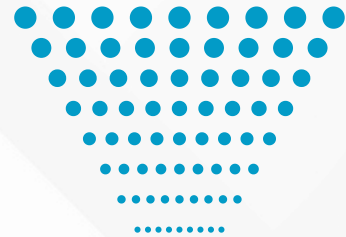




WAKE AHEC
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BEHAVIORAL HEALTH



Micro-Credential in Geriatric Mental Health

For Questions Contact:

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Geriatric Mental Health

The Geriatric Mental Health Micro-Credential is designed for behavioral health or healthcare professionals seeking to deepen their expertise in addressing the complex mental health needs of older adults. This program focuses on evidence-based practices for assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of geriatric mental health conditions, including depression, anxiety, substance use disorders, and dementia-related behavioral challenges. Participants will explore strategies for therapeutic interventions, crisis management, and care coordination within diverse settings. Emphasis is placed on ethical considerations, cultural competence, and interprofessional collaboration to ensure comprehensive and person-centered care for aging populations.

The following modules are required to complete the Geriatric Mental Health micro-credential.

- Developmental Stages of Aging in Geriatric Populations
- Assessment and Screening of Mental Health Disorders in Older Adults
- Ethical Concerns in Mental Health for Older Adults
- Anxiety, Depression and Aging
- Dementia and Older Adults
- Tired and True: Understanding and Treating Insomnia in Older Adults
- Grief and End-of-Life Care
- Substance Use and Older Adults
- Supporting Older Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD)

Micro-Credentials



Anyone can benefit from a micro-credential, but they are especially valuable for job seekers, career changers, working professionals, and students looking to gain specific, marketable skills to secure a job, advance their careers, or update their knowledge. These flexible and affordable credentials offer a way to demonstrate expertise, fill skill gaps, stay relevant in a rapidly changing job market, and build a portfolio of achievements.

How It Works?

Each credential requires the completion of set courses. All courses are self-paced and provided via online modules in order to provide the most flexible learning platform. Each module ranges between one to three hours, and at the conclusion of each module, students will take a knowledge quiz to ensure they understand the material being covered. Upon completion of the entire course, students will receive their Micro-credential. Participants need to complete all modules to receive credit.

Module

Descriptions

Module One:

Developmental Stages of Aging in Geriatric Populations

This module provides a foundational understanding of the developmental stages of aging, with a focus on the physical, psychological, cognitive, emotional, and social changes that occur across later life. Learners will explore the distinctions between early, middle, and late older adulthood, and examine how these stages influence mental health, identity, and care needs. The course integrates lifespan development theory, gerontological research, and clinical insights to support age-appropriate, person-centered mental health care for older adults.

Module Two:

Assessment and Screening of Mental Health Disorders in Older Adults

This presentation provides an overview of best practices for assessing and screening mental health disorders in older adults. It covers the importance of early identification, challenges in diagnosis, and a comprehensive assessment approach that includes clinical interviews, physical exams, functional and cognitive assessments, and collateral information. Additionally, it highlights validated screening tools and considerations for their use, along with case examples to illustrate practical application. The goal is to equip healthcare professionals with evidence-based strategies to improve mental health outcomes in older adults through accurate assessment and integrated care.

Module Descriptions

Module Three:

Ethical Concerns in Mental Health for Older Adults

This training provides a clear, practical overview of the key ethical challenges in mental health care for older adults. Participants will explore autonomy and safety, decision making capacity, informed consent in the context of cognitive impairment, confidentiality and family involvement, elder abuse reporting, cultural and systemic factors, end of life decision making, psychotropic medication ethics, and the impact of technology and resource limitations. The session equips providers with frameworks and strategies to deliver person-centered, age friendly, and ethically grounded care.

Module Four:

Anxiety, Depression and Aging

Crisis Intervention for Co-Occurring Disorders is a specialized educational workshop designed to equip healthcare professionals with the knowledge and skills necessary to respond effectively to individuals experiencing crises related to co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders. The program emphasizes trauma-informed care, integrated treatment approaches, and culturally responsive strategies to support diverse populations. Participants will explore real-world scenarios, evidence-based practices, and collaborative techniques to improve outcomes in crisis situations.

Module Descriptions

Module Five: Dementia and Older Adults

This educational program provides a comprehensive overview of dementia with an emphasis on Alzheimer's disease, current diagnostic practices, and emerging treatment options. Participants will explore the epidemiology, clinical presentation, and progression of cognitive disorders ranging from normal aging to mild cognitive impairment (MCI) and major neurocognitive disorder. The session reviews best-practice methods for screening, clinical workup, and differential diagnosis while highlighting the role of functional assessment, comorbidities, and caregiver support. In addition, attendees will examine the latest advances in Alzheimer's disease therapeutics, including anti-amyloid infusion therapies and the implications of biomarker testing and monitoring requirements. This program aims to equip healthcare professionals with up-to-date knowledge and practical strategies for supporting individuals with dementia and their families across the continuum of care.

Module Six: Sleep Disorders

Sleep disturbances are common in older adults, yet they are often misunderstood, underdiagnosed, or inappropriately treated. This program provides an evidence-based overview of insomnia and other prevalent sleep disorders in aging populations, with practical guidance for clinicians working in primary care, geriatrics, mental health, and community-based settings.

Drawing on current research, clinical guidelines, and real-world practice insights, the session explores normal age-related changes in sleep architecture, the multidimensional contributors to insomnia—including medical comorbidities, medications, and the impact of racism and chronic stress—and the diagnostic criteria for insomnia disorder. Participants will learn best practices in non-pharmacologic interventions such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Insomnia (CBT-I), the appropriate use of pharmacologic options, and strategies for identifying and managing other common sleep conditions such as obstructive sleep apnea, restless legs syndrome, and REM sleep behavior disorder. By the end of the session, attendees will be equipped with practical tools to provide safer, more effective, and person-centered sleep care for older adults.

Module Descriptions

Module Seven: Grief and End-of-Life Care

This program provides an in-depth exploration of grief and end-of-life care, equipping healthcare professionals and caregivers with the knowledge and tools to support individuals and families during one of life's most challenging transitions. Participants will learn about the nature and impact of grief, including anticipatory, complicated, and disenfranchised grief, and examine the widely recognized Kübler-Ross model. The session also addresses goals of end-of-life care, differentiates hospice and palliative care, and offers practical strategies for compassionate communication, cultural sensitivity, and caregiver self-care. Through case examples and evidence-based practices, attendees will gain skills to foster dignity, comfort, and emotional support for patients and loved ones.

Module Eight: Substance Use in Older Adults

This session explores the growing concern of substance use among older adults, a population often overlooked in discussions about addiction. Participants will learn about current prevalence trends, risk factors unique to aging, and the health consequences of substance misuse. The presentation will cover screening tools, treatment approaches tailored for older adults, and the impact of medication-substance interactions. Real-world case studies will illustrate common scenarios, and emerging issues such as cannabis and opioid use will be discussed. Attendees will gain insight into practical strategies for prevention, early identification, and integrated care to support older adults at risk.

Module Descriptions

Module Nine: Supporting Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD)

As people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) live longer than ever before, caregivers, healthcare professionals, and community providers are increasingly encountering complex age-related needs in this population. This training program offers a comprehensive, evidence-informed overview of aging with I/DD, with a special focus on the recognition, assessment, and support of individuals experiencing dementia.

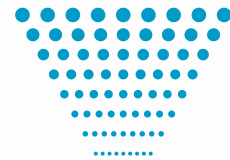
Participants will explore the biological, behavioral, and environmental factors that shape aging in adults with I/DD; learn to distinguish typical aging from atypical cognitive decline; and understand how dementia often presents differently in this population. The program also addresses diagnostic overshadowing, healthcare advocacy, communication strategies, care planning, environmental modifications, and cultural considerations.

Registration Fees - \$250

Includes access to all modules, online self-paced recording, and access to handouts and resources, and 12 hours of credit upon successful completion of the entire course.

Registration Information

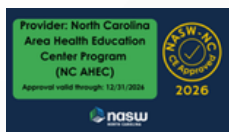
To register for this micro-credential, visit:
<https://www.wakeahec.org/courses-and-events/77545>



Credit



NBCC: Wake AHEC has been approved by NBCC as an Approved Continuing Education Provider, ACEP No. 6477. Programs that do not qualify for NBCC credit are clearly identified. Wake AHEC is solely responsible for all aspects of the programs.



NASW-NC: NC AHEC is an approved provider of distance CE by the National Association of Social Workers – North Carolina Chapter (NASW-NC). This program has been approved for 12.0 contact hours.

Category A NC Psychology Credit: This program will provide 12.0 contact hours (Category A) of continuing education for North Carolina Psychologists. Partial credit will not be awarded.

Contact Hours

Wake AHEC will provide up to 12.0 Contact Hours to participants.

Contact Information

For any questions about the micro-credential programs, please reach out to:

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