

Department of Psychiatry HEADLINES

Dr. Allan Peterkin Visits Dalhousie

Submitted by: Dr. Lara Hazelton
Humanities Coordinator, Department of Psychiatry



Above: Dr. Allan Peterkin poses with Psychiatry Residents during his visit to Dalhousie.

Dalhousie University's Division of Medical Education and Department of Psychiatry co-hosted a visit from Dr. Allan Peterkin in April. An Associate Professor of Psychiatry and Family Medicine at the University of Toronto, Dr. Peterkin was recently appointed the Head of the Narrative and Healthcare Humanities Program, and is based at Mount Sinai Hospital.

The Division of Medical Education hosted a presentation entitled "Surviving and Thriving in a Medical Life" and also offered a session entitled "Read, Write, Reflect: A Narrative Medicine Workshop".

Dr. Peterkin presented at the Department of Psychiatry Grand Rounds on April 28 offering an interactive session on "A Humanities Toolkit: Using Film, Fiction and Art to Teach Psychiatry". He also made time to meet with Psychiatry residents for a lunch and further discussion of the role humanities plays in their work.

Dr. Peterkin was well received at Grand Rounds and one attendee said "Dr. Peterkin was great in both shepherding the discussion and making his own interesting comments. I particularly enjoyed the diversity and quality of the input that came out of the

group in reaction to the 'stimuli'. That was a lot of fun and very educational."

Dr. Peterkin is an international leader in Narrative and Healthcare Humanities, publishing and presenting widely on the interface of humanities, medicine, and healthcare professionalism. One of his several textbooks, "Staying Human during Residency Training" is now in its fourth edition and is widely read and recommended. Dr. Peterkin is also a founding Editor of *Ars Medica: A Journal of Medicine, the Arts and Humanities*, which has been the recipient of two grants from the Canada Council for the Arts.

Message from the Head

Dr. Nick Delva

The Medical Humanities are certainly alive and well at Dalhousie University! Dr. Allan Peterkin's recent visit, featured on the front page and co-hosted by the Department of Psychiatry and the Dalhousie Faculty of Medicine Division of Medical Education, was a success: his talks and interactive sessions were stimulating and very well received. I'd like to thank our Departmental Medical Humanities Coordinator, **Dr. Lara Hazelton**, for all of her efforts in providing an excellent range of educational offerings for our undergraduate and postgraduate students.

Congratulations to our residents on passing this spring's Royal College Fellowship examinations, to **Dr. Margaret Rajda**, our Director of Postgraduate Education, and to all of the teachers in our Department. I'd like to express my thanks also to **Ms. Norma Thompson**, Postgraduate Coordinator, who works tirelessly to make all of the many arrangements required for a successful program, and to **Ms. Annette Cossar**, Education Administrator, who oversees the administration of all of our educational programs.

Congratulations also to **Dr. Cheryl Murphy**, who will assume the position of Director of Undergraduate Education at the beginning of 2011. Dr. Murphy is very well prepared to take on this role. She joined the Department of Psychiatry in 2005 with a clear commitment to medical education, and completed a Masters Degree in Medical

Education, Curriculum Studies (medical concentration) in the spring of 2007. Dr. Murphy has been the Unit Chair for the Psychiatry clerkship since 2005, and has also contributed in other ways to the undergraduate curriculum. I would like once again to thank Dr. Hazelton for assuming the interim directorship of the undergraduate education program during a busy and demanding time in the history of the Faculty of Medicine, and to all of the other members of the Department who have been involved in curriculum renewal.

We are very happy to welcome three new individuals to the Department, **Ms. Suzanne Decker**, Executive Assistant to the Department Head, **Ms. Amy MacKay**, Administrative Assistant to the Sun Life Financial Chair in Adolescent Mental Health, and **Ms. Michelle Patenaude**, Administrator, Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry.

The reader will enjoy the article on **Dr. David Gardner**, our resident psychopharmacologist, who has presented some very interesting and trenchant reviews lately on the issue of the process of drug approval in the US and Canada. I am looking forward to reading his new textbook: *Antipsychotics and Their Side Effects*, co-authored by **Dr. Michael Teehan**. Also of interest to the reader will be the most impressive work undertaken to reduce the incidence of suicide in Guyana, one of the projects undertaken by our International Section under the leadership of **Dr. Sonia Chehil**, and the



ongoing work of **Dr. Stan Kutcher**, the Sun Life Financial Chair in Adolescent Mental Health, and his team.

With reference to the picture and caption on page 9 of this issue, I hope that over the coming months and years, the Department of Psychiatry will continue to dribble with the best of the Departments of Psychiatry in Canada! We are encouraged by the government's promise of a mental health strategy for Nova Scotia, and we look forward to being active partners in creating and maintaining a high-quality and accessible system of mental healthcare that will serve Nova Scotians in all parts of the province, and support the highest standards of education and research.

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Department of Psychiatry HEADLINES

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Research Section

Submitted by: Jennifer MacDonnell
Research Administrative Assistant

10 Questions for a Dalhousie Psychiatry Researcher

This issue profiles Dalhousie Psychiatry researcher **Dr. David Gardner**. "10 Questions..." is a recurring article in the Research Section of *Headlines*. If you are interested in being profiled in an upcoming publication, please contact **Ms. Jennifer MacDonnell** at Jennifer.MacDonnell@cdha.nshealth.ca.

1. *Where were you born?* I was born in Scotland's Kingdom of Fife and lived in the picturesque fishing town of Anstruther. We emigrated to Canada when I was six landing in Kingston, Ontario. As an adult I lived in Toronto and Vancouver before putting down roots in Halifax.

2. *Why did you want to come to Dalhousie University?* I have worked with **Dr. Stan Kutcher** since 1989, when we were both at Sunnybrook Hospital in Toronto. When he was transitioning to Dalhousie in 1995, he invited me to join him as a faculty member with the Department of Psychiatry. While this was an opportunity I could not refuse, it was one I had to delay as I had just accepted a graduate position at UBC. So, in 1997 I arrived in Halifax ready and eager to begin my tenure with the Department.

3. *What is your educational background?* I received a BSc in Pharmacy (U of T) and completed a hospital pharmacy residency at Sunnybrook Hospital. After a few years of working as a pharmacist in psychiatry I sought out and completed a mini-sabbatical in psychopharmacology at Harvard's McLean Hospital near Boston where I was mentored by Dr. Ross Baldessarini. This incredible and career shaping experience catapulted me back into academia. I completed my Doctor of Pharmacy degree (UBC) in 1997 and broadened my horizons by completing an MSc in Community Health and Epidemiology at Dalhousie in 2003.

4. *What are your current research interests?* I've always had difficulty with being a narrowly focused researcher. The safe and effective use of psychotropics underlies most of my research, but this covers a lot of ground. The projects listed below will give you a flavour of my interests. I am also

interested in closing the knowledge-to-action gap between research and clinical practice.

5. *What research projects are you currently participating in?* A few notable projects include a mixed methods investigation evaluating the use of antipsychotics in youth in Nova Scotia, measuring the effectiveness of metformin for weight gain with antipsychotics in early psychosis, determining the effect of the Health PACT (an illustrative discussion tool) on antidepressant adherence and clinical outcomes, and estimating dosing bias in clinical trials. The latter is a follow up investigation to our international antipsychotic dosing study recently published in the *American Journal of Psychiatry* (June 2010). I'm also looking forward to the fall publication of *Antipsychotics and Their Side Effects*, a book authored by **Dr. Michael Teehan** and myself that supports judicious monitoring of patients taking antipsychotics.



Dr. David Gardner

6. *Why did you choose psychiatry as a career?* Research, teaching, and clinical work are all important components of my position. Removing any one of them would negatively affect my ability to do the others. Research in mental health is inspiring and rewarding. I feel very fortunate to have this opportunity and hope that my research efforts help to improve mental health care and the lives of people with mental illnesses.

7. *What was your second career choice?* When my son asks me what I want to be when I grow up... I still say international footballer.

8. *What experience best prepared you for your job?* While there is no single experience to speak of, my time at McLean Hospital profoundly influenced me serving as the impetus behind my career change to a more academic oriented track.

9. *Who was and is your mentor?* I feel extremely fortunate in this way. Drs. Stan Kutcher and Ross Baldessarini have been my long time mentors.

10. *What do you consider the biggest challenge facing researchers today?* This is a big question with numerous possible responses. In concrete day-to-day terms, participant recruitment into research protocols has repeatedly proven to be remarkably challenging. Funding is always a challenge. To that end we are very fortunate to have the Department of Psychiatry and Nova Scotia Health Research Fund opportunities. A final challenge, for the research that interests me, is the limited health databases in Nova Scotia. I truly envy the comprehensive, population-based, linked health databases of BC and the Scandinavian countries.

Research Day

This year's event is scheduled for Thursday, October 14 at the Lord Nelson Hotel. Now in its 20th year, Psychiatry Research Day promotes student involvement in research and showcases the Department's diverse expertise to our university and local communities. This year we will be giving presentation awards in the following categories:

- undergraduate;
- graduate;
- resident;
- junior faculty; and
- psychiatry staff.

We are pleased to announce that this year's keynote speaker will be



Dr. Robin Murray

Dr. Robin Murray, Professor of Psychiatry, Institute of Psychiatry at the Maudsley, Kings College, University of London. Dr. Murray is arguably one of the most prolific and influential psychiatrists of this generation. He is co-editor of *Psychological Medicine* and is author of hundreds of research articles in international peer-reviewed journals. He has also written over 20 books and many book chapters. According to the Web of Science (ISI), Dr. Murray is one of the most frequently cited psychiatrists in the world outside the USA. His research focuses on finding the causes of schizophrenia and bipolar disorder, and developing better treatments for these disorders. He is perhaps best known for helping to establish the neurodevelopmental hypothesis of schizophrenia and for environmental risk factors for schizophrenia such as obstetric events and cannabis use. Dr. Murray also runs the National Psychosis Unit at Bethlem Royal Hospital.

If you are interested in presenting at this year's Psychiatry Research Day, please submit your abstract using the registration form found at <http://psychiatry.medicine.dal.ca/research/researchday.htm> and forward it to **Ms. Jennifer MacDonnell** at

Jennifer.MacDonnell@cdha.nshealth.ca before July 30, 2010.

Research Expo

Research Expo is an informal, social event to highlight the diverse research expertise available to residents in the Department of Psychiatry and promote resident involvement in research. This year, the Expo will be spilling into the hallways of the Department of Psychiatry's 8th floor offices. Faculty members with a recent poster of research activities are encouraged to come and present. It's a great opportunity to get to know our residents and speak to them about research opportunities in the Department. Pizza and drinks will be served.

Date: Wednesday, June 23, 2010

Time: 4:00pm – 5:30pm

Location: 8th Floor, Abbie J. Lane Building

Funding Deadline

The next deadline for the Psychiatry Research Fund grant competition is October 1, 2010. For information and the application, please visit <http://psychiatry.medicine.dal.ca/Research/dgaf.htm> or contact **Ms. Jennifer MacDonnell** at Jennifer.MacDonnell@cdha.nshealth.ca.

Education Section

Submitted by: Annette Cossar
Education Administrator

Undergraduate News

Curriculum renewal continues to dominate the undergraduate agenda. Eventually there will be significant changes taking place at all levels of training, but in the coming academic year, only the Med I curriculum will be revised. This fall also sees the opening of the Saint John campus, which will be welcoming Med I students for the first time.

One of the biggest tasks for our Department involves updating the psychiatry component of the new Neurosciences unit (formerly Brain

and Behaviour). Many thanks to the following faculty members who have contributed new or updated cases for Neurosciences: **Drs. Cheryl Murphy, Mark Bosma, David Gardner, Alexa Bagnell, Heather Milliken, Abigail Ortiz-Dominguez, Martin Alda, Claire O'Donovan, Shannon MacDonald, and Curt Peters.** As well, **Drs. Joseph Sadek, Zenovia Ursuliak, and Allan Abbass** have been busy developing cases for other units.

With the new curriculum comes changes in tutor requirements, and this

fall our Department is being asked to provide an increased number of faculty to act as Case-Based Learning tutors. Tutors are needed for new Med I units, as well as for the last cohort in Med II Brain and Behaviour (neurology and psychiatry). There are also exciting new opportunities to tutor in the Professional Competencies and Clinical Skills Units. Tutorial sessions take place in the Tupper Building and time commitments vary. In the new curriculum there will be no Med I patient-doctor sessions, therefore faculty who previously

participated in that teaching will want to check out the new curriculum to see how they can continue to contribute to undergraduate teaching. More information regarding teaching opportunities will be distributed in time for the upcoming Individual Practice Profile (IPP) meetings. Please contact **Ms. Martine McKay** or **Dr. Lara Hazelton** if you are interested in tutoring.

The Clerkship years will also begin in their usual manner in September. Starting this year there was a formative OSCE in the traditional format in March and there will be a summative comprehensive OSCE in September. Stations for this exam are currently being chosen and rewritten. This exam is scheduled to run on September 16 and 17 and our Department will be required to have seven examiners over the two days. There will be an orientation to the exam and to the

individual stations and the school is requesting that examiners agree to participate for the full day. Unlike the current exam, examiners will not be examining in their field of expertise, making participation in the orientation sessions crucial for standardization. An e-mail request for examiners will follow shortly and your participation is very much appreciated.

At this time, the Director of Education, **Dr. Allan Abbass** would like you to join him in congratulating **Dr. Cheryl Murphy**, the successful applicant for the position of Director of Undergraduate Psychiatric Education. Dr. Murphy is a dedicated educator who achieved her Masters in Education during her fellowship here at Dalhousie. She has been the Clerkship Coordinator and will continue in this position for the time being. She, along with other UME educators, has contributed to

the outstanding results on national examinations by our undergraduates.

While Cheryl is on maternity leave we are very pleased and fortunate to have another dedicated educator to carry out the duties represented in this post. Dr. Lara Hazelton will serve as the interim Director at this crucial time in developing the future of Undergraduate Medical Education. Thanks to the UME Committee and those who have stepped forward on the many curriculum working groups. It's important to realize this work will shape psychiatric education for the foreseeable future.

On behalf of the Department, we also wish to take this time to thank **Dr. Allan Cook** for his excellent UME leadership over the past several years. It was great to work with him and we wish him all the best in his new path with Université de Sherbrooke.

Postgraduate News

This is an exciting time of year for the Education Section. The trees are budding, the spring bulbs are coming up, and all of our PGY-5s have passed their Royal College Examinations! Congratulations to **Drs. Sherry James, Heizer Marval, Christa Peters, Maryna Pogosyan, and Martina Ruzickova**. The End-of-Year Party to celebrate these accomplishments, fellowship training completion, and award winners will take place a little later this year. As our graduates have varying end of training dates, we will coordinate the social event in August to try and accommodate the majority of similar end dates. This arrangement will also allow the PGME Office to prepare the formal graduation certificates.

There is a curriculum review underway in the Postgraduate Program to have a look at the current state of affairs of the multi-level didactic teaching schedule as it has existed and plan for some progressive changes in areas that are required to follow Royal College standards. There will be thought given to providing our trainees innovative delivery methods to promote modern technology and time-saving alternatives. We value our faculty and the efforts they provide in teaching all of the trainees. We would like to alleviate some of the travel and in some instances the preparation time that is required for teaching material.

The fellowship training for two physicians will be drawing to a finish. **Dr. Abigail Ortiz-Dominguez** will be completing her two-year fellowship in Mood Disorders with **Dr. Martin Alda** on June 30. **Dr. Chris Bryniak** will complete his one-year term with the East Coast Forensic Hospital with **Dr. Scott Theriault** and his group at the end of August. We would like to thank both Abigail and Chris for their contributions to their respective training programs and the clinical care they have provided.

Continuing Education Activities

Clinical Academic Rounds at the QEII

June 2: Dan Steeves, Addiction Services
June 16: Dr. Ravinder Bains

Clinical Academic Rounds at the IWK: to be announced

June 2 and June 16

Clinical Academic Rounds at the NSH: to be announced

June 4 and June 11

Upcoming Workshops:

R.O. Jones Memorial Lecture

There has been a last minute and unfortunate change to the planned R.O. Jones Memorial Lecturer. Dr. Richard

Hermann (Tufts University) will be unable to join us this year as hoped, however, we will try to coordinate a future visit.

As a result, we are investigating other speaker possibilities. We will communicate further details once we have confirmation. Stay tuned. The R.O. Jones Memorial Lecture remains scheduled for Wednesday, June 9, 2010. The R.O. Jones Lecturer is also a presenter at the Atlantic Provinces Psychiatric Association (APPA) annual meeting. The 2010 Meeting will be held June 10–12 in St. John's, NL. For further details on the meeting, please contact Ms. Donna Fraser at dfraser@eastlink.ca.

International Psychiatry Section

The Dalhousie/Guyana Partnership: Establishing a National Crisis Hotline in Guyana

Submitted by: Dr. Sonia Chehil
Director, International Psychiatry

There were 946 reported suicide deaths in Guyana from 2003–2007, translating to an average of 189 deaths per year and a national suicide rate of 25 per 100,000 persons, over two times the global average.

The highest suicide rates affect the country's most productive population — persons aged 30 to 35 years. Close to eighty percent (76%) of all suicide deaths in Guyana are male. Sixty percent of suicide deaths in Guyana are attributable to pesticide poisoning. Twenty-six percent are attributable to hanging or suffocation. Eighty percent of all suicide deaths in Guyana occur within the country's largest ethnic group — persons of East Indian descent — who comprise 43.5 percent of the country's population. The vast majority of suicide deaths in Guyana are believed to be impulsive acts committed in the context of interpersonal or psychosocial crisis.

These statistics highlight the need to develop and implement effective suicide prevention strategies in Guyana. Unfortunately there are few well conducted studies on interventions for suicide prevention that have demonstrated efficacy in reducing suicide rates internationally. With the exception of means restriction, gatekeeper training, and physician education in depression recognition and treatment, there is little empirical data to support the effectiveness of any suicide prevention intervention in either developed or developing countries (Mann et al, 2005). Delaying the development and implementation of interventions for suicide prevention until evidence of efficacy and proof of effectiveness of population-based approaches are available is not ethically justifiable. Particularly when many of the interventions that may reduce the

morbidity and mortality associated with suicide behaviours are community-based interventions that meet broader public mental health needs.

The association between stressful life events and suicidality is particularly relevant to jurisdictions like Guyana, where pesticide ingestion is the traditional method of choice and where the vast majority of suicides are believed to be impulsive actions. In the midst of a crisis, when problem solving and rational thought is impaired, pesticide ingestion as an impulsive action is unforgiving and uncharitable to the rational second thought, and without immediate medical intervention it is nearly always fatal.

The suicide process, the interval between ideation and action, is often short — from minutes to hours. Given the small window in which to intervene, interventions to delay or abort the progression of a suicidal process must involve mechanisms that are immediately and widely available, affordable, and acceptable to persons at risk for suicide in the throes of a crisis. The establishment of a 24 hour crisis hotline in a jurisdiction in which cell phones are highly accessible may be one such promising approach.

Help lines have been in existence for decades. Their utility as a means to de-escalate and support persons in crisis has been strongly supported and justified in theory. However, empirical evidence for the usefulness and effectiveness of help lines in reducing population suicide rates has not been demonstrated to date. Despite the lack of empirical evidence for the efficacy of hotlines in reducing suicide rates there is evidence for the utility of the hotline service to interrupt the suicide process (Mishara et al, 2007). Placing a call to a hotline service may provide the window of opportunity needed to save a life.

In January 2010, the Ministry of Health in Guyana committed to the establishment of a National Crisis Hotline. The Crisis Hotline will provide an avenue for support to persons at risk of committing suicide. The Crisis Hotline will be designed to promote a sense of safety and calming, to provide practical assistance, to facilitate connection with social supports, to provide information on coping and wellness, to link with available collaborative support services, and to promote hope.

In May 2010, Anjena Gandham and Natasha Gandham, two volunteers from the CHIMO Crisis Services in Vancouver, joined the Dalhousie/Guyana Ministry of Health team to deliver a “training of trainers” workshop in crisis hotline counselling to 12 staff members within the Mental Health Unit, Adolescent Health Unit, and Minister's Secretariat. They also assisted in the development of guidelines, policies, procedures, as well as an M&E and continuous quality improvement strategy for the Crisis Hotline.



Crisis Hotline Team debriefing meeting with Guyana's Minister of Health, Dr. Leslie Ramsammy

IPS Studentship in Guyana – Building a Crisis Hotline

Anjena Gandham and Natasha Gandham, volunteers from CHIMO Crisis Services in Vancouver

Dr. Sonia Chehil provided us with the amazing opportunity to travel to Guyana and work with her and the Ministry of Health team to develop the country's first crisis hotline as part of a studentship experience with the International Psychiatry Section (IPS), Dalhousie University. Both of us have worked at the crisis hotline in Richmond, BC for years, and using this experience, we wanted to work with IPS and the Ministry to develop a similar mandate and similar policies that would be applicable to Guyana. This experience was truly memorable for us and is something that we will cherish for the rest of our lives.

Upon landing in Georgetown, we didn't know what to expect. Both of us had never travelled outside of North America before and had no idea what would be awaiting us outside the plane doors. Warm, dense air and a bevy of sights, sounds, and smells that were completely foreign immediately greeted us. Driving through the sparse land, we were taken aback by our

surroundings and the stark difference of the environment to our big city of Vancouver. We were constantly pointing out things we had never seen before: dogs in the middle of the road, cows and goats aimlessly wandering on the side streets, the lack of big buildings, and children playing bare foot near the road. However, the culture shock soon wore off and we were off to work, busy with our task at hand.

Working with the Ministry of Health team, we began to establish the policies and procedures of Guyana's first suicide hotline. Everything from the name of the hotline to the volunteer commitment was under discussion, and following this we began an intensive training program for the crisis line volunteers. Although the training itself is over, we will be in continual contact with the volunteers at the crisis line as well as the Ministry of Health to work on this developing mission until the crisis line opens in a few months time.

In addition to our crisis line initiative, we were also given the amazing opportunity of visiting two local schools and delivering presentations on teen relationship abuse prevention. This

was a truly rewarding experience as we engaged in a forum with the students regarding why they felt that relationships were a crucial part of adolescence. Upon completion of these presentations, we left the Ministry of Health with detailed materials that could be used to train volunteers so that they too can deliver these presentations in our absence.

Our trip to Guyana was one that will remain with us for our entire lives. We experienced openness and enthusiasm to learn, to teach, and to share that we don't often experience at home. We realized too that we have much to learn about "communityship" and resilience from the many people we were privileged to meet. We not only learned so much about another culture, but we also learned how fortunate we are to live in Canada and to appreciate the things that we so often take for granted, and perhaps this was the greatest lesson learned from our trip. We will be continually working on the crisis line initiative until it is fully operational and we hope to go back to Guyana to track this progress in the coming months.



Left: Anjena and Natasha Gandham

Below: Guyanese students attend a presentation from IPS volunteers



Sun Life Financial Chair in Adolescent Mental Health

Submitted by: Dr. Stan Kutcher
Sun Life Financial Chair in Adolescent Mental Health

It's been a busy few months in the group with many projects on the go as well as some new additions to the team.

Our Mental Health and High School Curriculum Guide is just finishing its first comprehensive school pilot with evaluations being tallied as we speak. The team is working on developing a set of supplementary online tools with Taking It Global that will enable teachers to engage their students virtually. The Curriculum is currently being piloted in schools in Ontario, British Columbia, and Nova Scotia. The team will be officially launching the guide in partnership with the Canadian Mental Health Association early in the 2010 school year.

The team hosted a Provincial School Mental Health summit in December which initiated a lot of discussion from the attendee Nova Scotia stakeholders (representatives from the Ministries of Health, Education, Health Promotion, Justice, all provincial school boards, and healthcare centres) around the development of a School Mental Health Framework. From the session 60 members representing these groups

have stepped forward to take on roles on working and advisory groups for this initiative.

Jessica Wishart has been instrumental in engaging and growing our Youth Advisory Council. The council is comprised of more than 25 youth ages 12–30 from a wide variety of backgrounds and experiences. Many of the members have a close relationship with mental illness, while other members simply want to help spread knowledge and information. The group has been working on assisting in the shaping and development of the EverGreen Child and Youth Mental Health Framework as well as providing feedback and invoking discussion around much of the work of the chair team. Several of the members also attended a digital storytelling program early this year, in which they created a number of short films that we will launch shortly to the community.

Our commentary on Critical Stress Debriefing in Schools, published in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal* has created much discussion across Canada. Numerous media outlets conducted interviews with our

team members including the CBC, the Globe and Mail, and the Toronto Star. Individuals interested in obtaining a copy of the articles can contact: Christina.Carew@iwk.nshealth.ca with their request.

I'd like to welcome **Ms. Amy MacKay** as our new Administrative Assistant. She has only been here a short time but is already running the office like a pro. Amy can be reached at 902-470-6598. We are also happy to announce that Jessica Wishart has taken a full-time role in the department, and will be working on a number of youth engagement projects over the summer. She will be working closely with our two summer students, Mina Hasish and Courtney Heisler. Mina will be working on the Youth Engagement Project and Courtney will be working on the Evergreen Project.

We are also please to announce that Dr. Iliana Garcia-Ortega will be taking on a more permanent role with the team. And lastly, a part of our research team is moving on to bigger things — we're so proud of Magda Szumilas who is headed to Dalhousie Medical School this fall.

News & Announcements

Staff / Faculty Changes

Ms. Suzanne Decker has joined the Department as Executive Assistant to the Department Head, effective April 19. Suzanne is located on the 8th floor of the Abbie J. Lane Building and can be reached at 902-473-2470. If you have any inquiries related to the Head's Office or wish to book an appointment with Dr. Delva, please contact Suzanne.

Ms. Amy MacKay has joined the Department as Administrative Assistant to the Sun Life Financial Chair in Adolescent Mental Health, effective April 22. Amy is located at Maritime Psychiatry and can be reached at 902-470-6598.

Ms. Michelle Patenaude has joined the Department as Child and Adolescent Division Administrator, effective May 3. Michelle is located at Maritime Psychiatry and can be reached at 902-470-8988. Any inquiries related to Child and Adolescent Psychiatry administrative issues should be directed to Michelle.

Notices

Upcoming Elections

Faculty members are reminded that elections will be held in June for representation on the following Department of Psychiatry committees:

- Finance Committee — 3 positions
- Executive Committee — 1 position and 1 alternate
- Human Resources Committee — 1 position
- Promotion, Tenure and Reappointments Committee — 1 position

Further information including nomination forms will be circulated shortly. The term for all appointments is from July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2013.

Congratulations

Dr. David Gardner to Publish in American Journal of Psychiatry

Dr. David Gardner is the Principal Investigator of a study being published by the *American Journal of Psychiatry*. “International Consensus Study of Antipsychotic Dosing” was also selected as part of the AJP CME credits program and Dr. Gardner has been invited to join a panel at this year’s APA organized by the *American Journal of Psychiatry* to briefly present the study. Dr. Gardner and his colleagues from Dalhousie and Harvard have been supported in part by the Department of Psychiatry Research Fund. The study looks at antipsychotic dosing equivalencies and dosing recommendations and is scheduled to be printed in the June 2010 edition of the journal.

Basketball and Psychiatry

Dr. Allan Abbass was honoured to coach the Legends Game at the Premier Basketball League All Star weekend in Halifax. “Basketball and Psychiatry do have a few things in common,” said Abbass. “First it’s about elevating your teammates, challenging the defences placed in front of you, respecting your opponents, and every so often scoring a slam dunk”. Dr. Abbass, who played for Ottawa University, Dalhousie, and the New Brunswick All Stars, had a great time coaching eight coaches and two politicians. He was quoted on Eastlink TV saying “we need a few more basketballs out there: they’re all experts and no one is passing the ball!”



Dr. Allan Abbass, back row fourth from left, stands between NBA Draftee Mickey Fox and Premier Darrell Dexter. Fourth from the right in the back row is Michael “Sugar Ray” Richardson, a several time NBA All Star who Larry Bird once called “the best player he’d ever seen”.

News

Innovative Programming at Laing House Includes Auricular Acupuncture

Submitted by: Wendy Ackerley, Executive Director,
Laing House Foundation

Laing House started offering Auricular Acupuncture on site to interested youth members in 2009. This complementary therapy involves placing five needles in each ear for approximately 40 minutes. Judy Bell, Director of Programming, was the original staff member trained to perform acupuncture here at Laing House and continues to offer acupuncture to a growing group of youth members.

The free weekly sessions are held in a quiet, comfortable room and also involve guided relaxation. Laing House members have reported that acupuncture helps them have a more deep and relaxed sleep, better deal with stress, calm the mind, and have an overall sense of being better able to cope with their illness. This was a welcome addition to the holistic

approach to wellness that is employed at Laing House.

Laing House members have seen such positive results that they asked for an extra session each week. Through a generous partnership with Capital Health's Addiction Services, a second Laing House staff person was trained, at no cost, to perform Auricular Acupuncture. Adrienne Power, Community Support, is also now offering this well received therapy at Laing House.

This is just one example of how Laing House uses innovative programs and services to ensure that members have all of the support they need on their road to recovery. In conjunction with ongoing professional development training seminars organized by partners like **Dr. Sonia Chehil**, the Laing House team has an array of tools to assist youth living with mental illness.

To learn more about the innovative programming offered at Laing House for youth living with mental illness, visit www.lainghouse.org.

Humanities Corner

On May 7, the Department of Psychiatry and the Dalhousie Medical Humanities program co-sponsored a Kitchen Party fundraiser in support of the Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia. The event was held at the Tupper Building and featured music provided by medical students from the Maritime and Celtic Music Society. Thanks to Tom Muir (Med II) and **Dr. Jonathan Brake** (R3) who helped with the organization, and **Dr. Daniel Rasic** (R3) who helped out behind the bar.

The 2010 "Music—the Best Medicine" 10th Anniversary Music Gala will take place on Friday, May 28 at 7:30 pm. The concert, which takes place at Faith Tabernacle (Windsor at Summit) features the Dalhousie Medical School Chorale and performances by The Vocal Chords, The TestosterTONES, and the Maritime Celtic Music Society. Tickets are \$15, and can be purchased at the door or by calling 902-494-6574.