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### The underrecognized potential for subspecialty training in sleep medicine among psychiatric trainees

In 2016 there were 39,180 psychiatrists active in the U.S. workforce, of which around 500 were board certified in sleep medicine. Currently, around 15 psychiatrists per year are entering sleep medicine fellowship training in the U.S. The sleep medicine subspecialty is listed on both the American Psychiatric Association (APA) and American Council on Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) webpages among the 9 areas of psychiatric subspecialty training. Familiarity with the sleep medicine subspecialty, however, has not yet spread to psychiatric residents, for unclear reasons. Sleep medicine is a multi-disciplinary subspecialty in which several psychiatrists played significant roles in both early discoveries and the establishment of the specialty. Many sleep disorders have significant overlap with mental illness and generate referrals both to and from psychiatrists. Mental health providers need a bridge to improved sleep disorder management that sleep medicine trained psychiatrists provide. Sleep medicine practices, both private and academic, recognize the value of sleep medicine trained psychiatrists assisting in the management of the mental health disorders that are frequently comorbid with common sleep disorders. Currently, low levels of knowledge exist among psychiatric trainees regarding subspecialty training in sleep medicine and the need for psychiatrists in this subspecialty practice. Apprehensions among psychiatry residents that they would not be welcome in current multi-disciplinary sleep medicine practices need to be assuaged. The practice of psychiatry is interdisciplinary in several areas including medical illnesses, addiction disorders, and disorders of the elderly. The interdisciplinary practice of sleep medicine promises a high percentage of good outcomes and excellent career satisfaction that should be attracting more psychiatric trainees.

### Biography

Gregory S Carter is the Program Director of the ACGME accredited University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas Sleep Medicine Fellowship Program. He initiated this training program in 2002 with psychiatrist Philip Becker and psychologist John Herman in the Department of Psychiatry. The program has trained a total of 26 fellows, including five psychiatrists and one clinical psychologist. He received his MD, PhD in pharmacology, and neurology residency training at West Virginia University. He is an Associate Professor of Neurology at UT Southwestern. He was joined by Imran S. Khawaja, a sleep medicine trained psychiatrist, in 2015 who re-established the Sleep Center at the VA North Texas Healthcare Center and began to train UT Southwestern sleep medicine fellows at the VANTHS in 2017.

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