that is designed to support the acquisition of professional competence. We support interns in finding a belief- or value-congruent path that allows them to work in a professionally competent manner with all clients/patients.

For some interns, integrating personal beliefs or values with professional competence in working with all clients/patients may require additional time and faculty support. Ultimately though, to complete our internship program successfully, all interns must be able to work with any client placed in their care in a beneficial and noninjurious manner. Professional competencies are determined by the profession for the benefit and protection of the public; consequently, interns do not have the option to avoid working with particular client populations or refuse to develop professional competencies because of conflicts with their attitudes, beliefs, or values.

Our training clinics are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our community. Consistent with this principle, Consortium policy requires that supervisors and interns do not discriminate on the basis of age, gender, gender identity, race, ethnicity, culture, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, or socioeconomic status in the services provided at the training clinics.

In some cases, tensions may arise for an intern due to differences in beliefs or values with clients. Because the interns will have to navigate these sorts of clinical situations in their future practice careers, the program has a responsibility to prepare interns to do so in a safe and ethical manner. NICPP will respectfully work with interns as they learn how to effectively practice with a broad range of clients. Thus, interns should expect to be assigned clients that may present challenges for them at some point in training. If interns do not feel comfortable or capable of providing competent services to a client because it conflicts with the intern's beliefs or values, it is the intern's responsibility to bring this issue to the attention of his/her supervisor. Because client welfare and safety are always the first priority, decisions about client assignment and reassignment are the responsibility of the faculty/supervisors.

Adopted April 13, 2015. Adapted from the American Psychological Association Education Directorate sample policy statements developed in January 2014 by the BEA Working Group on Trainee Conflicts Serving a Diverse Clientele.