Asylum Evaluation Project

De Novo is an organization of volunteer professionals that provides free legal assistance and affordable psychotherapy to people with low incomes. The Asylum Evaluation Project assists individuals who are applying for different types of immigration relief including asylum, Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), and U Visa based on past persecution and need clinical documentation of their condition in order to present their cases fully and effectively.

The Asylum Evaluation Project is currently recruiting volunteer clinicians in the MetroWest region to provide psychological evaluations of torture survivors and other survivors of abuse seeking immigration relief in the United States. Volunteers conduct evaluations in order to determine whether a client’s claims of abuse are credible given the psychological evidence. The volunteer then prepares a written affidavit, based on the clinical findings, which becomes part of the client’s application for asylum or other form of immigration relief.

Volunteers determine the extent of their involvement based on the number of evaluations they are able to do per year. Training, consultation, and regular support group meetings are available.

Qualifications: Current independent clinical license in MA, familiarity with diagnosis and diagnostic interviewing, ability to prepare affidavit in a timely manner. Excellent writing skills and expertise in diagnosis and treatment of trauma survivors are helpful. We are also looking for clinicians who are bilingual (especially French, Spanish, Arabic), although this is not a requirement.

Steps to becoming a volunteer:

1) For more information and/or to obtain an application form please contact:
   Lauren Shebairo, LICSW, MPH
   Associate Clinical Director
   De Novo, 47 Thorndike Street, Suite SB-LL-1, Cambridge, MA 02141
   Email: LShebairo@denovo.org
   Phone: 617-405-5467

2) Submit application form with resume

3) Interview: Once your application has been received, you will be contacted by the Associate Clinical Director, Lauren Shebairo, to schedule an in-person interview.

4) Attend a training
   - Date: TBD
   - Location: MetroWest Legal Services, 63 Fountain St # 304, Framingham, MA 01702
   - Training outline:
     - Legal process
     - Conducting forensic evaluations for immigration matters
     - Use of interpreters
     - Testifying in Immigration Court
     - Self-care and secondary trauma

Since 2001, many mental health professionals have very generously donated time to this project. We look forward to connecting with you!