

HEADLINES

November 2021 / VOLUME 16/ ISSUE 6

GRAD STUDENTS GALORE

DEPARTMENT WELCOMES
FOURTH CLASS OF MASTER'S
STUDENTS AND INAUGURAL
CLASS OF PHD STUDENTS



IN THIS ISSUE

FEATURES

GRAD STUDENTS GALORE Department welcomes its fourth class of master's students, and inaugural class of PhD students. *page 4*

AMCS SERVICE Same-day call-back service now available to NS clinicians. *page 14*

FACULTY AWARDED Read about Dr. Christine Chambers who was recently honoured. *page 16*

REOCCURRING

- 3** Message from the head
- 6** Research report
- 7** Education report
- 10** Child & adolescent psychiatry report
- 11** Meet our members
- 13** News from the department
- 17** Heavy helpers
- 18** Humanities corner
- 19** Photo feature

On the cover: Front row (L-R):Cat Robinson, Hailey Burns, Ashley Francis, and Sarah DeGrace. Back Row (L-R):Haley Bernusky, Katie Scott, Temi Toba-Oluboka, Ross Langley, and Tulayla Katmeh (missing Fatemeh Boorboor)

This newsletter is published for the Department of Psychiatry at Dalhousie University.

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HEAD LINES

MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD

I want to thank the faculty, learners, and staff of our department for their warm welcome and assistance as I continue to settle in the role of department head. I am very grateful for the many ideas shared by our faculty during the various individual and group meetings I have had in the last few weeks. The two recent town hall meetings at which I shared ideas for discussion in relation to the transformational plan were attended in total by about 80 of our faculty and staff, and the recording of the first town hall presentation (available: <https://youtu.be/V6cBIYTnGso>) had been watched close to 80 times as at the conclusion of the second town hall meeting. I am very grateful to faculty and staff for the engagement, frank, respectful and constructive feedback, and the support for the transformational plan both at the town hall meetings and in the several emails so far received. Over the next few days, my office will be sending out a survey to allow faculty and staff to provide further feedback and input into the transformational plan. I am confident, that combining the creative abilities and efforts of all our staff, learners, and faculty, and with each of us willing to contribute our quota to the shared goal, our department will attain a height that may seem unimaginable to others.

In this edition, we also profile **Dr. Hugh Maguire**, Chief of Psychiatry for Nova Scotia Health Northern Zone for his immense contribution to our department through facilitation and direct participation in distributed learning for medical students and



Dr. Vincent Agyapong

residents. We are incredibly lucky to have such a thoughtful and experienced leader, mentor, and supervisor as a faculty member in our department. I want to thank Dr. Maguire for his contribution to our department's mandate.

I would like to congratulate **Dr. Abraham Rudnick** for his appointment as the vice-chair of the Research Advisory Committee (RAC) at the Faculty of Medicine at Dalhousie University, and to **Dr. Christine Chambers** for her induction into Canadian Academy of Health Sciences.

I am also delighted to officially welcome our new cohort of master's students and our inaugural cohort of PhD students to our graduate

program. Thanks to our graduate program coordinator **Dr. Sherry Stewart**, along with **Dr. Kim Good** for their work promoting our graduate program to prospective students across the Maritimes, and to our faculty supervisors for creating opportunities for graduate students to work in their labs and be part of their research teams. Good mentorship and supervision are essential for a positive graduate experience, and I am thankful we have such incredibly dedicated mentors and supervisors in our department. I wish our new graduate students' successful studies.

ON THE COVER



On Sept. 7, 2021 our fifth Master's in Psychiatry Research class, and our first PhD in Psychiatry Research students began their training in the Department of Psychiatry. In our master's class, of the six students, two are Dalhousie graduates, and there is one graduate each from Mount Allison University, Mount Saint Vincent University, Queen's University, and the University of Manitoba. The two-year graduate program they are embarking on is designed to equip students with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed as professionals in clinical and neuroscience research concerning mental health and illness. The coursework covers relevant current topics including clinical trials, genetics, neuroimaging, participatory research, psychotherapy research, early interventions, and personalized psychiatry. Students will improve their skills in critical appraisal, study design, statistics, data analysis, and scientific writing. Each student will complete an independent master's thesis research project under the supervision of one of our faculty.

Our first PhD class is made up of four students, two of whom were fast-tracked through the Master's of Psychiatry Research Program. Those students are **Sarah DeGrace** and **Katie Scott**. Ms. DeGrace and Scott are joined by **Ashley Francis**, a graduate from both St. Francis Xavier and Saint Mary's Universities, and **Fatemeh Boorboor**, who comes to us from Tehran, Iran. The three-to-five-year PhD program equips students with the skills and knowledge

needed to succeed as doctoral-level professionals in clinical and neuroscience research concerning mental health and illness. The coursework covers advanced statistics and experiential psychiatry, as well as two comprehensives. Students will achieve advanced level skills in critical appraisal, study design, statistics, complex data analysis, scientific writing, and understanding of psychiatric illnesses. Each student will complete independent doctoral dissertation research under the supervision of one of our faculty.

You are introduced to both our new master's students, and our PhD students, below.

Haley Bernusky (MSc)

Haley graduated from the University of Manitoba in 2019 with a Bachelor of Science in honours psychology with a minor in biological sciences. Originally from Winnipeg, Manitoba, she began her studies with a desire to learn more about scientific research and advance her understanding of addictions in psychiatry. Her Master's in Psychiatry Research will be supervised by both **Drs. Sherry Stewart** and **Phil Tibbo**. Though her research focus is still to be determined, she is certain it will include something in the intersection of substance use, anxiety and mood disorders, and early psychosis/psychotic-like-experiences. After completing her master's, she hopes to continue her education with a PhD program in clinical psychology, but would also enjoy working for a time before her PhD.

Fatemeh Boorboor (PhD)

Fatemeh graduated in 2018 with a master's degree in general psychology from Islamic Azad University Tehran Central Branch located in Tehran, Iran. She has been working in mental health clinics, both remotely and in-person since that time. She is passionate about psychiatric disorders and using technology to improve mental health and well-being. Completing her PhD in psychiatry research at Dalhousie will enable her to work at achieving this goal. Supervised by **Dr. Sandra Meier**, Fatemeh's research will primarily focus on remote mental health services utilizing psychiatric apps that are accessible for many people. Upon completion of the program, she hopes to be a researcher in the field of psychiatry and mental health, and peruse her dreams in academia. She would like to have her own lab and to provide remote psychiatric services in her home country and worldwide.

Hailey Burns (MSc)

Hailey graduated from Mount Allison University in 2020 with a Bachelor of Science in honours biology and a minor in psychology. While she has lived in Moncton for the past 12 years, she was born in Halifax and is excited to return home for her graduate studies. Her interests in adolescent and youth mental health led her to pursue a Master's in Psychiatry Research under the supervision of Dr. Sandra Meier and Dr. Raymond Klein. Her project investigates the effects of attentional biases on problems in social interactions of youth with

anxiety. Through her work, she aims to develop a deeper understanding of the cognitive mechanisms behind anxiety disorders and help bridge the gap of knowledge surrounding how social media affects an individual's attention bias. In the future, Hailey hopes to continue researching and practicing in the mental health field, potentially as a clinical psychologist. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Hailey has taken up many hobbies to keep her busy, including embroidery, painting, hiking with her dog Hudson, watching all the Marvel movies in chronological order, and has now moved on to a new hobby to try: knitting.

Sarah DeGrace (PhD)

Sarah graduated from Acadia University in 2020 with a Bachelor of Arts with honours in psychology. In 2021, she completed her Master of Science degree in Psychiatry Research at Dalhousie University, supervised by Dr. Sherry Stewart. Originally from Nova Scotia, she is excited to be close to home while she begins her PhD in Psychiatry Research under the supervision of Dr. Stewart. Sarah's research will investigate the automatic cognitive processes which link post-traumatic stress disorder and cannabis-use disorder. More specifically, her work will combine Dr. Stewart's cue-reactivity paradigm with a computerized reaction time task to examine memory associations between trauma cues, cannabis, and approach behavior. Sarah hopes to continue to pursue cannabis use research in mental health contexts, either in industry or academia, after completing her PhD.

Ashley Francis (PhD)

Ashley graduated from St. Francis Xavier University in 2018 with her

Bachelor of Science with honours in psychology, and in 2021 graduated from Saint Mary's University with her Master's in Applied Science with a focus in psychology and neuroscience. Originally from Hebbville, Nova Scotia, a small town just outside of Bridgewater, Ashley became motivated to pursue graduate training in psychiatry after an undergraduate presentation by **Dr. Derek Fisher** that introduced her to EEG and how we can study clinical populations using brain-based research. Dr. Fisher then supervised her master's program and is a co-supervisor for her PhD, along with Dr. Phil Tibbo. Ashley's master's work focused on the impact of cannabis use on inhibition and sensory gating pathways in the brain and she will continue studying the impact of drugs on the brain while expanding her knowledge to include psychiatric disorders in her PhD. In particular she will look at auditory hallucinations in individuals with bipolar disorder and the potential neural generators associated with these hallucinations using EEG, and fMRI techniques. After her training Ashley hopes to run her own research lab, or work in pharmaceutical research, and is also open to academia.

Tulayla Katmeh (MSc)

Tulayla graduated from the Dalhousie pharmacy program in May 2019. Originally from Damascus Syria, Tulayla moved to Nova Scotia in 2006. After working for two years in community pharmacy she recognized the gap between evidence-based medicine and what was being practiced in community and became motivated to begin her graduate training. Her master's thesis will be

supervised by **Dr. Andrea Murphy** and **Dr. David Gardner**. Her research will be focused on the treatment of insomnia and she will conduct a qualitative study to better understand older adults' experiences in stopping their sleep medication. After she completes the program she hopes to enroll in medical school.

Ross Langley (MSc)

Ross graduated from Queen's University with a Bachelor of Science honours in life sciences. He was born in Boston but grew up in Halifax, and he is excited to be returning to the Maritimes to begin his Master's in Psychiatry Research. Ross's interest in the diagnosis and early intervention of mood disorders led him to work under **Dr. Rudolf Uher**. His project investigates measures of depression in speech, integrating subjective and computer-based objective measures of speech. In the future, Ross aims to continue research and working with mood disorders in adolescents.

Cat Robinson (MSc)

Cat graduated from Mount Saint Vincent University in 2021 with a Bachelor of Arts in psychology with honours. Originally born in Vancouver, she has been living in Halifax most of her life. She has spent many years volunteering with Laing House, currently sitting on the board, which has contributed to her interest in using research to improve the lives of people living with severe psychiatric disorders. She will complete her master's degree under the supervision of **Dr. Tomas Hajek**, who specializes in brain changes associated with bipolar disorder. Her research is presently focused on a meta-analysis looking at the relationship between brain metabolites and weight. The next step

will be taking the results and using them to examine weight and diabetes-related risks for individuals with bipolar disorder. After the completion of the program Caitlin will be applying to medical school with dreams of becoming a physician. She would love to be able to practice evidence-based psychiatry someday, but is also excited to have exposure to other specialties, neurology in particular.

Katie Scott (PhD)

Katie is a PhD student from Malagash, Nova Scotia. She graduated from Dalhousie in 2020 with a Bachelor of Science with honours in neuroscience, then entered the Master's in Psychiatry Research last year before transitioning into the PhD program. Her supervisor is **Dr. Martin Alda**, who she discovered while an undergraduate student, and

was very interested in his research surrounding the genetics of mood disorders. Certain she wanted to work in psychiatric research, she applied to the department's master's program after her undergraduate training. Her research explores clinical traits that cluster in families affected with bipolar disorder, what that means for their course of illness and treatment response, and if the traits are linked to specific genes. After her degree, she plans to continue work in mood disorder research, preferably in Nova Scotia.

Temi Toba-Oluboka (MSc)

Temi graduated from Dalhousie in 2020 with a Bachelor of Science degree in psychology with a minor in health studies. Originally from Calgary, Alberta, her passion for

research motivated her to start her graduate training. She has always enjoyed learning about mental illness and the biological factors behind disorders. Temi is interested in research that can improve the patient experience and finds it incredibly rewarding to be a part of that process. She will complete her master's in psychiatry research degree under the supervision of **Drs. Kara Dempster** and Phil Tibbo. Her work will be focused on assessing clozapine eligibility in first episode psychosis patients by looking at glutamate in the Anterior Cingulate Cortex. When she is finished, she hopes to complete a PhD in psychiatry and later pursue a career in the pharmaceutical industry as a Medical Science Liaison or Medical Advisor.

RESEARCH REPORT



Department of Psychiatry Research Day 2021

This year's event is scheduled for Friday, Nov. 12, 2021 and will be hosted virtually on Zoom.

Now in its 31st year, Psychiatry Research Day promotes student involvement in research and showcases the department's diverse expertise to our university and local communities.

We are pleased to announce that

this year's keynote speaker will be Dr. Brenda Penninx, a professor of psychiatric epidemiology at the Department of Psychiatry at Amsterdam UMC, who will be speaking on the topic of the epidemiology of anxiety and depression.

If you are interested in attending this online event, please follow this link, <https://dalpsychiatry.ca/ls/index.php/568761?lang=en>, to register by Nov. 5, 2021.

If you have questions please contact **Mandy Eslinger** at mandy.eslinger@nshealth.ca.

EDUCATION REPORT



UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION NEWS

Skilled Clinician

Our Med 2 Skilled Clinician block is winding down in early November. Thank you to our faculty and residents for tutoring and our many patients for participating.

Psychiatry Interest Group

We would like to welcome the new Psychiatry Interest Group chairs: Shirley Xu and Prathiksha Nalan. We would also like to thank Katharine Birkness for serving as the chair of the Psychiatry Interest Group in

2020/2021. The interest group is a valuable link between the department and the medical students; increasing awareness and facilitating discussion about mental health as well as encouraging students' interest in the field of psychiatry.

POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION NEWS

CaRMS 2022

The education team is in the early planning stages of another virtual CaRMS in 2022. CaRMS interviews for all candidates, including local applicants, will be taking place on the following dates:

Monday, February 28: 12:00pm – 6:30pm

Tuesday, March 1, 9:00am – 3:30pm

Thursday, March 10, 12:00pm – 6:30pm

Friday, March 11, 9:00am – 3:30pm

Check your email for invitations to take part in CaRMS interviews and events.

FELLOWSHIP AND SUBSPECIALTY TRAINING NEWS

Interviews

The child and adolescent psychiatry subspecialty program offered interviews to five applicants. Interviews took place on October 8 and 12. Successful applicant(s) will start with our program on July 1, 2023.

Journal Club

Child and Adolescent Psychiatry hosted a virtual journal club Oct. 14, 2021. **Dr. Jill Chorney** led the discussion about the journal article.

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEWS

Rounds

Grand rounds resumed on Wednesday, Sept. 8, 2021 and will be continuing in an online only format until the end of the year.

Workshop

An online CPD workshop for psychiatrists and residents on the topic of newcomer mental health took place on Friday, Sept. 24, 2021. The

session featured presentations on cultural formulation and working with interpreters by Dr. Lisa Andermann, University of Toronto. Local speakers included **Dr. Mutiat Sulyman**, Ms. Laura Callaghan (IWK), and Dr. Alyaa Abouzied, a family physician at the Newcomer Health Clinic. Many thanks to the presenters, and to **Kate Rogers** and **Baoya Song** for providing support.

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.

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.

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.

Note: Many Faculty Development activities are accredited. If you would like to receive a CME listing of your credits for the past year, or other date span, please feel free to contact Deirdre Harvey at 902-494-2234 or deirdre.harvey@dal.ca.

Faculty Development Fund

AFP faculty members are reminded that the department has a faculty development fund available. Visit the department database under 'Forms/Faculty Development Funding Application' and click in the blue box 'Find out what is eligible for funding' for details on funding criteria.

MED-ED MINUTE

This Med Ed Minute highlights the ways you can obtain your medical education credits.

Ways to obtain your Med Ed credits

Wondering how to meet the minimum two hours of faculty development related to your teaching role?

Many opportunities exist within the Department of Psychiatry and Dalhousie Faculty of Medicine, as well as externally at conferences, workshops, webinars, and courses.

Examples of topics that pertain to faculty development may include:

- Assessment of learners
- Feedback
- Clinical teaching skills
- Classroom teaching skills

Popular options for psychiatrists in our department include:

- Tutor training modules offered by the Faculty of Medicine
- Exam question writing workshops offered by **Drs. Mark Bosma** and **Cheryl Murphy**

Department of Psychiatry

Grand rounds currently scheduled for 2021-22 that qualify for Med Ed credits are as follows:

December 8, 2021 (University Rounds – Med Ed) **Dr. Yvonne Steinert**, McGill University

January 26, 2022 (Clinical Academic Rounds – Med Ed) **Drs. Holly Greer, Angela Wang, Lauren Chan, and Kate Stymiest**

Resident medical education projects

Dalhousie Faculty of Medicine

The Faculty of Medicine offers a variety of faculty development opportunities in medical education. Refer to the faculty development opportunities section of *Headlines* to discover what is available, or visit Dal's Continuing Professional Development & Medical Education website: <https://medicine.dal.ca/departments/core-units/cpd/faculty-development/programs.html>

Conferences with a medical education focus

- Canadian Conference on Medical Education (CCME) <https://mededconference.ca/>
- Association for Academic Psychiatry (AAP) <https://www.academicpsychiatry.org/annual-meeting/>
- Canadian Psychiatric Association (CPA) <https://www.cpa-apc.org/annual-conference/>
- International Conference on Residency Education (ICRE) <https://icre.royalcollege.ca/>
- Association of Medical Education in Europe (AMEE) <https://www.amee.org/conferences/amee-future-conferences>

Looking to further develop your teaching skills?

The Association of Medical Education in Europe (AMEE) offers online courses designed for those new to teaching, and for teachers with some experience who would like a greater understanding of the basic principles and an update on current best practice.

- Essential Skills in Medical Education (ESME) <https://amee.org/courses/amee-esme-online-courses/esme-online>
- ESME Assessment <https://amee.org/courses/amee-esme-online-courses/esme-assessment-online>
- Research Essential Skills in Medical Education (RESME) <https://amee.org/courses/amee-esme-online-courses/resme-online>

CHILD & ADOLESCENT PSYCHIATRY REPORT

Welcome new staff

We are excited to welcome **Nicole Bonn** to the Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. Nicole joined the department on Oct. 12, 2021 as the education & research coordinator. She has been working in administrative roles for the past seven years with VON Canada and VON Greater Halifax.

CACAP

The 41st Annual Canadian Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry was held virtually Sept. 11 – 14, 2021. The following faculty presented this year:

PANS/PANDAS Special Interest Study Group with Dr. Megan McFadden, **Dr. Sarah Fancy**, **Dr. Alexa Bagnell**, and Dr. Evelyn Stewart.

Poster: **Propper,L.**, Sandstrom,A., Rempel,S., Howes-Vallis,E., **Abidi,S.**, **Bagnell,A.**, **Lovas,D.**, **Alda,M.**, **Pavlova,B.**, **Uher,R.**: *Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder and other neurodevelopmental disorders in high-risk offspring.*

Presentations

On Oct. 3, 2021 **Dr. Selene Etches** presented a *Fundamentals Course on Cannabis Use Disorders* at the Canadian Society of Addiction Medicine.

Child & Adolescent Psychiatry Retreat


The next CAP psychiatry faculty development retreat will be held virtually on November 19 9:00 am – 1:00pm.

TransHealth Symposium

On Oct. 21-22 and 25-26 the fourth annual Trans* Health Symposium took place virtually on Zoom. The symposium, Integrated care for gender dysphoric, gender non-binary, & transgender children into adulthood, saw more than 180 mental health clinicians and medical providers, including social workers, psychologists, registered counselling therapists, endocrinologists, family physicians, pediatricians, nurse practitioners and psychiatry residents and fellows, in attendance. Building on the success of the inaugural symposium in 2018, the goal was to increase access to competent care for gender creative, gender dysphoric and transgender youth and their families throughout the Maritimes.

Study Participation

Youth aged 14-25 who have experience with a mental health problem are encouraged to enroll in one of three studies to learn about citizenship and community belonging among youth with mental health problems. To learn more visit: https://youthcitizenship.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3mbIEHy6SaXZDLg



"WHERE DO I BELONG? A MIXED METHODS STUDY EXAMINING CITIZENSHIP AMONG YOUTH WITH MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES"

PARTICIPATE IN A STUDY!

HELP US LEARN ABOUT CITIZENSHIP AND COMMUNITY BELONGING AMONG YOUTH WITH MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS

WHAT WILL YOU DO?
QUESTIONNAIRES AND/OR INTERVIEWS

COMPENSATION CAN INCLUDE:
A 30\$ GIFT CARD; A CHANCE TO WIN A 50\$ OR 100\$ GIFT CARD

ELIGIBILITY:

- AGED 14 - 25
- EXPERIENCED A MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEM
- LIVING IN CANADA
- RECEIVING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

• **WE ARE ESPECIALLY SEEKING YOUTH FROM DIVERSE ETHNIC, GENDER, SEXUAL AND RELIGIOUS BACKGROUNDS**

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE !](#)

Researcher in charge of project: Dr. Gerald Jordan - gerald.jordan@mail.mcgill.ca

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 new face. In this issue, get to know **Dr. Hugh Maguire**, psychiatrist and assistant professor in the Department of Psychiatry, and chief of psychiatry for the Northern Zone in Truro, Nova Scotia.

My early career at Dalhousie: After completing my residency training at Dalhousie, I accepted a position in Truro. The hospital has always been involved in medical education, so I have been affiliated with Dalhousie since then. My eldest daughter Clare was born on the very day we moved here. I expected to be here temporarily, but have stayed much longer; Clare just turned 23. I am still working in the Northern Zone, and I am happy to call Nova Scotia my home.

How my career at Dalhousie/NSH has changed over the years: I think most doctors would say that things are always changing in health care, and this is certainly true of Nova Scotia. Many doctors would also agree that what doesn't change is our shared commitment to the patients and communities we serve. I am grateful to have had a fascinating and challenging hospital-based practice that includes teaching and service development. Over the years, I have held numerous positions in our hospital and community, and in psychiatry, mental health and addictions. I now serve as chief of psychiatry for the Northern Zone, as my facility's director of medical education, and am actively involved in physician recruitment.



Dr. Hugh Maguire

My early career aspirations: I didn't always know I wanted to be a

psychiatrist. It was a circuitous path: before medicine, I studied English and theatre arts, and had a strong interest in International Development. During my clerkship psychiatry rotation, my staff person asked if I'd ever considered it as a career, and I answered politely that it would be a great choice, but in fact I had never really given it much thought. It would take a few more years for me to decide to pursue psychiatry. The science of medicine is at its best when artfully applied; I think I saw that as being especially true in this field, and suspect that influenced my decision.

A typical day in my life: I have a broad, rural practice. My work includes serving our inpatient unit and outpatient department, providing consults to medical units, supporting our excellent crisis and ER workers across the zone, and consulting with the dedicated family and ER physicians of the Northern Zone. I am lucky to work with engaged, collaborative clinicians, so we frequently discuss cases and see patients together. I attend to my duties as chief and medical education director each day. I spend more time than I would like trying to keep on top of my email and voicemail inboxes. I have been actively recruiting doctors to our area and am happy to note that we have seen some success. We do still have vacancies though, so if you or someone you know is looking to come work with an awesome team in a beautiful part of this great province, please be in touch!

The most satisfying thing about my current role: Patient care. Hands down. Teaching is a close second. I still love practicing medicine, and for that I am grateful beyond measure.

What I wish I could change about

it: I have fantastic colleagues to work with – I just wish we had a few more of them! As for provincial system changes, there are many people working diligently to improve services and how they are delivered throughout Nova Scotia. Change is happening. It's good change, and it's exciting!

The piece of advice I would offer to someone starting their career in mental health:

I know I certainly needed lots of advice when I started – though I probably wouldn't have taken any of it! If I needed to choose one piece of advice to give, I would speak to the importance of relationships: with family, friends, patients, colleagues. Positive relationships built on respect, trust and understanding are vital to the work we do. And they are vital to our own well-being.

In an ideal world, the next five

years look like: Over the next few years Nova Scotia will see continued improvement in healthcare, including, if not especially, mental health and addictions. Northern Zone is an excellent place to live and to work; we will continue to recruit excellent, collaborative doctors who are committed to providing full range psychiatric service to rural Nova Scotians. In my ideal world, every area of Nova Scotia will have the personnel and material resources to provide Nova Scotians the care they deserve.



NEWS FROM THE DEPARTMENT

Dr. Abraham Rudnick appointed vice-chair of the RAC at the Faculty of Medicine at Dalhousie

Dr. Abraham Rudnick has been chosen as the vice-chair of the Research Advisory Committee (RAC) at the Faculty of Medicine at Dalhousie University. The RAC proactively and reactively discusses

research policy and related issues of the Faculty of Medicine and makes related recommendations to the Faculty of Medicine executive. Dr. Rudnick's duties will include co-leading the RAC with the chair of the RAC and the associate dean of research at the Faculty of Medicine. He looks forward to the opportunity to help guide research strategic

directions of the Faculty of Medicine at Dalhousie University based on cognitive and moral values such, as the search for truth and social justice, respectively. His term will be one year, after which he will become the chair of the RAC for an additional year.

Dr. Alexa Bagnell featured on Beyond Research podcast

The Chief of Psychiatry at the IWK and head of child and adolescent psychiatry, **Dr. Alexa Bagnell**, was recently featured on a podcast produced by Research Nova Scotia. *Beyond Research* looks deeper into research and shows how important discoveries across disciplines help

shape our lives. In this episode Dr. Bagnell shared her insights on mental health throughout the pandemic and a growing area of research that supports children and youth during this difficult time, the power of play. Listen to the podcast by visiting <https://researchns.ca/season-2-episode-3-the-power-of-play/>.



Faculty member Dr. Mary Lynch launches plant-based meal replacement drink

Dr. Mary Lynch has partnered with Gregg Curwin to launch a plant-based meal replacement called *Sperry* through their company Novagevity. The idea was born from the consultations with hospital dieticians who indicated a need for a meal replacement for those who are unable to tolerate or choose not to consume milk-based proteins. This sparked Dr. Lynch's interest in nutrition and she began to investigate what her


patients were eating, and what they were being fed while in hospital and found that in some cases it could be making their situation worse. She began working with Mr. Curwin two years ago on the development of the plant-based, gluten free and organic product. *Sperry* will be available in chocolate and vanilla-maple flavour and will soon be found in pharmacies, grocery stores and health food stores in Atlantic Canada. In the meantime, the product can be pre-ordered at <https://sperry.ca/>.

To learn more about Sperry and Dr. Lynch's journey to its development visit: <https://www.saltwire.com/atlantic-canada/business/halifax-company-launches-meal-replacement-drink-thats-completely-plant-based-100623019/#.YVHZgEJJC34.twitter>.

Addictions Medicine Consult Service (AMCS) offers same-day call-back service to NS physicians

Nova Scotia Health (NSH) is now offering telephone advice at the point of care to community pharmacists, physicians and nurse practitioners in the province who have questions about prescription or service navigation for patients with addictive disorders, or who are looking for advice on the management of addictive disorders using a holistic approach. AMCS provides verbal evidence-informed clinical advice and guidance to diagnose and manage substance use disorders in adults, children and adolescents, and advice on how to manage medications related to substance use.

Created in the summer of 2019, the program is the brainchild of Dr. Sam Hickox, chief officer of the Office of Mental Health and Addictions, in consultation with Dr. David Martell, the provincial lead for addictions in the NSH Mental Health and Addictions Program. Discussions for this service began many years ago as addiction medicine clinicians reflected on the frequency with which they received calls from colleagues regarding the clinical management of addictive disorders. A needs assessment from frontline providers indicated that this support was needed and should be given priority. "We saw other provinces with telephone consult services functioning well," says Dr. Martell. "Ontario and BC stood out." They also saw NSH had been developing telephone support for providers in other departments, most notably general internal medicine, and that



ADDICTIONS MEDICINE CONSULT SERVICE (AMCS)

Nova Scotia Health - Mental Health and Addictions Program

Addictions Medicine Consult Service (AMCS) provides rapid Addictions Medicine consultant advice to community pharmacists as well as physicians and nurse practitioners working in Mental Health and Addictions (including Correctional Health Services), Primary Care, Emergency Departments, Long Term Care, and Acute Care in Nova Scotia.

AMCS is available **Monday to Friday** from **8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.**


Voicemail only evenings, weekends, and holidays.

AMCS provides verbal evidence-informed **clinical advice** and **guidance** to:

- Diagnose and manage substance use disorders in adults, adolescents, and children; and
- Manage medications related to substance use.

Call AMCS toll-free at:
1-855-970-0234

To learn more about our Mental Health and Addictions Program visit:
MHAhelpns.ca



they had an interest in expanding this model. Dr. Hickcox, who held the provincial lead position prior to Dr. Martell, proposed the formation of an AMCS to the provincial leadership team and the idea was well received and supported.

Working with consultants Drs. Tiffany O'Donnell and Leah Genge, and Dr. Martell, Dr. Hickcox provided leadership and supported the team in the development of the service. He also is a backup for the service when needed. Lynne Lowe (senior policy analyst), Lynne MacNeil (policy analyst) and Brian McLeod (policy consultant) have also provided support and assisted in its development.

"Each of us find the incoming calls fascinating, partly because they uncover gaps in our system and in our knowledge as providers, but also because they present us with cases that have layers of complexity to sort through," says Dr. Martell. "I think each of us likes the challenge and to know that we can help guide our colleagues to improved outcomes for

the patients they serve." Often it is simply reassurance that the physician, nurse practitioner or pharmacist is using the right approach, or that there is no right answer. Dr. Martell says part of what he enjoys most is the interaction with colleagues. "I like that we are all trying to do this work as best we can together. It helps me stay connected to the practice community."

AMCS is available 8:30am-4:30pm Monday to Friday, with a voicemail option evenings, weekends, and holidays. To utilize this service call 1-855-970-0234.

A landmark project on personalized treatment for depression launching at Dalhousie

Major depressive disorder, commonly known as depression, is the mental disorder most responsible for disability and cost in Canada and worldwide. Dozens of treatments for depression exist, but each person with depression is different. Recently, Canadian Biomarker Integration Network in Depression (CAN-BIND) researchers, including

Dr. Rudolf Uher at Dalhousie, have found that people who completely lose interest and markedly reduce activity when depressed require an addition to antidepressants to help them recover. Brain activity measured with electroencephalography adds additional information. Now, for the first time, CAN-BIND researchers will test whether allocating treatment according to symptoms and brain activity actually improves the outcomes of depression. The new project will be known as OPTIMUM-D, which stands for Optimized Predictive

Treatment in Medications for Unipolar Major Depression. Nova Scotia Health (in collaboration with Dalhousie) will be one of eight Canadian sites enrolling participants. As part of OPTIMUM-D, over 400 adults will receive high quality treatment for depression and provide information that will help improve outcomes for many others.

For more information, you can view the CAN-BIND website (www.canbind.ca), or Contact the Nova Scotia CAN-BIND team at 902-473-5313.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NS rTMS clinic accepting patients

Nova Scotia Health's Repetitive Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (rTMS) clinic located at the Nova Scotia Hospital is accepting new patient referrals.

rTMS involves sending short, magnetic pulses to targeted areas in the brain to change neuronal activity, that can ease depression symptoms and help improve mood with little or no discomfort.

During treatments, the patient is seated comfortably and remains awake. They can return to normal, daily activities immediately following treatment, as no medication or anesthesia is required.

A typical treatment course is approximately four to six weeks, with treatment sessions ranging between five and 40 minutes, five days a week.

New patients must be referred to a psychiatrist through their family



The rTMS clinic at the Nova Scotia Hospital.

physician. The family physician can make a referral to MHA Central Intake at 1-855-922-1122 from there, a psychiatrist will then meet with the patient to determine if this is the right

course of treatment.

For more information on rTMS visit <http://www.nshealth.ca/sites/nshealth.ca/files/patientinformation/1975.pdf>

STAFF & FACULTY CHANGES

Arrivals

Nicole Bonn joined the department as the education and research coordinator in the Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry effective Oct. 12, 2021. Nicole will be working at the IWK and can be reached at Nicole.bonn@iwk.nshealth.ca or by phone at 902-470-8376.

Dr. Nicole Herschenhous rejoined the department as an assistant professor effective Sept. 7, 2021. Dr. Herschenhous will be working in the Reproductive Mental Health Unit at the IWK. She can be reached at nicolel.herschenhous@iwk.nshealth.ca or 902-470-8098.

AWARDS & HONOURS

Dr. Christine Chambers inducted into Canadian Academy of Health Sciences

Dr. Christine Chambers, who is cross-appointed in the Departments of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience, and Pediatrics, joins Dr. Gail Tomblin Murphy as one of two Dalhousie researchers who have recently been inducted as fellows into the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences (CAHS), one of the highest honours for members of the country's health sciences community. Dr. Chambers is recognized for her significant contributions to health policy and the promotion of health science.

Dr. Chambers is a clinical psychologist, a Canada Research Chair (Tier 1) in Children's Pain, and the scientific director of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research's Institute of Human Development, Child and Youth Health. She is also the director and creator of Solutions for Kids in Pain, a national knowledge mobilization network based here at Dalhousie and aims to improve the assessment and management of children's pain. She has made a global impact on children's pain management, with research influencing practice and policy and is most deserving of this honour. To learn more about her

incredible work please visit: https://www.dal.ca/news/2021/09/14/two-dalhousie-researchers-inducted-into-prestigious-canadian-aca.html?utm_source=Today@Dal&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=dalnews.

THE HEAVY HELPERS: COMMUNITY GROUPS MAKING A DIFFERENCE



HEALTHY MINDS COOPERATIVE

Who they are.

Healthy Minds Cooperative is a charitable, non-profit organization that is peer-led and member driven, whose mandate is to improve the lives of those with mental illness and addiction. Services are offered free to all who require them.

How they help.

They focus on advocating for better access to mental health services; public education about mental illness; reducing stigma towards mental illness; peer support and advocacy for consumers and their families; more participation in the decision-making around mental health services; wellness workshops; and connecting to existing community services.

Want to make a difference?

Healthy Minds Cooperative offers several ways you can get involved:

- Become a member
- Become a board member
- Donate

To learn more about Healthy Minds Cooperative and how you can contribute to their excellent programs please visit <https://www.healthyminds.ca/get-involved>.

HUMANITIES CORNER



Book Club

The first meeting of the Psychiatry Department Book Club for the 2021-22 year kicked off on October 21 with an online discussion of *The Innocents*. This haunting and powerful novel by acclaimed Newfoundland writer Michael Crummey skillfully tells the story of two siblings orphaned in a remote outpost — an apt choice for this year’s book club theme of isolation. If you are interested in attending future book club meetings (possibly in person if pandemic conditions allow) or have suggestions for a great read, please contact **Drs. 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



Miltoniopsis Cataline de Alvarado (Photo by Dr. Malgorzata Rajda).

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 Jan. 4, 2022, with the deadline for submissions to be Dec. 17 2021.

Please send all submissions to Kate Rogers: Kate.Rogers@nshealth.ca