

Katherine Anne Comtois, Ph.D., MPH

Senior Advisor, Consultant & Trainer with the Treatment Implementation Collaborative, LLC

Kate Comtois, PhD, MPH is Associate Professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences and Adjunct Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology at the University of Washington. She received her Ph.D. in clinical/community psychology from the University of Maryland in 1992. She received her MPH in Health Services at the University of Washington in 2009.

Dr. Comtois' career goal is to give suicidal clients and their clinicians their best chance to succeed. Dr. Comtois has been assisting programs to implement DBT since 1996. She has provided training and consultation on DBT to community mental health agencies, inpatient psychiatric programs, outpatient and residential substance abuse treatment, juvenile and adult corrections, private and university outpatient clinics, and primary care. She has trained across the United States as well as in Canada, England, Norway, and Australia. She has trained and collaborated in the implementation of DBT with African-American, American Indian, and Alaska Native programs. Having directed a DBT program in public mental health for almost 20 years, Dr. Comtois is particularly knowledgeable about the systemic issues of DBT implementation and the structural changes needed for sustainable implementation.

Dr. Comtois' research for over 20 years has been in the area of health services, treatment development, and clinical trials to prevent suicide. Her graduate training was in community/clinical psychology and focused on achieving clinical ends through prevention and other system interventions in socio-culturally diverse populations. She has developed and adapted interventions to improve care and clinician willingness to work with suicidal patients including DBT, Collaborative Assessment and Management of Suicidality (CAMS), caring contacts via text message, and Preventing Addiction Related Suicide (PARS). She has developed DBT-ACES, a program to assist psychiatrically disabled individuals with BPD find and maintain living wage employment and self-sufficiency. Dr. Comtois' research has been funded by the National Institute of Mental Health, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, the State of Washington, and the Department of Defense.

In addition to clinical research, Dr. Comtois' goal is to promote research methods for rigorous but efficient methods for organizations funding or implementing EBPs to answer the questions most relevant to them and evaluate what they implement. To that end, she founded the Society for Implementation Science Collaboration (SIRC) as an NIMH R13 conference grant. This has spurred important implementation science innovation and collaborations. Dr. Comtois now the PI and Director of the Dissemination and Implementation Core within the Military Suicide Research Consortium (MSRC) focusing on the dissemination of innovative, evidence-based suicide prevention interventions in military settings.

Beyond her research, Dr. Comtois directs the Harborview Psychotherapy Clinic whose DBT program received an award in 2000 as the best direct service program of all Medicaid-funded mental health or substance abuse programs in Seattle/King County. She also has a long history of training and mentoring fellows, psychiatry residents, undergraduate and graduate psychology students since 1993 as well as providing primary mentorship of junior faculty and clinical staff. She has developed and maintained a clinical training program for psychiatry residents and fellows in Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) for 19 years. She coordinated a track of the psychology pre-doctoral internship program in community psychology for 9 years and an NIMH T32 fellowship for 5 years. Dr. Comtois has received awards for her teaching and mentoring from the UW Psychiatry Residency and Psychology Pre-doctoral Internship programs and was the UW Postdoctoral Association Mentor of the Year in 2008.