



## EARLY CAREER PSYCHIATRY - Jessica Isom, MD



Dr. Jessica Elizabeth Isom MD, MPH is an inspiring early career community psychiatrist who has accomplished a tremendous amount in the three short years she has been in Massachusetts. Her work has ranged from providing exemplary mental health care to patients as chief psychiatrist at the Codman Square Community Health Center, to her work at the Massachusetts Psychiatric Society as member of the MPS Council and of the Anti-Racism Committee, and to the work she has done on a national level at the American Psychiatric Society as a representative on the Area 1 Council since 2017.

Dr. Isom's medical career began in 2010, when she pursued combined degrees in medicine and public health at the University of North Carolina School of Medicine and the University of North Carolina Gillings School of Global Public Health, respectively. While in medical school, she was a member of the Eugene S. Mayer Community Service Honor Society and Student National Medical Association (SNMA) National Co-Chair in Health Policy and Legislative Affairs.

Following her graduation, Dr. Isom pursued a psychiatry residency at Yale University. As a resident in the Yale Department of Psychiatry, she was selected Chief Resident of Medical Education and Chief Resident of Diversity and Inclusion. During her time at Yale, her professionalism, diversity and inclusion expertise, and educational skillset were honored through awards and department-wide recognition. She was also a faculty track leader for the Social Justice and Health Equity Curriculum. Dr. Isom's strong training background and leadership experiences inform her current role as Chief Psychiatrist in Boston, MA at the Codman Square Health Center since 2019.

In addition to her clinical work, Dr. Isom has become a sought-after public speaker and inspiring national leader in identifying and eliminating health disparities and in helping organizations learn how they can do the work to create an antiracist organization, both in values and behaviors. She has led numerous presentations at the APA national meetings, and she has recently produced educational materials, reading lists, and has led multiple national seminars on topics such as: *Does One Size Fit All in Addiction Treatment? When Anti-Racism Becomes Trauma Mental Health in the Black Community*

Dr. Isom has been a gift to the members of the APA and Massachusetts Psychiatric Society because she draws on her psychiatric training and humble background to connect across differences in power, education, and perspective to foster a collaborative approach to achieving racial justice and equity in medicine and beyond. Her style in doing this work has been universally acclaimed as empathetic and patient, with a unique willingness to teach those of us many physicians who may not understand the true scope of racism in health care, in our society, and in the lives of Black psychiatrists. Dr. Isom has stated at the APA:

*"The Association needs to lead by example. Not only must we individually reject bigotry, but we must also collectively condemn it as an organization; we must explicitly name mental health equity and elimination of mental health disparities as an organizational goal in public forums; and we must commit to supporting psychiatrists in the expansion of their roles as advocates for social change, champions for inclusion, and adjuncts to policymakers in order to achieve mental health equity."*

It is for Dr. Isom's exemplary clinical work, her comprehensive list of professional activities, her informed leadership on racism and its consequences, and all the while mothering her young daughter Amara, the Massachusetts Psychiatric Society is pleased to honor Dr. Jessica Isom with the 2022 Early Career Psychiatry Award.