Master’s Level Student Training Program
About Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services

Since 1942, Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services has served Southern California residents by providing mental health and substance use treatment services. As the first non-profit mental health outpatient clinic in Los Angeles, Didi Hirsch was initially founded to help adults cope with the aftermath of the Great Depression. Over the years, Didi Hirsch has evolved in response to the needs of our increasingly complex community. From our 10 sites and through partnerships with more than 100 schools, we have served more than 100,000 clients a year throughout Southern California.

As a Department of Mental Health (DMH) contracted agency, we offer a wide range of clinical services which are provided from an integrated, whole person care perspective. Services address each client’s mental health, physical health and substance use and include: out-patient counseling, short-term residential treatment, case management, substance use treatment, housing assistance and extensive community outreach. Our Suicide Prevention Center (locations in Los Angeles and Orange Co.) offers a variety of services to people impacted by suicide. The Center operates a 24 hours a day, 7 days a week crisis line (phone and text), has an out-patient counseling program and provides group therapy for survivors of a suicide attempt and for those experiencing bereavement due to a death from suicide. The Center also provides extensive community outreach education to raise awareness of suicide and intervention strategies.

Didi Hirsch continually endeavors to reduce the stigma attached to mental illness and to provide hope and support to the many individuals and families whose lives are affected by mental illness.

“Our mission is to save and transform the lives of children, adults and families through world-class, whole-person mental health care and suicide prevention, including where discrimination and injustice limit access.”
About the Master’s Level Student Training Program for MSW Interns and MFT/PCC Trainees
(2nd Year Students)

The mission of the Master’s Level Student Training Program is to provide in-depth, comprehensive training in the provision of clinical services to a diverse population of adults, children and families in a large Department of Mental Health (DMH) contracted non-profit community mental health agency. We believe that all future mental health professionals need to demonstrate competency in:

- Assessment, diagnosis and treatment of chronic severe mental illness and emotional/behavioral problems in adults, adolescents and children utilizing evidence-based interventions
- Ethical and legal responsibilities
- Diversity, equality and inclusion
- Professional and personal interactions with others
- Community outreach activities

All client service is provided through a hybrid model either in-person or remotely depending on the client situation and educational requirements of the student. Students work primarily within our out-patient clinics in our Adult or Child/Family programs, however placements are may also be available with our suicide prevention programs and our residential programs. We provide direct, practical experience in working clinically with clients experiencing a broad range of psycho-social stressors and serious mental health diagnoses. Our client population is extremely diverse in a variety of areas: ethnicity, culture, gender identification, sexual orientation, age; all are in the low socio-economic range. With intensive supervision (both individual and group) and monthly trainings, students gain knowledge and experience from our practical, hands-on approach. Students are also given considerable responsibility in order to prepare them for more independent work during the course of their careers. All students are assigned to a licensed clinical supervisor who provides 1-2 hours of supervision per week. Students also participate in group supervision bi-weekly.

During the course of the program, students gain:

Clinical Experience
Students providing direct clinical service to clients are typically assigned 8-10 cases for which they provide individual and family treatment (as indicated), and may also facilitate a therapy or psychoeducational group. Students are given the opportunity to conduct initial assessments which include a DSM diagnosis as well as gaining experience with treatment planning. All client documentation is done through an electronic medical record and includes all DMH required forms (except for work within the suicide prevention programs). All students are fully integrated into multi-disciplinary teams. Depending on the placement site and program, a student’s work with clients may also include field visits to wherever the client is living. Some school-based counseling experience may be available within the Child/Family program.

Community Outreach (Macro) Experience
Students participate in our Consultation, Education and Prevention program (C,E&P). This community outreach project provides students with the opportunity to work in the community providing psych-educational presentations focused on mental health awareness and reduction of stigma to members of community organizations and agencies. Students are given a list of projects to choose from and typically participate on the project as part of a team. A student may also attain Macro level experience through a macro placement working with the agency’s Substance Use Prevention Program.

Training Experience
All students are required to attend monthly trainings which provide instruction on a variety of mental health topics and specific intervention techniques.
Specialized Training Experience:

Seeking Safety Training
This evidence based practice designed for work with clients with substance abuse and PTSD is offered as funding permits.

Suicide Assessment and Intervention Training
This training is a two-day intensive, interactive and practice-dominated course designed to provide skills to assess and intervene to prevent the immediate risk of suicide.

Professional Assault Crisis Training (Pro-ACT)
This training is an interactive course providing information and strategies for de-escalating crisis situations and enhancing personal safety when working with clients.

Application Information—Masters Level Student Training Program

Minimum Master’s Level Student Requirements:
1. Work 3 days (20 hours) per week (weekdays only).
2. Commitment to a 9 month training program from mid-September through the end of May.
3. Available to work at least two evenings per week until 8 pm if working in the Child/Family program.
4. Required to be on site every Wednesday all day (9 am—5 pm)
5. It is helpful if students have at least one prior volunteer, paid, or training experience working with clinical populations using basic clinical interviewing and intervention skills.
6. Interest in developing clinical experience working with clients with serious mental health disorders.

Application Procedures:
Please complete the master’s level application available on our website at www.didihirsch.org. In the application please note your preference for position and only apply for the position based on your discipline. Your preference for location will be taken into consideration, but Didi Hirsch reserves the right to select the program/site that best matches your experience. Please include your resume when submitting the completed application.

Applications with attached resumes must be sent via email to training@didihirsch.org. Any questions can be addressed to the Training Director, Linda O’Connor, LCSW, at loconnor@didihirsch.org, (310) 846-2074.

General Information:
- **Stipend.** A $5000 stipend is available for students who are fluent in Spanish at any site except the Orange County Suicide Survivor Support Services program, the residential programs, and the Substance Use Prevention Program. To qualify for the stipend students must pass a language proficiency test.

- **Beatrice Stern Intern Scholarship Award:** A $5,000 scholarship is awarded to an outstanding student (based on application) pursuing a Master’s degree as a marriage and family therapist or a Master’s in social work. The scholarship is awarded prior to the start of the training year. Only students who have already been accepted into the training program are eligible to apply.

- **Supervision.** One hour (or more depending on caseload) of individual supervision is provided with a licensed clinical supervisor. Live supervision or audio/visual recordings of at least 4 sessions are required over the course of the year. Two hours of group supervision is provided bi-weekly.

- **Time off.** Students are given a total of 10 days of time off inclusive of agency holidays.
Didi Hirsch Site Locations:

**Headquarters - Sepulveda**
4760 S. Sepulveda Boulevard
Culver City, CA 90230
(310) 390-6612

**Inglewood Center**
323 North Prairie Avenue
Inglewood, CA 90301
310-677-7808

**S. Mark Taper Foundation Center**
1328 West Manchester Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90044
323-778-9593

**Excelsior House**
1007 Myrtle Avenue
Inglewood, CA 90301
310-412-4191

**Jump Street**
1233 S. La Cienega Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90035
310-855-0031

**Glendale Center**
1540 East Colorado Street
Glendale, CA 91205
818-244-7257

**Suicide Prevention Center – Century City**
10277 W. Olympic Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA. 90067
424-362-2901

**Suicide Survivor Support Services - Orange County**
2000 East 4th Street, Ste 201
Santa Ana, CA 92705
714-547-0885

**Via Avanta**
Pacoima, CA
818-897-2609