



## Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental & Related Disabilities (LEND Program)

The LEND program at the Institute for Community Inclusion at Boston Children's Hospital provides advanced interdisciplinary training to health and counseling professionals and to families and people with lived experience of disability 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 specific clinical practice and team collaboration to support models and policy issues. 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, intermediate, and short-term graduate level interdisciplinary training opportunities to health and education professionals as well as to families and people with lived experience of disability. The program is appropriate for trainees 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, pediatrics, health administration, law, nursing, nutrition, occupational therapy, pastoral counseling, physical therapy, psychiatry, psychology, public health, rehabilitation counseling, social work, speech therapy and architecture. Family members and people with lived experience of disability 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 can apply.

LEND program objectives include:

- (1) Advancing knowledge and skills of the full range of child health professionals, family members, and people with lived experience of disability 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 and local agencies, organizations, private providers and communities;
- (3) Providing a wide range of professionals, families and people with lived experience of disability 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 diversity, partnerships among disciplines, and family-centered approaches to care.

LEND fellows dedicate approximately 400 hours to the program, which is a 1 ½ days per week commitment, from September through early May, with Fridays being the dedicated training day. The additional half day is flexible. Each Fellow will participate in the various training activities during the year, which 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). The class is held each Friday from 8:00-10:00 a.m. during the fall and spring semesters.

**SEMINAR SERIES:** These presentations provide focused attention in the areas of public health, cultural diversity, public policy, technology, evidence-based practice, and management skills.

**CLINICAL SEMINARS:** A clinical seminar series offered monthly addresses a broad range of issues from an in depth review of specific neurodevelopmental disability conditions to ethical principles and considerations.

**LEADERSHIP SEMINARS:** A monthly series that focuses on leadership characteristics and opportunities, and looks at specific skill sets needed for leadership in maternal and child health.

**CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES PRESENTATIONS:** Fellows work together in small groups to develop in class presentations to inform their peers about topics that are emerging in the media, in the community, in clinical practice, in research, locally, nationally and/or internationally.

**TITLE V INQUIRY:** Working with LEND faculty and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, each fellow chooses a Title V agency for program review and hosts the Title V director to present to the class.

**CLINIC OBSERVATIONS:** Each semester, fellows go individually or in pairs to observe a clinic in the hospital. After each clinic visit, each Fellow is expected report on their experience in a reflection paper.

**FAMILY HOME VISITS:** Each semester, fellows go in small groups to a home visit with a family and child with a developmental disability. The Fellows arrange a mutually agreeable time with the family, which can be on Zoom. This takes place once in the fall and once in the spring with the same family. A reflection paper is required after each visit, and can include how the experience changed from one semester to the next.

**COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS (CBO)/BCH OUTREACH INITIATIVES:** Fellows participate in and/or develop a project with an affiliated CBO or BCH outreach program. This experience requires field visits and allows Fellows to understand the meaning that neurodevelopmental disability has for families and communities within and across cultures or settings. Fellows will present on their experience/projects in class.

**DISABILITY POLICY SEMINAR:** Each year fellows attend a national policy conference in Washington, D.C. This three-day conference provides trainees with connections to the disability community, to other LEND participants from programs in the AUCD Network, up-to-date policy considerations on the national political arena, and concludes with visits to legislators on Capitol Hill. Fellows can prepare to speak on issues of relevance and concern to the families and children they know and/or work with.

**ADDITIONAL LEND FELLOWSHIP ACTIVITIES:** Other opportunities include hospital and departmental conferences, research opportunities, and local and regional activities in the disability community.

Stipends are available for participation in the LEND Fellowship.

Interested applicants should send letters of interest, resume, and references to:

Jason Fogler, Ph.D.  
LEND Director  
Institute for Community Inclusion/LEND Project  
Boston Children's Hospital  
300 Longwood Avenue  
Mail Stop: BCH 3217  
Boston, MA 02115

Inquires can be made to Jason Fogler at 857-218-3745 or [Jason.Fogler@childrens.harvard.edu](mailto:Jason.Fogler@childrens.harvard.edu)