

UMASS CHAN HUMAN RIGHTS AND ASYLUM PROGRAM

**WE ARE A MEDICAL STUDENT-RUN ORGANIZATION
SEEKING VOLUNTEER PHYSICIANS AND PSYCHIATRISTS
TO HELP CONDUCT EVALUATIONS FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS
HERE IN MA.**

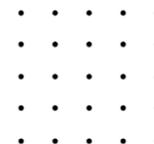
**INTEREST FORM LINKED HERE - PLEASE
FILL OUT TO RECEIVE ADDITIONAL
INFORMATION.**



**Please email umassmedasylumclinic@umassmed.edu with
any questions.**



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UHRAP Frequently asked questions

See Lucy Candib or Rachel Wheeler today for more information, or contact us later.

(lmcandib@gmail.com or doctorrachelwheeler@gmail.com)

Q: I'm retired. Can I still do this?

A: It's a great retirement activity. Keep an active Massachusetts license. You do NOT need malpractice insurance if you are not caring for patients, and asylum evaluations are not patient care. You do not need to maintain board certification, DEA, or other credential required to practice medicine.

Q: What is the time commitment?

A: Each evaluation is about a day's work, in total. Complex cases can take more. Usually, we start with a two-hour interview, most often remotely. If a physical examination is needed, that can be done in a separate visit, usually shorter. Writing a report may take half a day. It's best to plan on some back and forth with the lawyer after submission to make sure your wording is as careful and clear as possible. You may occasionally be asked to be available remotely at some future date for a hearing. Usually your written report is accepted; it is the rare exception to actually be asked to testify.

Q: I don't speak many languages. Can I still do this?

A: Legal offices provide interpreters.

Q: I don't have an office or exam room. How do I do exams?

A: Many simple skin exams for scars can be done in a private room in a legal office. Some of us have borrowed exam rooms in off hours from former colleagues. The RISE clinic in Worcester can also make space available.

Q: Can I do psychological evaluations, as opposed to physical evaluations? Or both, for the same client?

A: YES! It is ideal, when both physical and psychological are requested, for the same examiner to do both. That way the client is not re-traumatized twice by recounting the details of their trauma. As a family physician, you diagnose and treat depression every day, and have familiarity with PTSD. There is higher demand for psychological evaluations than physical evaluations, and because psychological evaluation can be done remotely the logistics are often easier. You can do evaluations where only psychological

evaluation is requested. At the same time, we currently are in particular need of more physicians who can also do physical examinations.

Q: What are the benefits of doing this?

A:

- You may save a life.
- Social justice work is important, and feels better than passivity.
- You will come to understand your patient panel in a different way. (When, in practice, have you ever had two hours to hear the whole story?)
- You will learn more about conditions in other countries.
- You will hear stories of incredible resilience.

Q: How much do I need to commit to?

A: You will need to do an on-line or in person training with Physicians for Human Rights. PHR estimates the on-line training takes about 5-7 hours. <https://phr.org/issues/asylum-and-persecution/asylum-network-trainings/>

After that, identify a mentor who can answer questions when you have them, and accept your first case. You can do one case, or as many as you want. Right now, we at U Mass are unable to keep up with the demand, and every bit of help is important.

Q: What support does UHRAP provide?

A: The students are fabulous at handling all the logistics of communicating with lawyers, setting up zoom meetings, and making sure legal offices have clients sign permission forms in advance. Usually, two students will join you in a remote evaluation and scribe the entire interview, so that you do not have to take notes and have the opportunity to quote patient language when appropriate. There are monthly remote faculty meetings that you are invited to (but not required to) attend where you can find support from other physicians and psychologists who are part of the program.

Q: I am not in Massachusetts. What can I do?

A: Contact Physicians for Human Rights. Do the on-line training. Get on the mailing list for referrals through PHR. Find out who is doing this work in your locale, and how they can mentor or support you.