



Internship Program Q&A

www.cancerlifeline.org

Revised January 2008

Fifty years ago, no one talked much about cancer. Today, cancer is much more visible. Advancements in medical science are allowing people to live longer than ever before after a cancer diagnosis. As a result, most people have a family member or friend living with cancer, or have cancer themselves in their lifetime. Thriving, or at least maintaining an acceptable quality of life while living with cancer is the challenge, and requires more than just medicine.

For more almost 35 years, Cancer Lifeline has helped improve the lives of people living with cancer. We make more than 13,000 contacts a year with people affected by cancer—patients, survivors, family members, friends and coworkers. We provide free services that help people take back the things that cancer can take away: health, hope, independence, community and joy.

People can call the Lifeline any time of the day or night for information or just to talk. Cancer Lifeline's support groups help people meet others in similar situations. Couple, Family and Parenting Meetings help people talk to each other and children during difficult times. Exercise, nutrition and meditation classes help participants get strong and stay well, while building community. Healing Arts activities feed the soul through creative expression and sharing. Financial navigation programs help patients and their families stay afloat financially during treatment. Workplace programs help managers and co-workers support the patient and each other when an employee has cancer.

What is Cancer Lifeline?

Cancer Lifeline is an organization whose mission is to “*Optimize the quality of life of all people living with cancer.*” Since 1973, we have provided a variety of free services to cancer patients, survivors, family members, friends and co-workers.

We have more than 13,000 contacts a year with people affected by cancer—patients, survivors, family members, friends, care-givers and co-workers. Our budget of \$1.2 million comes from individual donations, foundations and contracts with medical centers. With 14 FTE staff, 8 interns, more than 50 contract facilitators and close to 50 active volunteers we provide the following programs:

- **The 24-Hour Lifeline** offers support and resource referral to people affected by cancer. The Lifeline is available 24 hours a day, State-wide and Nation-wide—it's there whenever and wherever people are in of emotional support and information. We also offer face-to-face Lifeline support and information to people who drop-into our Green Lake center, as well as to patients while they receive chemotherapy in area cancer centers.
- **The Patient & Family Support Program** includes Family, Couple and Parenting Meetings; Share-the-Care Meetings; and Kids' and Parents' Groups, which help patients and their families and friends strengthen relationships, open lines of communication and coordinate care during treatment and illness.
- **Support Groups** offer a forum for patients, survivors, family members and friends to share thoughts, feelings, information and caring. We currently offer these groups: Brain Cancer, Breast Cancer (3 groups), Caregiver Support, Colorectal Cancer, General Cancer (2 groups), Kids & Parents, Lung Cancer, Lymphoma, Rainbow Women's Cancer Group (for sexuality-minority women) and Reclaiming Your Life (for survivors after cancer treatment). We provide space for and/or promote THYCA's Thyroid Cancer support group and Cierra Sisters' breast cancer support group for African American women.
- **The Health Promotion Program** includes a wide range of gentle exercise, nutrition and meditation classes for people at all stages of cancer treatment and recovery, as well as their family members and friends.
- **The Healing Arts Program** offers a range of writing, visual arts, crafts, horticulture and music and sound classes that support personal exploration, sharing and building community growth in support of coping and healing.
- **The Lymphedema Education, Support and Exercise Program**, developed with grants from the Komen Foundation, provides education, networking and exercise for breast cancer survivors who have lymphedema or are at risk for it in 9 Western Washington Counties.
- The **Komen Patient Assistance Fund** and the **Cancer Lifeline Patient Assistance Fund** provide financial assistance to low-income cancer patients in 16 Western Washington Counties.
- In **Workplace Consultations**, Cancer Lifeline staff assist managers and co-workers address on-the-job issues created by cancer.

For further information about Cancer Lifeline's services, go to our website www.cancerlifeline.org.

What values guide Cancer Lifeline's programs?

We believe that cancer patients, survivors and their families, friends, co-workers and caregivers are all "people living with cancer." More than a decade ago, we analyzed calls to our Lifeline and identified the four primary needs of people living with cancer—

patients, survivors, caregivers, family members and friends. We develop all of our programs to address these four needs:

1. Information
2. Opportunities to express feelings without being judged
3. To be included rather than isolated
4. To nurture a sense of choice and control

We believe that the emotional, spiritual and mental components of health are as important as the physical ones.

We value listening to the needs of our clients and creating excellent services to meet those needs.

We value people of diverse cultures and backgrounds and we intend to serve them in culturally appropriate ways.

We value an immediate and personal response to people living with cancer, as demonstrated by the 24-hour Lifeline.

We value the sense of community found at the sites served by Cancer Lifeline.

We value sound financial stewardship so our community can count on us.

We value our staff, board, interns, volunteers and supporters for their commitment to our mission.

Why do psychology interns choose Cancer Lifeline?

Cancer Lifeline is a community-based placement, providing a range of free, non-pathologizing psychological services to anyone touched by cancer. Our clients deal with the trauma of a life-threatening illness, which may be accompanied by physical discomfort, grief, loss, financial stresses and existential challenges. Our services are holistic and comprehensive, ranging from acute crisis intervention to ongoing individual support, support groups, mind/body and healing arts workshops and psycho-educational skills groups for longer-term survivorship. We use an evidenced-based person-centered approach, which includes a wide range of cognitive and behavioral strategies. We offer individual, couples, family, group and organizational work. Interns receive extensive training specific to working with people with cancer, and quickly begin providing a range of services. Cancer Lifeline interns can build skills in the following approaches:

Person-Centered

Fundamental to a person-centered approach is the belief that people inherently have the ability to figure out how to experience the life that they desire. The clinical work at Cancer Lifeline is to support and facilitate clients through this process. The clinician's role is to create the space, time, questions and sense of

support such that clients develop solutions to their particular issues. A Cancer Lifeline internship is a good match for a student who is excited at the prospect of further developing skills in active listening, non-judgment and positive regard. Active listening, nonjudgment and positive regard are fundamental components of most psychological theoretical orientations and we really emphasize them at Cancer Lifeline.

Interns have many opportunities to see the person-centered approach at work—in Lifeline calls, face-to-face work with individuals, support groups, couple and family meetings and workshops. The results of active listening, nonjudgment and positive regard can be remarkable. Interns experience how much clients can achieve using this self-empowering approach to find solutions.

Interns at Cancer Lifeline really learn to listen, which is the foundation of all therapy. To learn to be a compassionate listener to people going through the life and death issues so common to our clients, is an extraordinary opportunity. Learning to stay open and be a non-anxious presence in the face of great anxiety and suffering is a great preparation for psychological practice of all kinds.

Cognitive and Behavioral

Cancer Lifeline interns use a range of evidence-based cognitive and behavioral strategies to help clients implement the goals and approaches that clients identify. For example, interns may help clients identify strategies to manage anxiety while waiting for test results, make lists of questions necessary for making treatment decisions, develop new communication skills with family and friends, use distraction and meditation to cope with pain and use exposure to reduce anxiety and fear of death.

Additionally, Cancer Lifeline offers the interns a monthly cognitive and behavioral group that focuses on helping the interns, themselves, complete their dissertations and/or pursue professional development. Interns feel supported and make progress on their dissertations while they learn, first hand, how to use cognitive and behavioral tools to achieve their goals. Cognitive and behavioral strategies are commonly used in psychological practice settings.

Trauma

Cancer Lifeline interns have the opportunity to work with clients and their family and friends as trauma is occurring. We are also beginning to contemplate how to work with the ways in which cancer trauma activates previous life traumas or complicates current life experience. Interns have a rare opportunity to help clients manage in the current moment and mitigate long-term effects of trauma. Cancer Lifeline's wide range of services (e.g., the Lifeline, gentle yoga, nutrition classes, pressed flower card classes, financial assistance), is meant to provide something that everyone dealing with cancer will be motivated to pursue. Once engaged, the

person-centered non-judgmental approach that infuses all our programs is meant to help clients cope and even thrive in the midst of a potentially traumatic experience.

Grief and Loss

Grief and loss are central themes when working with life-threatening illness. Some form of grief or loss are present in nearly every interaction interns have with clients, as clients cope with often unwanted changes to their physical selves, daily activities, relationships, finances and, possibly, the length of their lives. Grief and loss work at Cancer Lifeline is guided by the four needs of patients and caregivers experiencing cancer listed above (1) Information, (2) The Ability Express Oneself Without Judgment, (3) Inclusion rather than Exclusion, and (4) Choice and Control. Interns learn to use the four needs to guide their interactions with clients.

Health Psychology

Cancer Lifeline services assist patients and caregivers in managing their health concerns. During Lifeline calls, face-to-face Lifeline work in infusion rooms, support groups, and nutrition and exercise classes, clients make treatment decisions, manage symptoms and side effects and work to develop healthy behaviors to promote well-being during treatment and beyond.

Using the range of free services available at Cancer Lifeline, interns can help clients process, adapt and manage their health issues and concerns. True to our person-centered focus, clients take the lead in setting goals and selecting strategies to achieve the optimum approach to address their emotional and physical needs. The skills that interns develop or strengthen while working with those touched by cancer are invaluable in working with clients with an acute or chronic illness in any health psychology or general practice setting.

Community Psychology

Cancer Lifeline interns deliver psychological services in non-medicalized, non-stigmatizing community settings. Even our programs located at cancer centers are presented as non-medical supportive services. A patient uncomfortable with the idea of being in therapy will call the Lifeline when he receives bad news about his cancer. A couple who would never think to go to couple therapy to deal with disagreements about next steps for treatment will talk with a Cancer Lifeline intern for an hour while the wife is receiving chemotherapy. A parent whose adult child is dying of cancer looks forward to his twice-a-month caregiver support group to gain perspective on her situation, get ideas for coping and managing, and have the opportunity to help other caregivers. A woman who is fearful of her cancer recurring wouldn't think of going to group therapy, but

enjoys the monthly craft and horticulture classes she attends where people really understand how she feels.

Cancer Lifeline interns can also work with staff throughout the agency and in partnership with other community organizations State-wide to design, implement, and evaluate programs. Cancer Lifeline has formal partnerships with three hospitals and collaborates with a host of other community organizations to improve psychosocial and support services for cancer patients and caregivers throughout the State, including the infrastructure that supports such services.

Systems Perspective

No one experiences cancer or any acute, chronic or life-threatening illness totally alone. There is always the treatment team, family, friends, coworkers, neighbors and so on, who can play important roles for patients, and in turn, are themselves significantly touched by the patients' cancer journey. Cancer is never solely a medical or physical condition—it has emotional, relational, financial and existential implications. Cancer Lifeline's person-centered approach means that we prioritize helping clients address cancer in a systemic way—because that is how clients generally experience the disease. Also, we can offer different types of services at multiple services, such that we can work with the whole person, family and other caregivers in the patients' life.

We may help a woman who is dying by talking to her on the phone weekly and helping her manage fear and pain. We may hold a Share-the-Care meeting to help her family and friends form an efficient and effective care team to deliver meals, get her children ready for school in the morning and take her to daily radiation treatments. The patients' husband may work with Cancer Lifeline to figure out how to pay for her medications and get more affordable health insurance for their children because they were covered under their mother's policy which is extremely expensive since she lost her job. The patients' sister may also call the Lifeline to deal with her lack of comfort with her sister's treatment decisions. The patient's friends may attend a weekly gentle yoga class with the patient, so they can spend time together relaxing during this stressful time. Cancer Lifeline, through staff and interns, strives to offer support services to all who are touched by cancer, to help them address the cancer experience in all its forms.

In summary, an internship at Cancer Lifeline is an excellent match for psychology students who, after graduation, want to include in their professional work:

- working with individuals, couples, families, groups, organizations and communities dealing with illness, grief and loss.
- providing person/client-centered and cognitive and behavioral interventions to individuals, couples and families
- being a clinician, supervisor or administrator in a multi-disciplinary social service agency or medical setting.

Where does Cancer Lifeline provide services?

Cancer Lifeline is one of the few clinical psychology internship sites in the Puget Sound area and one of the few psycho-oncology training sites nationwide. We have a free-standing center in Seattle near Green Lake, and are co-located at three Puget Sound area hospitals: Northwest Hospital near Northgate, Evergreen Hospital Medical Center in Kirkland and Valley Medical Center in Renton. Interns are based at the Seattle office near Green Lake and provide services at the three hospital sites (we attempt to match them to sites that are geographically convenient for them). We also offer selected services at other sites in the Puget Sound area, Western Washington and State-wide.

What experiences do Cancer Lifeline interns have?

Interns participate in a variety of direct service, program development, evaluation and organizational consultation experiences. There are opportunities for interns to assist with or offer all of our programs, as well as to develop new services. We collaborate with each intern to design a series of responsibilities that meet, to the degree possible, their interests and needs.

- **24-hour Lifeline.** Most interns take shifts on the 24-hour Lifeline. The interns provide emotional support and information to callers who are cancer patients, survivors, family, friends and co-workers. Interns learn to pick-up the telephone and be present with and supportive of whomever is on the other end of the line, whatever the caller's experience with cancer and current emotional needs. In addition to speaking with new callers on the Lifeline, most interns have several ongoing clients with whom the interns speak regularly to provide continuing support through the callers' cancer experiences. Cancer Lifeline receives more than 2,500 calls a year on the Lifeline, including calls for information and class registration.
- **Face-to-face Lifeline.** Interns provide face-to-face emotional support to clients who drop-in at the Green Lake site. They also have the opportunity to provide face-to-face emotional support to patients and caregivers while the patients are receiving chemotherapy at Valley Medical Center. We are in the process of arranging for interns to provide face-to-face emotional support during chemotherapy at other cancer centers.
- **Support Groups.** Most interns co-facilitate one or more of Cancer Lifeline's ongoing drop-in cancer support groups and provide a range of services to the group and individual members. Interns co-facilitate the support groups – becoming part of the groups, the community that develops around the groups and the lives of individual group members. The interns are also involved in the practical sides of offering successful support groups: reminder calls, calls to new participants, calls to participants who miss group, assessing educational needs of the groups, scheduling speakers and tracking participation in groups over time. Support groups give interns the unique opportunity to follow a group of

individuals over the course of a year as they live their cancer experiences – including coping with diagnosis, treatment, recurrence and, in some cases, death.

- **Psycho-educational groups.** Most interns also attend and help facilitate at least one time-limited, closed, psycho-educational group. These groups include, for example, *Reclaiming Your Life* –a group for women at least three months out of cancer treatment; *Kids’ and Parents’ Group* –for parents with a cancer diagnosis and their children; and *Kaizen* –an Eastern approach to taking small steps towards lasting life change.
- **Other programs and projects.** Interns have the opportunity to learn about, assist with and run a variety of other programs and projects:
 - *Therapist Referral Program*
 - *Couple, Family & Parenting Meetings*
 - *Share-the-Care Meetings*
 - *Workplace Presentations and Consultations*
 - *Developing and presenting Educational, Health Promotion and Arts classes*
 - *Lymphedema Education, Support & Exercise Programs*
 - *Program Evaluation*
 - *Outreach to Clients and Professionals*
 - *Developing Cancer-Support Programs Collaboratively with Diverse Organizations and Communities*
 - *Clinical Supervision of Volunteers and Practica Students*
 - *Assisting with the Collaboration at Hospital Medical Centers*
 - *Designing and overseeing Speaker Series*

What supervision do interns receive?

Pre-doctoral interns attend two hours a week of regularly-scheduled supervision with a licensed psychologist. They receive additional supervision from Cancer Lifeline’s interdisciplinary team of masters-prepared nurses, social workers and other mental health professionals. Additionally, pre-doctoral interns can provide supervision to practica students and community volunteers.

Practica students attend one hour a week of regularly-scheduled supervision. This supervision is provided either by a licensed psychologist, or by a pre-doctoral intern and closely supervised by a psychologist—with the psychologist either directly observing the supervision or reviewing audiotapes of the supervision.

What kinds of didactics does Cancer Lifeline offer?

Following is the current plan for Cancer Lifeline’s 2008-09 didactics. There is some talk, however, that some didactics will be offered collaboratively among several Seattle internship sites in 2008-09. If this happens, it is possible that there will be changes to the following schedule. In any case, we will finalize the didactics schedule before offers are

extended for internship and practica. By accepting an offer, pre-doctoral interns and practica students commit to attend the required didactics.

Ongoing reflection and learning are highly valued at Cancer Lifeline, and we offer considerably more than two hours of didactics a week:

- 40 hours of initial Lifeline training, scheduled 9-5 on the five Sundays in June (*required of both pre-doctoral and practica interns*)
- Lifeline Case Conference on the 4th Monday of every month from 6:30-8:30pm (*required of both pre-doctoral practica interns*)
- Thursday lunchtime didactics, every Thursday from 11:30am-1:30pm. These cover a variety of topics, including
 - Support Group case conference (generally on the 1st Thursday lunchtime didactic meeting of the month), (*required of both pre-doctoral and practica interns*)
 - Dissertation/professional development support group (*required of pre-doctoral interns and optional for practica interns*)
 - Grand Rounds and other educational presentations (*required of pre-doctoral interns and optional for practica interns*)

Initial Lifeline Training. All interns are required to begin their experience at Cancer Lifeline with a 40-hour training in an evidence-based, person-centered approach to providing emotional support and information. The training includes at least six extended “performance enactments”—in which they develop skills in working with clients by role playing interactions to common client presentations and we assess the development of their skills. All interns also attend 8 hours of orientation to the internship and agency. Lifeline training and Internship Orientation are currently scheduled 9-5 on the five Sundays in June, 2008.

Case Conferences. All pre-doctoral and practica interns are required to attend the following case conferences

- **Lifeline Case Conference.** 4th Monday of the month, from 6:30-8:30, focused on their work with individuals
- **Support Group Case Conference.** ??Thursday of the month, from 11:30-1:30, focused on their work with support groups

Case conferences include presentations and discussion of individual and support group cases. They also include presentations on topics relevant to the work at Cancer Lifeline, ranging from personal perspectives on death and dying, to medical systems affecting cancer patients (hospice, home health care), to evidence-based approaches to running support groups.

Thursday lunchtime didactics. Pre-doctoral interns are required to attend all the Thursday lunchtime didactics 11:30am-1:30pm, and practica students are welcome to attend as they are able and interested. These Thursday lunchtime didactics include:

- **Monthly dissertation/professional development support group.** This group helps interns make progress on their dissertation and/or pursue other professional development—using cognitive and behavioral tools to achieve their goals. It is scheduled once a month for one hour during the Thursday 11:30-1:30 lunchtime didactic.
- **Grand Rounds.** The grand round presentations offered by Psychiatry and Behavioral Medicine at the University of Washington School of Medicine present cutting-edge research-based psychological assessment, treatment and programming by international experts. The Grand Rounds provide breadth to interns’ experiences at Cancer Lifeline, and gets them into the habit of participating in community-based training to pursue lifelong learning. The topics are relevant to interns’ work at Cancer Lifeline, interns’ other psychological interests and future work. The 2008 winter quarter’s Grand Round offerings include topics such as:
 - *Marriage, Health, and Mental Health: How to Improve Them*
 - *How Neuroscience Research Can Inform Successful Psychotherapy*
 - *Challenges to the PTSD Diagnosis*
 - *Community Partnered Participatory Research to Reduce Burden of Depression: A Work in Progress*
- **Educational presentations by Puget Sound area Psycho-Oncology researchers and clinicians.** Interns arrange for local experts in psycho-oncology to present research and clinical approaches and discuss the implications for work at Cancer Lifeline.

Additional grand rounds and relevant training. Interns are notified of and can attend Grand Rounds at Children’s Regional Hospital and Medical Center and Harborview Medical Center, as well as other relevant local training, such as Swedish Cancer Institute’s annual psycho-oncology conference.

Staff Meetings. Interns required to attend the annual day-long staff and intern retreat and can attend program staff and full staff meetings as they are able and interested.

What schedules do interns work?

All Cancer Lifeline interns must attend the Lifeline training and Internship Orientation from 9-5 on the 5 Sundays in June 2008. Pre-doctoral interns can start their internships immediately after Lifeline training, later in the Summer, in the Fall or beyond. Pre-doctoral internship can last from one to two years. Practica students usually start in Summer or Fall, depending on what their programs require and their personal preferences. We ask all interns to take weekly 4-hour Lifeline shifts at their homes between the time when Lifeline training ends and when they begin their internships, in order to maintain the skills that they learned in training. These hours can generally be counted towards preparation/training time. Other arrangements may be available on a case-by-case basis.

Pre-doctoral interns are generally regularly scheduled to be at Cancer Lifeline four days a week, from 9-5, 11-7, etc. They must attend the Thursday lunchtime didactics—but they may have the option to work a full day Thursdays or just come in for the lunchtime didactics.

Practica students are generally regularly scheduled to be at Cancer Lifeline for one and one-half to two days a week. They also must attend the Thursday lunchtime didactic that is Support Group Case Conference (generally the 1st Thursday of the month), as well as the 4th Monday of the month evening Lifeline Case Conference.

Pre-doctoral and practica interns also generally co-facilitate a support group, most of which occur on weekday evenings. Additionally, interns interested in assisting with the couple, family, parenting and Share-the-Care meetings will need to work additional evenings and weekend times when families are available to meet. Interns also rotate covering some weekend Lifeline shifts. All interns work some evening and weekend hours.

Are Cancer Lifeline pre-doctoral interns compensated?

We are still exploring whether we will be able to offer pre-doctoral interns a stipend. We will decide this before we make offers for internship. In any case, we will offer pre-doctoral interns 2 weeks of vacation and 2 weeks of sick leave. If we do not offer stipends, we will also offer pre-doctoral interns 250 hours to work on their dissertations.

Why does Cancer Lifeline have an internship program?

Interns help us pursue our mission of optimizing the quality of life of all people living with cancer by allowing us to provide more services to more people. We also have an internship program to help increase the level of knowledge among professionals in working with people living with cancer in particular, and grief, loss and trauma in general. Finally, we have interns because we find their interest, energy, knowledge and personalities to be valuable additions to the staff at Cancer Lifeline!

Application Process

For 2007-08, Cancer Lifeline accepted four doctoral clinical psychology students in their pre-doctoral internship placements and three doctoral clinical psychology students in their practicum placements. In 2008-09 we plan to accept 2-5 pre-doctoral interns and 2-5 practicum students. We will interview pre-doctoral interns on 2/22 or 2/23, if not before and make offers on 2/25. We will continue to work to fill any open slots after that. Practica students need to submit their written applications by March 1, 2008, although applicants will be interviewed and accepted on a rolling basis so it is in practica students' best interest to apply early.

To apply, please complete the Internship Application found on our website (www.cancerlifeline.org). Please e-mail the completed application, your resume and two Letters of Recommendation to Dr. David Sugarman (dsugarman@cancerlifeline.org).