

HEADLINES

January 2022 / VOLUME 17 / ISSUE 1



CHANGING OF THE GUARD

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHIATRY
ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM SEES
SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN 2022

IN THIS ISSUE

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On the cover: (L-R): Neha Singh, Anila Balakrishnan, and Ariann Greenidge

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HEAD LINES

MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD

I would like to welcome all our faculty, staff, and learners back to campus to start a new year. I am hopeful that not withstanding the raging pandemic you all took advantage of the festive season to connect and socialize safely with friends and family, reflect on the successes and challenges of the past year and to strategize for the new year.

In late 2021, our department welcomed several new staff. **Ariann Greenidge** joined us as administrative assistant to the department head, **Anila Balakrishnan** as research coordinator and **Neha Singh** in a new role as human resources coordinator. Several administrative positions had been vacant in the last year and administrative staff went above and beyond to take on additional responsibilities and to keep the department's clinical, education and research programs running uninterrupted. I would like to extend my profound gratitude to **Carolyn Sisley, Mandy Eslinger, Kate Rogers, Janet Bardon, Michelle LeBlanc, Sandra Millar, Jen Brown, Tyler Creelman** and **Linda Ford** for gallantly holding the fort. On a related note, with mixed feelings, I would like to thank our department's communications officer, Kate Rogers, who has taken on a role within the Faculty of Medicine and has left our department after rendering ten years of dedicated service. I would like to wish her the very best in her new role.

There have also been several new faculty join our department. **Dr. Beth Eayrs** at the East Coast Forensic



Dr. Vincent Agyapong

Hospital in Dartmouth in November 2021; **Dr. Mahmoud Gad** joins the IWK Acute Care Psychiatric Inpatient Unit in a locum capacity this month; whilst **Dr. Anthony Pianosi** also joins us in a locum capacity supporting the day hospital and the psychiatry emergency and acute care services. I would like to formally welcome our new staff and faculty to the Department of Psychiatry.

This year, our department hosted yet another highly successful virtual Research Day. I would like to thank all those who contributed in diverse ways to make the day a resounding success. Related to research, I would like to congratulate **Dr. Sandra Meier** in receiving grant funding from the EJP RD Joint Transnational Call; **Dr Cindy Calkin** for receiving a \$50,000 grant for psychiatry metabolic

research from the Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation; **Dr. Rudolf Uher** who was named by Clarivate and the Web of Science among the 2021 highly cited researchers; and **Dr. Martin Alda** who received medal from Czech Republic Ministry of Health for his contributions to the field of psychiatry. These are great testaments to the strength of our department's research program. Other notable awards won by our faculty include **Dr. Mutiat Sulyman** and **Mahmoud Awara** who shared the department's Outstanding Clinician Award, **Dr. Alice Aylott** was named the department's Educator of the Year, **Dr. Herb Orlik** who received the department's Outstanding Teacher Award and **Dr. Mahmoud Awara** who won the poster prize from the Royal College of Psychiatrists, U.K. I would like to congratulate all the award winners.

ON THE COVER



It's no secret that 2020 and 2021 were challenging years for everyone. The COVID-19 pandemic crippled industries, and pushed many to the breaking point, not to mention the illness caused by the virus and heartbreak that came with the loss of life. Here in the Department of Psychiatry faculty, learners and staff stepped up to ensure we continued to provide high quality clinical care, and excellence and innovation in our education and research programs. For the psychiatry administrative team it has been a time of enormous adjustment and change. In spring 2020 with the onset of the pandemic staff were moved quickly to a work-from-home format, as dictated by the university. For many months staff maneuvered the challenges of completing their duties remotely and engaging with colleagues, faculty and learners virtually. And just when things seemed to be returning to normal, several administrative vacancies added pressure to an already challenging situation. Now, as we stare down the barrel at 2022, we are pleased to say, that with the addition of three new staff, we are nearing pre-COVID levels of support for our faculty and learners.

When our administrative assistant to the head, Kate Clarke, left the department in February 2021 for promotion at the university, the various pieces of her position were picked up by others. **Mandy Eslinger** and **Kate Rogers** supported meetings and **Carolyn Sisley** initially assisted with the department head's calendar



The Department of Psychiatry administrative team in 2019. We have seen significant change since then! Back row (L-R) Jen Brown, Sandra Millar, Hillary Yuill (left August 2021), and Linda Ford. Front row (L-R) Kate Rogers (left December 2021), Janet Bardon, Michelle LeBlanc, Carolyn Sisley, Mandy Eslinger, Megan Bellefontaine (left November 2020), Kelly Hancock, Kate Clarke (left February 2021), and Tracy Fraser MacIsaac.

until Kate Rogers took over with the arrival of **Dr. Vincent Agyapong**. It was many, many months before the position was filled, relieving staff of the additional duties. On Dec. 13, 2021 **Ariann Greenidge** joined the department as administrative assistant to the department head. Ariann came to us from Patterson Law where she was a legal assistant. She supported two lawyers, managing their busy schedules, and ensuring deadlines were met. In her new role she will provide daily assistance and administrative support to Dr. Agyapong, and to the executive leadership team including the deputy head, **Dr. Lara Hazelton**, and chief operating officer, Carolyn Sisley. Beyond this, Ariann provides administrative and coordinative

support to executive level committees such as the executive, finance, and the Department of Psychiatry staff meetings. She is excited to work in the mental health field and hopes to learn from our faculty members. "I am passionate about race and mental health," she says. "I felt like this was a good opportunity to broaden my horizons."

Dec. 13, 2021 was a good day for the Department of Psychiatry as we had **Anila Balakrishnan** join us from the Faculty of Computer Science. Anila fills the research coordinator position, left vacant since August 2021 when Hillary Yuill left to pursue her master's degree. Since that time research activities have been supported by various individuals in the department including Mandy

Esliger, Kate Rogers, Carolyn Sisley, **Sandra Millar, Jen Brown, and Tyler Creelman**, with many things simply placed on hold until the position was filled. While in the Faculty of Computer Science Anila was the undergraduate programs assistant and her main function was providing academic advising to undergraduate students and acting as the first point of contact for the Natural Science and Engineering Research Council of Canada Undergraduate Student Research Awards and exchange programs. This instilled in her a strong interest in research administration and prepared her for her position as research coordinator. In her new role she is responsible for providing administrative support to the research program and coordinating the graduate programs in the department. Anila will work directly with the director of research, **Dr. Ben Rusak**, providing him, the research committee, and other researchers in the department administrative support. She will work with **Dr. Sherry Stewart** through her support of the graduate programs. She will also provide financial administration of research accounts and coordinate research human resource processes on behalf of department researchers. Though there will be a steep learning curve, Anila is looking forward to the challenge. "My previous role was my first full time permanent position at Dalhousie so I'm most excited for the different learning opportunities coming my way," she says. "I'm also excited for the new team that I'll be a part of and the experience of working

in a hospital environment."

Rounding out the new faces you will see among the administrative team is **Neha Singh**, who filled a new position in the department on Dec. 9, 2021. Neha is our human resources coordinator working with the physician resource manager, **Janet Bardon**. In her role she coordinates the processes for faculty appointments, promotion and tenure, credentialing, and orientation. She manages personnel files and is responsible for managing the human resource component of the faculty database. Neha is also a member of the human resources committee. Though she is new to the department, Neha is not new to the field of human resources. She came to us from the Nova Scotia College of Social Workers where she provided administrative support. Her past work experience is in human resources, as is her education and career aspirations, and she says her new role perfectly aligns with her career goals. Like Anila, Neha is excited to join the team at Dalhousie and says her excitement is driven by the fact that she is now "part of such an esteemed, inclusive and diverse organization."

In January 2022 things feel a bit more normal here in the Department of Psychiatry, but it is certainly not the end of the changes we will face. We began the new year without our communications coordinator, Kate Rogers, who was with us for more than 10 years. She has started a new position with the Dean's Office in the Faculty of Medicine. Later

this year, Carolyn Sisley, the chief operating officer will retire after 18 years in the department. And so, the transformation of the Department of Psychiatry continues. What has remained the same through the pandemic and administrative changes, however, is our commitment to supporting the faculty and learners, always striving for excellence in our education and research programs, and ensuring our department provides the best care possible to our patients.

RESEARCH REPORT



Department of Psychiatry Research Day 2021

The 31st Annual Research Day was held on November 12 over Zoom.

Dr. Brenda Penninx, a professor of psychiatric epidemiology at the Department of Psychiatry at Amsterdam UMC, was the keynote speaker and her presentation, *Immunometabolic depression: ready for personalized medicine?*, was very well received. This was followed by eight faculty, staff, and student oral presentations, nine resident oral presentations and 35 poster presentations in the afternoon.

Research Day prizes were awarded to:

Graduate student – Silvia Marin-Dragu

Undergraduate student – Caitlin Robinson

Psychiatry Staff – Kyle McKee

Resident – **Dr. Jillian Cottreau**

Café Scientifique

The Café Scientifique, titled *Depression, Aging, and Somatic Health: An Online Public Conversation*, was held over Zoom the evening of November 10. **Dr. Sandra Meier** moderated the event and speakers included:

- Dr. Brenda Penninx, MD, PhD, professor of psychiatric epidemiology, vice-department chair, Department of Psychiatry of Amsterdam University Medical Centre, Amsterdam, Netherlands
- Dr. Ken Rockwood, MD, FRCPC, professor of medicine, geriatric medicine, community health & epidemiology, Dalhousie University
- Dr. JianLi Wang, PhD, professor of community health and epidemiology, Dalhousie University
- **Dr. Tomas Hajek**, MD, PhD, professor of psychiatry, Dalhousie University
- **Dr. Martin Alda**, MD, FRCPC, professor of psychiatry, Killam Chair in Mood Disorders, Dalhousie University

EDUCATION REPORT



UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION NEWS

Tutor recruitment

We have successfully completed our 2021/2022 tutor recruitment drive. Thank you to all our dedicated faculty for committing their time to teaching our medical students.

With the arrival of January comes the start of preparations for the 2022/2023 academic year. In the coming weeks, **Kelly Hancock** will be in touch regarding clerkship rotation scheduling and tutor recruitment.

Medical student contests

Please note the upcoming contests for medical students and please encourage your students to apply:

- Dalhousie Psychiatry's Annual Humanities Writing Contest, open to medical students, residents and fellows, will be held again this year. All submissions to be submitted by May 1, 2022. More details and specific contest rules to be found on page 25.

- The Canadian Organization of Undergraduate Psychiatric Educators (COUPE) Best Paper Award for Medical Students. The author of the winning submission will receive \$250.00, and travel expenses paid to attend the fall Canadian Psychiatric Association (CPA) meeting (up to \$750.00 value), as well as an engraved plaque from COUPE. This contest is sponsored by COUPE. Submission

deadline is January 15, 2022.

- The Department of Psychiatry supports the travel expenses of a Dalhousie medical student interested in psychiatry to attend the annual Psychiatry Student Interest Group Network (PsychSIGN) conference held in conjunction with the American Psychiatric Association (APA) conference. Submission deadline is mid-February.

Contest details will be distributed to students through the Psychiatry Interest Group and the Dalhousie Medical Students' Society newsletter, as well as posted on our departmental website, in due course.

POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION NEWS

Resident mid-year oral exams

The PGY 2, 3, and 4s completed their mid-year oral exams virtually in December. Thanks to the dedicated group of faculty who regularly take time out of their week to act as examiners. Special thanks for both their time and flexibility in December to:

Drs. Mahmoud Awara, Justin Paradis, Sabina Abidi, Lourdes Soto-Moreno, Kim White, Alice Aylott, Herb Orlik, Deb Parker, Tanya Tulipan, Kathy Black, Cheryl Murphy, Alexa Bagnell, Scott Theriault, Jacob Cookey, Greg MacMullin, and Pam Arenella.

CaRMS

CaRMS will be taking place virtually this year, on February 28, March 1, March 10 and March 11.

The poll to sign up for faculty and residents will be sent in early January and we encourage all who receive it to sign up ASAP. Specifically, consider volunteering for one of the afternoon/evening times. While it might appear inconvenient, please remember that CaRMS is taking place virtually, and therefore you can participate from home (reducing travel time once interviews are over). Please also remember for faculty, these are billable hours under academic activity in the AFP.

Thank you in advance for your participation. CaRMS is the most important postgraduate event of the year, and we cannot move forward without your cooperation.

FELLOWSHIP AND SUBSPECIALTY TRAINING NEWS

Geriatric psychiatry subspecialty program

The geriatric psychiatry subspecialty training program has instituted the new Royal College Competency Based Medical Education (CBME) curriculum. Subspecialty residents are now being evaluated with the Entrustable Professional Activity forms.

Dr. Christelle Boudreau is in the midst of her PGY-6 year, **Dr. Amy Gough** in her PGY-5 year, and we are delighted to announce **Dr. MacKenzie Armstrong** will join our training program in his PGY-5 year starting in

July 2022.

Child and adolescent psychiatry subspecialty program

Congratulations to **Drs. Sarah Fancy, Ali Manning, Katie Radchuck** and **Vhari James** who have all successfully passed their Royal College Child and Adolescent Exams.

The child and adolescent psychiatry subspecialty program offered spots to two applicants: Congratulations to **Drs. Kate Stymiest** and **Courtney Handford** who have been offered and accepted subspecialty residency

positions in our program.

The 3rd National Child & Adolescent Psychiatry Residency Programs Competence Committee Chairs meeting was hosted by the Dalhousie Division of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry and chaired by **Dr. Lukas Propper** on October 25 via Zoom.

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

Faculty Development Opportunities Dalhousie Continuing Professional Development

Professional Development Seminar Series

Join Dal CPD for the launch of their latest series of multi-media sessions to develop your skills, knowledge and understanding in the areas of: Anti-Oppression (EDI); the Humanities; Wellness and Leadership; and Fundamentals of Teaching and Research.

Upcoming seminars:

Thursday, Jan. 6, 1:00-2:00pm: *White Fragility Clinic* with Dr. Gaynor Watson-Creed | Contact gho@dal.ca to register (to be offered every second Thursday from 1:00-2:00 pm)

Tuesday, Jan. 11, 12:00-1:30: First session in the Medical Education Research Roundtables | *Getting Started in Medical Education Research* with Dr. Sarah Burm and **Dr. Lara Hazelton** | Connect [here](#) via MS Teams.

Thursday, Jan. 20, 1:00-2:00pm: *White Fragility Clinic* with Dr. Gaynor Watson-Creed | Contact gho@dal.ca to register (to be offered every second Thursday from 1:00-2:00 pm until June)

If you would like a calendar invite for any of the above sessions, please contact FacDev@Dal.Ca.

For a full list of upcoming seminars, please visit their website: <https://medicine.dal.ca/departments/core-units/cpd/faculty-development/programs/lecture-series.html>

Online Learning

Online Courses:

Teaching and Assessing Critical Thinking Phase Two | Jan. 25-March 29, 2022

Register by visiting: <https://registration.cpd.dal.ca/Registration/Welcome.aspx?e=30007418B84362EA90BEAFBC104F558A>

Fee: \$125 *Please note: TACT 1 is a prerequisite for TACT 2

Educating for Medical Professionalism and Wellness | Feb. 1-March 8, 2022

Register by visiting: <https://registration.cpd.dal.ca/Registration/Welcome.aspx?e=B10486B503BF4D2C300EF186D4D39CCA>

Fee: \$100

Emerging Leaders in Academic Medicine | April 5-June 7, 2022

Register by visiting: <https://registration.cpd.dal.ca/Registration/Welcome.aspx?e=2C3B989BE1B248042A30FEEA1B4DF57F>

Fee: \$125

For more information on the courses listed above please visit: <https://medicine.dal.ca/departments/core-units/cpd/faculty-development/programs.html> or email FacDev@dal.ca – please note each course has limited registration.

SAVE the DATE | Medical Education Research Roundtables

Presented as part of the PD Seminar Series

Are you interested in medical education research but not sure where to start? Have you collected data and are wondering about the next step? Maybe you have drifted away from education scholarship and are looking for opportunities to re-engage? For more information visit: <https://cdn.dal.ca/content/dam/dalhousie/pdf/faculty/medicine/departments/core-units/cpd/FacDev/MedEdRoundtable.pdf>

When: second Tuesday of each month 12:00-1:30 pm beginning Jan. 11, 2022 via MS Teams | Click [here](#) to join the meeting.

For more information on Faculty Development and their programs, email FacDev@dal.ca.

Are you new to tutoring this fall and looking for resources to assist you in small group learning? Contact susan.love@dal.ca for access to the online Tutor Skill Development Program.

CHILD & ADOLESCENT PSYCHIATRY REPORT



Presentations

The child and adolescent psychiatry faculty development retreat was held virtually on November 19. The presenter, Dr. Duncan Law, led a discussion on working with goals. This virtual event was attended by 23 child and adolescent psychiatrists from Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

Dr. Alexa Bagnell contributed to the Nova Scotia Health Ethics Network Fireside Chat series. Her interview can be found at <https://www.nshen.ca/index.php/fireside-chats/ethical-issues-in-adolescent-mental-health/>.

Research

Congrats to **Dr. Sandra Meier** who was successful in receiving grant funding from the EJP RD Joint Transnational Call for her project *Evaluating Parent Perceptions, Economic Burden, and the Impact of Online Coaching Interventions for Parents of Children Diagnosed with the 22q11 Deletion Syndrome*.

Faculty updates

Dr. Sarah Fancy started her maternity leave in December 2021 and will be off for one year. We wish her a healthy delivery and best of luck with her newborn.

GERIATRIC PSYCHIATRY REPORT



Program updates

The geriatric psychiatry program's quality patient care, education and research continues in the midst of pandemic challenges, thanks to the dedication of our entire team and students. Led by **Dr. Meagan MacNeil**, the Geriatric Psychiatry Provincial Web Education program returns this month to provide monthly education to hundreds of frontline care providers in the province. Undergraduate, postgraduate and subspecialty training programs also continue to thrive, and the team has made innovations in practice, research and education, highlighted at the fall's Canadian Academy of Geriatric Psychiatry Annual Scientific Meeting.

Provincially, **Drs. Michael Flynn** and **Sameh Hassan** continue to run the Geriatric Psychiatry Acute Inpatient Unit, as well as the provincial neuromodulation program. The provincial geriatric psychiatry program grew this year with **Dr. Ian MacKay** blazing a trail with virtual outreach services in the Northern and Eastern Zones. Dr. MacKay also serves as regional representative to *Project ECHO*, a national initiative to build clinical capacity and community of practice. This fall Dr. Elyse Ross returned to NS to provide geriatric psychiatry services in the Western Zone. As part of the provincial geriatric psychiatry program, subspecialty residents **Drs. Christelle Boudreau** and **Amy Gough** will spend time with Drs. MacKay and Ross to

gain rural practice experience. In July Dr. Boudreau will join geriatrician Dr. Maggie Lovett and work part-time on the south shore in Western Zone.

In provincial initiatives, **Dr. Beverley Cassidy** has developed an innovative rural social advocacy project, memorycafens.ca, to support well-being and social connection among persons living with dementia and their caregivers in rural NS. Memory Cafés will be happening in-person and virtually in the Annapolis Valley and Cape Breton Regional Municipality this Winter and Spring. This fall she, **Dr. Gail Eskes** and Dr. Ryan Wilson also collaborated on a three-week virtual Memory Bootcamp project bringing memory skills training to promote brain health in rural NS. Both

these initiatives were presented at the CAGP Annual Scientific Meeting in October.

National news

In national news, a new book launched this fall, *Promoting the Health of Older Adults, The Canadian Experience*, edited by Irving Rootman, Peggy Edwards, Melanie Lavoie, and Francis Grunberg, published by Canadian Scholars. A chapter on *Mental Health, Cognitive Resilience and Vitality-Promoting the Health of Older Adults*, was co-authored by Drs. Beverley Cassidy and **Keri-Leigh Cassidy**, with Drs. Kiran Rabheru (University of Ottawa) and David Conn (University of Toronto).

Drs. Keri-Leigh Cassidy, **Michael Vallis** and colleagues recently completed a national knowledge translation project called *The Brain Health and Wellness Project* funded by the Canadian Centre for Brain Health Innovation (CCABHI). Results were presented at the CAGP/

CCSMH conference and were also recently published in *Open Journal of Psychiatry*.

Dalhousie's enhanced Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (eCBT) group manuals for depressed and anxious seniors are being disseminated to other academic centres in Canada. Drs. Meagan MacNeil and Keri-Leigh Cassidy are currently updating the second edition. Dr. MacNeil also supervises Dalhousie psychiatry residents in eCBT and offers national leadership in late life psychotherapies, teaching the psychotherapy unit of the CAGP's national online course. This fall, Drs. Keri-Leigh Cassidy and Gail Eskes collaborated with Drs. Linda Gobessi and Anna Skosireva at the University of Ottawa's Geriatric Psychiatry Program on outcomes research using Dalhousie's eCBT manuals, presented at the CAGP-CCSMH ASM.

Dr. Terry Chisholm, along with Drs.

Anthony Levinson and Ana Hategan from McMaster University and Dr. Cathy Hickey from Memorial University developed a Geriatric Psychiatry Learning Path which are online interactive courses. The content is now available for geriatric psychiatry subspecialty residents nationally, and is starting to be used by geriatric medicine residents and other allied professionals, as presented at the CAGP-CCSMH ASM.

The Canadian Academy of Geriatric Psychiatry and Canadian Coalition of Seniors Mental Health (CAGP-CCSMH) Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM) was held virtually on Oct 29-30, 2021. The theme was *Geriatric Psychiatry in Challenging Times: Embracing Opportunity for Advocacy, Inclusion and Innovation*. Drs. Keri-Leigh Cassidy, Beverley Cassidy, Gail Eskes, Amy Gough, Michael Vallis, **Kathleen Singh**, Terry Chisholm, and **Ms. Mandy Eslinger** were involved in presentations.

DR. PAUL JANSSEN CHAIR IN PSYCHOTIC DISORDERS REPORT



Early Psychosis Intervention Nova Scotia

Early Psychosis Intervention Nova Scotia (EPINS) is a provincial service dedicated to early detection and optimal care for young people experiencing psychosis. Due to COVID, the annual provincial gathering was held virtually on November 19 and included clinicians from every zone. Program data and activities were reviewed as a group,

and smaller group discussions took place on three key areas of service planning: enhancing capacity, incorporating families and clinician education, which will be the focus for the upcoming year and beyond. Evaluation of the event identified that smaller group discussions was valuable and hosting two gatherings a year would be beneficial.

EPINS continues to offer monthly online rounds, quarterly newsletters,

and has a provincial Sharepoint site. EPINS also received a grant from the Mental Health Foundation of NS to purchase 33 FitBits for those in rural areas to participate in a program about healthy lifestyles and 30 FitBits are currently being used.

If you would like to learn more about EPINS, please contact Brittany Chisholm at BrittanyC.Chisholm@nshealth.ca or (902) 221-8186.

MEET OUR MEMBERS

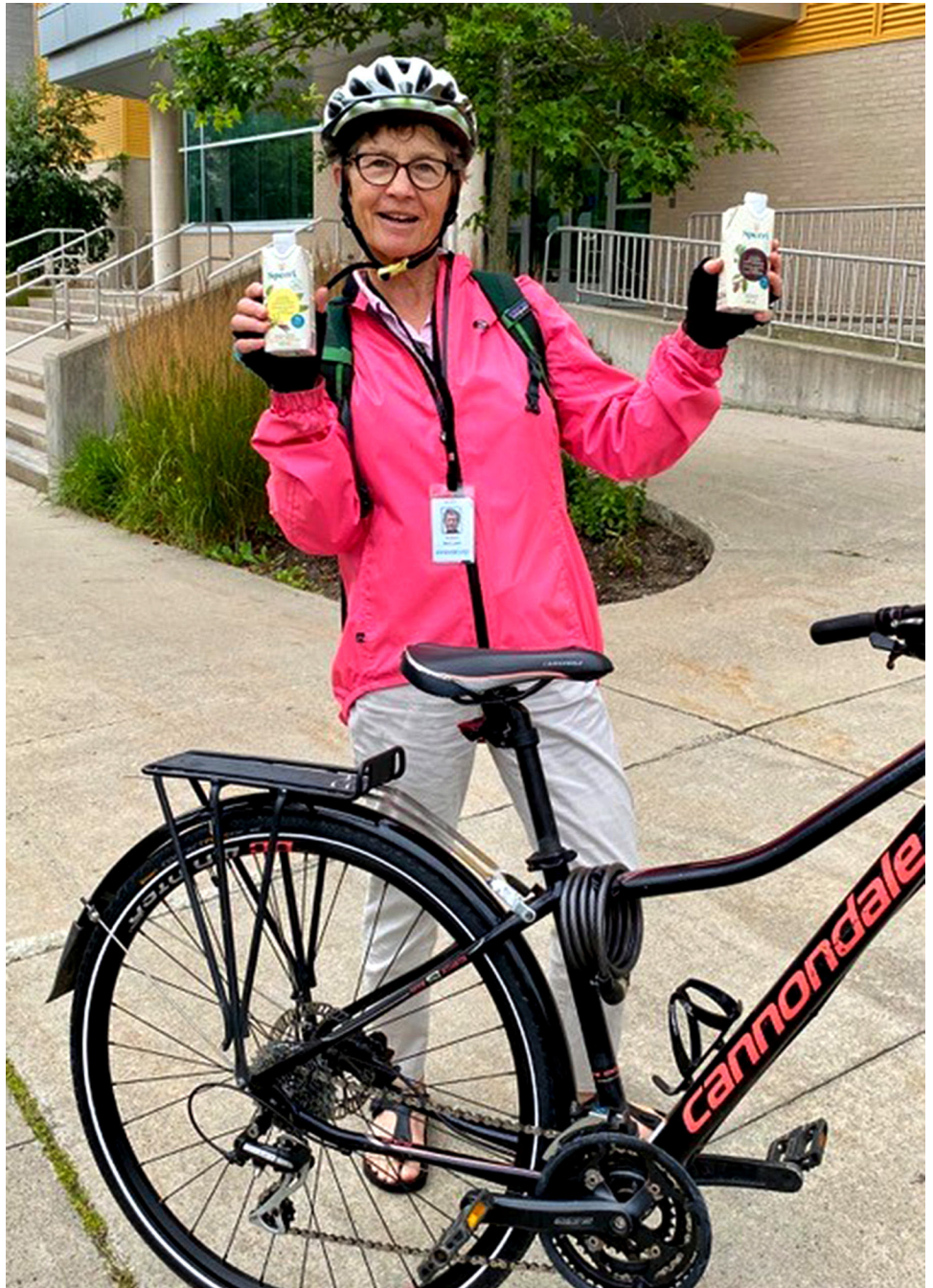


The Department of Psychiatry is home to over 200 faculty. We have expert teachers, researchers and clinicians among them. In hopes of familiarizing you with our members, in each issue of *Headlines* you will be introduced, or re-introduced, to a faculty member. In this issue, get to know **Dr. Mary Lynch**, psychiatrist and professor in the Departments of Psychiatry, Anesthesia, Pain Management & Perioperative Medicine, and Pharmacology.

My early career at Dalhousie: I was educated at Acadia University and then Dalhousie where I completed a Bachelor of Science in psychology. My teachers were wonderful and gave me the skills I would need later for the research portion of my career. I went on to study medicine at Dal and was recruited into the Department of Psychiatry in 1988. Dr. Bill McCormick was residency director when I was a trainee and he instilled in me a passion for research which persists to this day. I have been very fortunate to have been promoted through the ranks and have had research collaborations that led to cross-appointments. As a result, I am a professor in three departments including psychiatry, anesthesia pain management and preoperative medicine, and pharmacology.

How my career at Dalhousie/NSH has changed over the years: I started out as a staff psychiatrist working at the pain management unit, as well as consultation liaison psychiatry. I was also the psychiatrist assisting at Dalhousie Health Services. Over time the management of pain became my primary focus both clinically and in research.

My early career aspirations: The first time I thought about medicine was when I realized I loved all the health sciences from immunology to psychology and statistics as applied



Dr. Mary Lynch with her organic plant-based meal replacement Sperrri.

to human health. I met with Dr. Fraser Nicholson, who was Dean of Students at the time and he was so wonderful it was an easy decision to make to apply to medicine.

A typical day in my life: I spend time seeing patients in the pain clinic with learners present and this keeps me on my toes. I attend research meetings and am President of the Canadian Pain Society, so I am involved with national committees and advocate for better care for people with pain. I have three beautiful daughters and always make sure there is also time for fun with them.

The most satisfying thing about my current role: I should back up and mention that not quite 10 years ago my research work led in an entrepreneurial direction. This was because it allowed us to find additional sources of grant funding. I have been fortunate to be involved in two start-up companies. The first one had to do with developing cannabinoid-based therapies for pain. The current one is all about medical nutrition. There is a whole new field of nutritional psychiatry, and the impact of food on the gut and then the mind-gut connection is huge. **Dr. Cindy Calkin** is doing some amazing research on the impact of insulin resistance in treatment resistant affective disorder, this is important stuff. The company is called Novagevity and we just launched our first product called Sperry which is a fully organic plant based meal replacement.

What I wish I could change about it: Change about my career? Nothing, I have loved my teachers, my patients, the combination of clinical teaching

research and now business, it has been so rewarding and fun.

The piece of advice I would offer to someone starting their career in mental health: Pay attention to the body's amazing capacity for healing and focus on promotion of health first and foremost. Read Dean Ornish's book "Un-do it" and follow the basic principles for yourself and for your patients. I think the pharmaceuticalization of mental health and health in general has been a big mistake.

Also remember that all healing takes place within the context of a trusting therapeutic relationship, it is the relationship that matters most in assisting our patients to move forward. Sadly, with all the technological and pharmaceutical advances, I think medicine has forgotten this.

In an ideal world, the next five years look like: I would love to be part of getting better nutrition to all Canadians and beyond. In the past two and a half years I have met amazing dietitians, agricultural experts, food scientists, nutritional scientists and they are doing amazing things to promote better health. I want to be part of that.

NEWS FROM THE DEPARTMENT

Dr. Rudolf Uher named highly cited researcher

Dr. Rudolf Uher is among the 2021 highly cited researchers named by Clarivate and the Web of Science

for the fourth year in a row. This is a recognition for the top ~ 0.1 per cent publishing researchers, and an honour only bestowed upon nine researchers in the psychiatry or psychology field

in Canada. To learn more visit <https://recognition.webofscience.com/awards/highly-cited/2021/>.

Dr. Phil Tibbo part of schizophrenia podcast

Dr. Phil Tibbo was among the guests on a podcast hosted by the Fresh Outlook Foundation (FOF), an organization whose goal is to collaborate to make communities healthier, happier and more prosperous through inspiring community conversation for sustainable change. Their initiative *Heads Up! Community*

Mental Health Podcast combines science with storytelling to explore diverse mental health issues and challenges with people from all walks of life. In this episode, Dr. Tibbo joins Katrina Tinman, a peer support worker for Peer Connections Manitoba, and Chris Summerville, CEO of the Schizophrenia Society of Canada, to share stories, recount history, summarize signs and stages, bust myths, introduce recovery philosophy, and argue for recovery-

focused healthcare. The podcast, *Schizophrenia: Part 1 – Stories, Signs, Myths & Recovery Movements*, is part of a two-part series. Part two will take place at a later date.

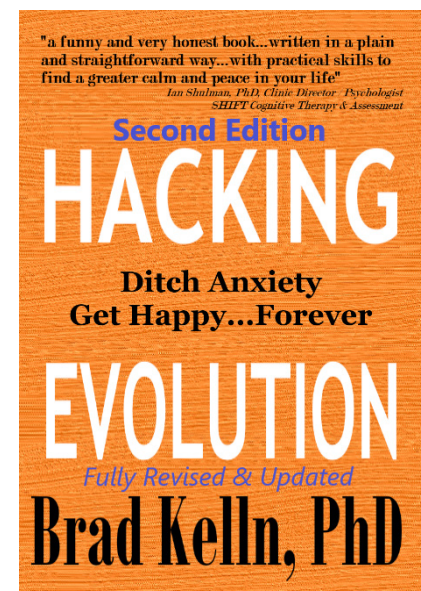
To learn more or listen to the podcast please visit: <https://freshoutlookfoundation.org/schizophrenia-part-1-stories-signs-myths-recovery-movements/>.

Dr. Brad Kelln publishes second edition of book

Dr. Brad Kelln, forensic psychologist with the East Coast Forensic Hospital and assistant professor in the Department of Psychiatry, released the first edition of *Hacking Evolution: Ditch Anxiety Get Happy...Forever* in the summer of 2020. Since then he's fully updated and revised this popular e-book with more research, more exercises, and more innovation. The second edition launched Dec. 8, 2021.

To find out where you can purchase Dr. Kelln's book visit <https://books2read.com/ap/nBkj2l/Brad-Kelln>.

For questions please contact Dr. Kelln at brad.kelln@nshealth.ca.



Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation grants \$50,000 to Dr Cindy Calkin, metabolic psychiatry researcher

by Dayna Park, Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation

On Thursday, Nov. 4, the Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation (DMRF) granted \$50,000 at the very first Influencer Social. At the event, the top three local health researchers from the competition each had ten minutes to pitch their mental health research project to an exclusive group of donors, the DMRF Influencers for Health Research. The Influencers then voted on which research study would be granted the \$50,000, which is an accumulation of \$25,000 from their giving, and a \$25,000 match by DMRF.

“DMRF is committed to investing in research excellence, as are the donors

that support their innovative work,” says DMRF CEO, Joanne Bath. “We are proud to introduce the inaugural DMRF Health Influencers Grant. This grant has been supported by a group of individuals across the Maritimes who care deeply about the impacts of local health research.”

Dr. Cindy Calkin, was chosen as the \$50,000 grantee at the event.

Dr. Calkin’s research has recently answered a paramount question in psychiatric research. She and her team have found a correlation between insulin resistance (pre-diabetes) and more pronounced symptoms of psychiatric illness—specifically bipolar disorder. For the approximately 20,000 people in Nova Scotia alone living with bipolar disorder, these findings are helping to change their lives by treating a, before

now, unrelated, and undiagnosed condition.

“Thank you so much to the Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation and the DMRF Health Influencers,” Dr. Calkin says. “The vision and support of this group means so much and allows us to expand the study and ultimately treat more patients. I’m so grateful to receive this funding and to continue this important work.”

The event was live-streamed on Facebook and the recording can be watched by visiting

https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?ref=watch_permalink&v=1059542664858335.

Dr Calkin’s talk starts at seven minutes.

Dr. Joe Sadek pens article for United Nations

It’s not everyone who can say they are published by the United Nations. **Dr. Joe Sadek** can add that accolade to his resume with the recent publication of *Well-being of judges should be*

a priority for every judiciary on the United Nations website. In the article Dr. Sadek describes the enormous stress faced by judicial officers, particularly during the pandemic, and the importance of focusing on their well-being. To read Dr. Sadek’s piece

please visit <https://www.unodc.org/dohadecclaration/en/news/2021/11/well-being-of-judges-should-be-a-priority-for-every-judiciary.html>.

Demonstrating effectiveness: the Mental Health Day Treatment Program reduces ER visits and Inpatient Days

by Dr. Jackie Kinley and Dr. Sandra Reyno

Costs for mental health services are soaring and the number of mental health disorders continues to rise, with estimates indicating one-in-three individuals may develop a mental illness during their lifetime. Severe psychiatric disorders result in substantial health costs, primarily due to frequent emergency department (ED) visits and hospital admissions. The department offers a group-based, six-week intensive group psychotherapy program that serves individuals with complex treatment needs (i.e., patients who normally fall into the 'high cost status'). It integrates dynamic understanding of defense/resistance with cognitive-behavioural and interpersonal interventions to effect rapid, positive changes in psychiatric symptoms, resilience and attachment styles.

Drs. Jackie Kinley and Sandra Reyno and their team recently completed a cost-benefit analysis of this program to determine its financial impact systemwide.

They evaluated direct service utilization and cost following treatment for 313 patients over a six-year period (2013-2019). This included service usage data three years prior to treatment and three years post completion of our program.

Service usage reduced significantly post-program for the following: urgent care visits, ER visits, psychiatric inpatient days, mood disorders specialty service visits, addictions



Drs. Sandra Reyno (left) and Jackie Kinley (right) at the retirement of Marie Kavanaugh (center) the program coordinator of the Mental Health Day Treatment Program for over 20 years.

program intensive treatment service days and addiction program community visits. Total cost savings post-treatment were just over three million dollars. After factoring in the cost of the program, total monetary savings were estimated at close to four hundred thousand (12.6 per cent of total post-treatment savings). Although outpatient treatment service usage did not differ significantly, a pattern was observed of a steady increase prior to participation, and a steady decline thereafter.

Indirect and human capital costs (e.g., support from legal or community/social services, work disability etc.) were not factored into this cost analysis but can be substantial and may exceed the direct medical costs themselves. Due to COVID-19 changes to mental health service delivery, the team recently developed a virtual care component to the program that may geographically extend the treatment population, decrease wait times and further reduce the direct and indirect

cost burden on the patient and mental health system.

KUDOS

Administrative staff

by Carolyn Sisley, Chief Operating Officer

Kudos to our administrative staff who have been picking up the workload over the last several months due to staff vacancies and leaves. Special thanks to **Mandy Eslinger** for taking over research activities while we searched for a new research coordinator, **Kate Rogers** for providing support to **Dr. Agyapong** during the search for a new administrative assistant as well as support for our CPD activities, **Jen Brown** for supporting the geriatric psychiatry program on top of her regular postgrad duties, **Michelle LeBlanc** for supporting IWK research and education activity, and **Tyler Creelman** who came in as a temporary employee and has picked up anything that we have sent his way. They have all stepped up when asked and done so with a smile. We couldn't have survived 2021 without all of you. You are all very much appreciated!

Communications coordinator

by Carolyn Sisley, Chief Operating Officer

As we start 2022 in the Department of Psychiatry, we will do so without our communications coordinator, Kate Rogers. Kate has accepted the position of Communications Advisor in the Dean's Office in the Faculty of Medicine effective January 4th. We are pleased to see Kate moving on to a greater challenge and also to be staying within the Faculty of Medicine.

Kate joined our department 10 years ago as a fresh graduate from the NSCC Advanced Diploma in Public Relations program. She impressed us in the interview process with her professionalism and her portfolio, as well as the height of the heels she managed. Throughout the past 10 years Kate has developed the communications position into the role that it currently is, has taken on various special projects many of which had little to do with communications, and has continually stepped in whenever she was needed. This past year is no exception when she has taken on two extra roles due to various



Kate Rogers

vacancies. I always knew if I handed her a project, it would be done on time and done well without ever having to follow-up with her. That skill meant she got handed lots of projects. She does all her work with a positive attitude which is also invaluable.

Kudos to you Kate for a job well done and best of luck as you move on in your career. We are glad you won't be too far away when we need to ask some questions.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mental health and addictions newsletter

The Mental Health and Addictions Program at Nova Scotia Health has developed a monthly newsletter providing updates on their programs and services, introducing team members, and announcing events. To read the newsletter visit:

[https://mha.nshealth.ca/en/coronavirus.](https://mha.nshealth.ca/en/coronavirus)

Introducing the Thrive MD Physician Wellness Program

The Department of Psychiatry's newly established Physician Wellness Committee aims to promote the wellbeing of physicians in our department. In the new year, **Dr. Zenovia Ursuliak**, chair of the committee, and committee members **Drs. Ali Manning** and **Keri-Leigh Cassidy**, will be bringing a new Thrive MD Physician Wellness Program to physicians in the department.

What is the Thrive MD Physician Wellness Program?

The Thrive MD Physician Wellness Program was developed by physicians and for physicians. Materials were co-created in 2021 by content experts Drs. Keri-Leigh Cassidy and Michael Vallis and physicians at different career stages: Drs. Ursuliak, **John Chiasson**, Ali Manning, **Nicole Herschenhaus**, Linda Gobessi and Anne Hennessey (University of Ottawa) and Cindy Grief (University of Toronto). This spring, **Drs. Amy Gough**, John Chiasson and Margaret Casey will also be offering the program to retired physicians with Doctors Nova Scotia.

The program uses the THRIVE © Approach to Wellbeing, integrating the science of wellbeing, resilience, preventative medicine, brain neuroplasticity and behaviour change. The program includes The Wellness App, initially developed by **Dr. Beverley Cassidy** for use by patients, and now modified in Thrive MD for physician users. The program is also designed to be as time-efficient for physicians as possible, involving just two free one-hour webinars, delivered one month apart.

In Part 1, physicians learn about the science of wellbeing and behaviour change and apply a three-step approach to activate a new health behaviour. They are invited to track their goal using The Wellness App for support and encouragement to complete their goal.

In Part 2 one month later, physicians assess the impact on their wellbeing and learn about additional wellbeing resources, including Doctors Nova Scotia's Physician Support Program led by Dr. John Chiasson and Balint groups led by Drs. Herschenhaus or Manning, and other offerings.

Set SMART Goals

The Thrive MD program is based on 10 years of implementation in community and clinical settings using Fountain of Health's behaviour change tools. In over 1,500 people using these tools, 80 per cent at least partially achieved a SMART health goal and improved well-being in four weeks, with improved health behaviours, outlook, and well-being. SMART Goals are Specific, Measurable, Action-oriented, Realistic and Time Limited. Of note, physicians who practise preventative health practices themselves are more likely to recommend preventative health practices to their patients, and patients are more likely to practice those behaviours.

The Thrive MD Physician Wellness Program is an initiative of the Fountain of Health Association, in collaboration with Doctors Nova Scotia and the Department of Psychiatry. This project is funded through a 10-year, \$115 million commitment by Scotiabank, MD Financial Management and the CMA

to support the medical profession and advance health in Canada.

How do I get involved?

If you are interested in participating or if you have suggestions on how to share this program with colleagues in our or other departments, please reach out to Jean Robinson-Dexter, Project Manager at fountainofhealth.ca

How do I register for the Thrive MD program?

To register to attend the Thrive MD two-part webinar series this winter, visit: <https://horizonscda.ca/surveys/index.php/498879/lang-en>

Any additional dates and times will be posted on fountainofhealth.ca, doctorsNS.com and in the Doctors Nova Scotia (DNS) e-newsletter, Latest News.

For more information, please email Jean Robinson-Dexter, project manager at info@fountainofhealth.ca or phone: 902-354-2397.

SIIP: Summer Internship in Psychiatry

First year medical students at Dalhousie who may be wondering what path to take in medicine, or are considering a career in psychiatry are invited to apply to SIIP: Summer Internship in Psychiatry.

SIIP is a 4-day program for students that are interested in learning more about psychiatry. This program will run at the end of the academic year from May 24 to 27, 2022. The program will be held in Halifax and a limited number of spots will be offered to

students from both Halifax and Saint John campuses.

Preferentially, sessions will be held in person, though all sessions will be adaptable to be held virtually in case of pandemic restrictions.

The 4-day program will include:

- working with psychiatrists from various subspecialties, psychiatry residents and allied health professionals
- opportunities to learn more about a career in psychiatry

- interactive educational sessions
- clinical skills practice
- elective placements with exposure to different psychiatric presentations
- social events

Applications will be open from Jan. 17 to Jan. 28, 2022 and can be found at: <https://dalpsychiatry.ca/static/psychiatry-siip>.

If you have any questions, please feel free to email siip@dal.ca

STAFF & FACULTY CHANGES

Arrivals

Anila Balakrishnan joined the department as research coordinator, effective Dec. 13, 2021. Anila will be working at the Abbie J. Lane building in room 8412 and can be reached at 902-473-7358 or by email at anila.balakrishnan@nshealth.ca.

Dr. Beth Eayrs joined the department as assistant professor on Nov. 22, 2021. Dr. Eayrs is completing a locum at the East Coast Forensic Hospital in Dartmouth. She can be reached at beth.eayrs@nshealth.ca or 902-460-7300.

Dr. Mahmoud Gad joined the department as a lecturer effective, Jan. 1, 2022. Dr. Gad will be completing a locum in the Garron Centre, IWK Acute Care Psychiatric Inpatient Unit. He can be reached at

mahmoud.gad@iwk.nshealth.ca or 902-470-8123.

Ariann Greenidge joined the department as administrative assistant to the head, effective Dec. 13, 2021. Ariann can be found in room 8209 in the Abbie J. Lane building and can be reached at 902-473-6214 or by email at ariann.greenidge@nshealth.ca.

Dr. Anthony Pianosi joined the department as a lecturer effective, Jan. 1, 2022. Dr. Pianosi is completing a locum in the Abbie J. Lane Day Hospital, PES and acute care services. He can be reached at Anthony.pianosi@nshealth.ca.

Neha Singh has joined the department as human resource coordinator, effective Dec. 9, 2021. Neha will be working in the Abbie J. Lane building in room 8406 and can

be reached at 902-473-2507 or by email at neha.singh@nshealth.ca.

Departures

Kate Rogers left the department effective Dec. 24, 2021. Kate served as the communications coordinator in the department since July 2011. She has started a new position as communications advisor in the Dean's Office at the Faculty of Medicine at Dalhousie University. We thank Kate for her years of service to the department and wish her all the best in her new role.

AWARDS & HONOURS

Dr. Martin Alda receives medal from Czech Republic Ministry of Health

On a recent visit to Czech Republic **Dr. Martin Alda** was presented with a medal from the Ministry of Health in the country for his contributions to the field of psychiatry. A Czech Republic native, Dr. Alda was also recognized for his work in the establishment of the National Institute of Mental Health in the Czech Republic. Other notable recipients of this honour were professor Paul Grof (University of Toronto), Professor Jan Volavka (emeritus professor at New

York University), professor Norman Sartorius (former director of the World Health Organization's (WHO) Division of Mental Health, and a former president of the World Psychiatric Association), and Professor Jan Libiger (Charles University in Czech Republic). Dr. Alda was presented with his medal at a special meeting at the National Institute of Mental Health in Czech Republic on October 15.



Dr. Martin Alda's medal from the Czech Republic Ministry of Health.

Dr. Mutiat Sulyman and Mahmoud Awara share Outstanding Clinician Award

Dr. Mutiat Sulyman and **Mahmoud Awara** are co-recipients of the 2021 Department of Psychiatry Outstanding Clinician Award. This award was established by the department to recognize those members who have made outstanding contributions to the department's mandate of providing excellence in clinical care. Both recipients were nominated by their peers.

Dr. Awara received two separate nominations. He joined the Recovery and Integration services in April 2014 as a staff psychiatrist for inpatient rehabilitation services (Simpson Landing) and contributed to the seamless flow of patients through his effort in educating the team and

residents on identifying key clinical attributes that assist patients in progressing through rehabilitation and integrating back into the community. In 2016, he joined the community rehabilitation team in Dartmouth and has been using the same approach with the Dartmouth Connections team which has gone from strength to strength each year. Despite the bottleneck related to system issues in Community Mental Health and Addictions, he has continued to advocate for turn-over of patients and has worked with family physicians to take on patients who have been stable and who remain stable in the community.

Residents have consistently attested to the impact that placements with Dr. Awara have had on building their skills and competencies as evidenced

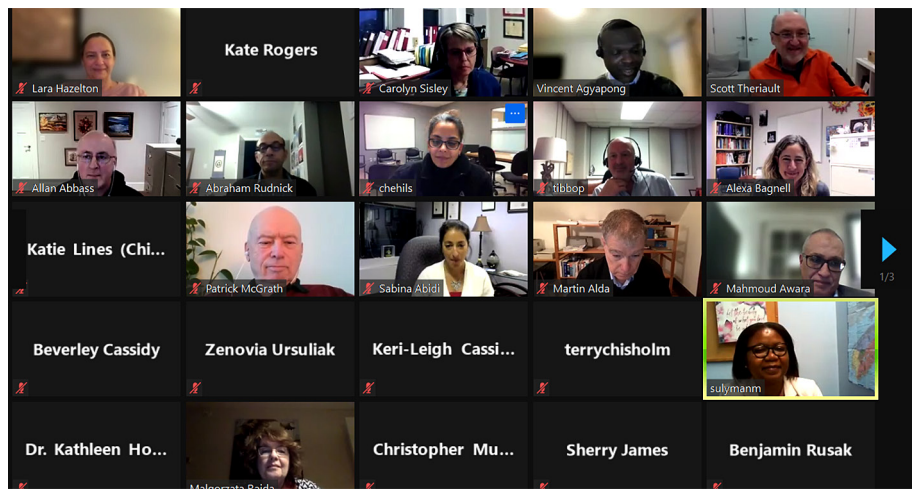
by the positive feedback they provide after completing the rotation. He has been invited to share his clinical experience as a speaker and poster presenter at international conferences and congress. He has also been sharing his clinical experience as a reviewer for the Journal of Medical Case Reports, the Clinical EEG & Neuroscience Journal, and the European Journal of Medical Case Reports.

A new faculty member and mentee commented on the necessity of colleagues like Dr. Awara stating: Through his clinical expertise, humility, endless curiosity and respect for colleagues and family he is a treasured resource for learners and clinicians alike.

Dr. Sulyman is the lead psychiatrist for our dual diagnosis service, which

includes an outreach program called COAST and an inpatient unit--the Adult Neurodevelopmental Stabilization Unit (ANSU). Since 2015 ANSU, then Emerald Hall, has gone through a tremendous transformation, and Dr. Sulyman has been instrumental as the clinical leader in that change. Prior to the transformation, individuals at ANSU stayed in hospital for many months and in some cases many years. This was not optimal care for our patients, and it also was not sustainable for our healthcare system. For ANSU to function as an effective stabilization unit, it needed to have optimum patient flow. Patients should come in for stabilization, receive care and therapeutic intervention and then return to their home in the community. Achieving this flow through the transformation led by Dr. Sulyman and others has allowed ANSU to become a high-quality and sustainable service that provides specialized care to an extremely vulnerable patient population.

Fast forward to 2021, the former Emerald Hall, now ANSU, has won a Silver Quality Award and a National Merck Patients First Award for their quality initiative that led to an impressive reduction in the use of restrictive practices (restraints) amongst patients. Today, ANSU has positive team morale, staff and patient injuries have decreased significantly, as have Code Whites and seclusion events. Patient placements have also increased significantly, and in recent years several extremely long-stay patients have moved on to a full life in the community, thanks to the improved care and therapeutic interventions they are receiving from



Drs. Mutiat Sulyman and Mahmoud Awara were presented with their awards at the department's biannual meeting in November.

the interprofessional team.

Dr. Sulyman worked together with leadership, the inter-professional team, and patients/families to achieve excellence in health, healing and learning. As further evidence of Dr. Sulyman's efforts to achieve excellence through her work with ANSU, the ANSU was recently selected by the Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC) to be presented as a real-world example of approaches that address structural stigma in the Canadian healthcare system.

Congratulations to both Drs. Sulyman and Awara: two very deserving recipients of the 2021 Outstanding Clinician Award.

Dr. Alice Aylott named Educator of the Year

Dr. Alice Aylott is the recipient of the 2021 Department of Psychiatry Educator of the Year Award. This award is a peer nomination to recognize an exceptional faculty member who has demonstrated excellence in teaching, mentorship in scholarly activity, and/or leadership and innovation in the development of educational programming.

Since joining the Faculty in 2016, Dr. Aylott has provided clinical supervision to many medical students and residents. The medical students especially, highlight her exceptional

teaching skills, her obvious interest in and concern for their learning, the supportive and encouraging learning environment she creates as a preceptor and the valuable feedback she provides them.

She contributes many hours of didactic and tutorial teaching in undergraduate medicine in Neuroscience, Skilled Clinician and LINK every year and has held the role of Skilled Clinician Component Head since 2017, in which she has delivered a consistently high-quality program, and valuable initial introduction to our specialty for undergraduate medical students. She has been an active

member of both the Department of Psychiatry's Undergraduate & Postgraduate Committees and the Faculty of Medicine's Postgraduate Medical Education Committee. At the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic Dr. Aylott also volunteered to prepare a valuable online resource for faculty facing workplace re-deployment. So far during her career, Dr. Aylott repeatedly demonstrated her strong engagement with the educational mission of the Department of Psychiatry and commitment to providing highest quality teaching. She is most deserving of this award. Congratulations Alice!

Dr. Herb Orlik receives Outstanding Teacher Award

Dr. Herb Orlik was recently awarded the 2021 Larry Buffet Outstanding Teacher Award from the Department of Psychiatry. This peer recognized award is presented to an exceptional faculty member who has demonstrated an outstanding performance in a teaching and clinical supervisor role for learners.

Dr. Orlik has been an educational leader in child and adolescent psychiatry in our country for approximately four decades, and an undergraduate education champion in our department. He has led the Dalhousie University undergraduate psychiatry curriculum and clerkship rotations from a footnote experience in medical school to a core rotation and highly valued part of the education of our medical students. It is through his leadership that psychiatry has become a valued rotation at Dalhousie University

attracting excellent medical students to pursue a psychiatric career.

At the national level he has served on and led many undergraduate education committees and has been a key leader in changing how psychiatry is taught and incorporating new approaches to learning. His passion and skill as a clinician are well known, and he remains a sought-after mentor and teacher within our faculty. His focus on integrating the brain and mind in psychiatry and the understanding of mental illness was instrumental in bringing about the necessary change in undergraduate education psychiatry in our country. He has been a key education leader at Dalhousie in changing how psychiatry is taught by incorporating new approaches to learning. An early adopter and promoter of case-based and problem-based interactive learning, he created some of the first materials for psychiatry teaching in this new teaching modality. Dr. Orlik

has also taught various child and adolescent psychiatry topics in the Law School, School of Social Work, School of Occupational Therapy and School of Human Communication Disorders. He has been a frequent teacher in continuing education programs for family physicians in the Maritime Provinces.

His passion and skill as a teacher and mentor have resulted in his being recognized by many student and resident teaching awards over the years and continuing to be a sought-after mentor and teacher within our faculty. Over the past several years four of five graduating subspecialty residents have chosen to pursue a career in his clinical specialty areas of eating disorders or autism spectrum disorder.

Congratulations Dr. Orlik. The department is so lucky to have you as a teacher!

Dr. Mahmoud Award wins poster prize from the Royal College of Psychiatrists, U.K.

Dr. Mahmoud Awara is the recipient of a poster prize from the Royal College of Psychiatrists in the U.K. for his poster entitled *Three-Year-Outcomes: Clinical and Cost Effectiveness of an Inpatient Psychiatric Rehabilitation Service*. The poster captured his work on a three-year-study of an inpatient psychiatric rehabilitation service in Nova Scotia. Most patients with severe and persistent mental illness and high pre-rehabilitation service utilization were successfully discharged to a more socially inclusive environment while

reducing their post-rehabilitation admission rate, length of stay, and emergency visits.

Dr. Awara presented virtually at the annual conference of the Faculty of Rehabilitation and Social Psychiatry, U.K. on Nov. 18 and 19, 2021. Dr. Helen Killaspy, who is an international pioneer in psychiatric rehabilitation, commented on the poster and noted in a congratulatory email to Dr. Awara: "The judges were impressed by the relevance of your study, the rigour and the quality of the poster aesthetic." Congratulations Dr. Awara.



Dr. Mahmoud Awara

VOLUNTEER VIEW



Are you a volunteer in the mental health community? We want to hear about it. Contact psychiatry@dal.ca and be ready to answer a few questions about your volunteer experience.

Kiyana Kamali: Kids Help Phone

Kiyana Kamali, who is a first year medical student at Dalhousie University, has volunteered with Kids Help Phone virtually as a crisis responder since 2018, and has accumulated over 300 hours and has had 300 different conversations. Volunteering with Kids Help Phone can be flexible and you can complete either two-or four-hour shifts.

Kiyana's role as a trained crisis responder is to take people from moments of hot to cold. "Typically, I would try to figure what the individual's crisis is, create a safe

space by actively listening and validating them, risk assessing for suicide, and work together to create a plan that helps them stay safe and calm," she says. "The caveat of this role is that this all happens through texting, so I don't have any verbal cues to understand their full emotions." The service is available 24/7 and is anonymous (unless they are at imminent risk), so Kiyana notices people feel free to open up more and reach out whenever they want. The most rewarding aspect she says is knowing that by just listening to people it can be very therapeutic.

Want to get involved? If you want

to volunteer as crisis responder with Kids Help Phone visit <https://kidshelpphone.ca/opportunities/crisis-responders-overnight> for more [information](#).

THE HEAVY HELPERS: COMMUNITY GROUPS MAKING A DIFFERENCE



THE YOUTH PROJECT

Who they are.

The Youth Project is a non-profit charitable organization dedicated to providing support and services to youth, 25 and under, around issues of sexual orientation and gender identity.

How they help.

They have a provincial mandate and host staff/volunteers in the HRM, Cape Breton, the Valley, and the South Shore and travel around the province to meet with youth in other communities. They provide a variety of programs and services including support groups, referrals, supportive counselling, a resource library, educational workshops, social activities.

They are a youth directed organization and the Youth Board ensure that their programs and services are relevant and needed by the youth who access the Project. The Youth Project is committed to providing leadership opportunities to lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, transgender and ally youth.

Want to make a difference?

The Youth Project offers several ways you can get involved:

- Support summer camps through donation
- Become a volunteer
- Make a donation

To learn more about the Youth Project and how you can contribute to their excellent programs please visit <https://youthproject.ns.ca/>.



MEDICAL HUMANITIES

Student Writing Competition 2022

Do you enjoy writing?

Medical students and residents are invited to submit reflective essays, prose, poetry, plays, or graphic novellas exploring the intersection of mental health and the humanities to the [Dalhousie Department of Psychiatry Annual Student Writing Competition](#). Other forms of creative writing may also be accepted.

One entry in each category (medical student, postgraduate trainee) will be selected to receive a cash prize.

Contest Rules

Who is eligible? Medical students, residents and fellows at Canadian medical schools.

Maximum word count: 2,000 words

Deadline: This year's deadline is **May 1, 2022**. Winners will be announced on June 1, 2022.

Entries can be sent as PDF attachments to the Department of Psychiatry Undergraduate Education Coordinator, Kelly Hancock, at kelly.hancock@nshealth.ca.

To ensure confidentiality is maintained, patients and anyone else described in essays, stories, or poems **must be fictional or composite characters (with the exception of the narrator him/herself). Please indicate in your e-mail whether you are a medical student or a resident/fellow.*

Winning

Winning entries will be published in the Department of Psychiatry newsletter, *Headlines*, and on the [Dalhousie Department of Psychiatry website](#).

Tel: 902.473.5633 | kelly.hancock@nshealth.ca



Psychiatry book club

The humanities group held its second Psychiatry Department Book Club meeting of the 2021-22 year on Dec. 13, 2021. Unfortunately increasing COVID-19 cases prevented us from meeting in person, as planned, but we had an enjoyable evening on Zoom discussing Elyn Saks's memoir of schizophrenia, *The Centre Cannot Hold*:

My Journey Through Madness. The conversation was lively and engaging, with detours into exploration of psychoanalytic theory, stigma, memory, and of course our theme for this year, isolation.

If you would like to participate in future book clubs, please contact any of the medical humanities

representatives: **Dr. Abraham (Rami) Rudnick** (abraham.rudnick@nshealth.ca), **Alex Whynot** (alex.whynot@nshealth.ca), **Julia LeBlanc** (julia.leblanc@nshealth.ca), or **Alison Toron** (alison.toron@nshealth.ca).

PHOTO FEATURE



Double rainbow, Dartmouth, N.S., November 2021 (Photo by Dr. Abraham Rudnick).

HEADLINES SUBMISSIONS

Headlines aims to provide a forum for the exchange of information, ideas, and items of general interest to the faculty, fellows, students and staff of the Department of Psychiatry. Your contribution(s) are needed and greatly appreciated.

The next issue of **Headlines** will be distributed on March 1, 2022, with the deadline for submissions to be Feb. 18 2022.

Please send all submissions to psychiatry@dal.ca.