

# HEADLINES

News from the Department of Psychiatry at Dalhousie University

FEATURE ► COVER STORY

## Awarding clinical leadership

Dr. Ron Fraser receives CPA C.A. Roberts Award



Photo: Jay Shaw

Dr. Fraser (right) is presented with his award by the Chair of the CPA Professional Standards and Practice Committee, Dr. Doug Urness.

Congratulations to **Dr. Ron Fraser** who is the recipient of the 2015 C.A. Roberts Award for Clinical Leadership. This award, dedicated to the memory of Dr. C.A. Roberts, is presented annually to a psychiatrist-clinician who has contributed significantly to improving patient care. The recipients are outstanding CPA-member clinicians who have been instrumental in developing new treatment approaches, creative program design or administrative innovations, or who have been

recognized for consistently providing superior quality psychiatric care to patients.

In 2010 Dr. Fraser and his team went about developing a clinical model for addictions services at what was then Capital Health (CDHA). Their idea was to take interventions that had been scientifically proven to be effective and beneficial in the treatment of individuals suffering from addictive disorders and incorporate them into existing services. They also

wished to stop offering services that had been shown to be ineffective. Outcome data had revealed that the majority of patients were only attending a single session and then dropping out of treatment. The new model of care was based on brief intervention (BI), with the goal of trying to engage individuals in a minimum of six sessions. Dr. Fraser and many of the staff from addictions services worked to develop a Brief Intervention Manual that outlines a menu of individual sessions that

*[Continued on page 3]*

## in this issue

1

cpa award for dr. fraser

2

message from the head

4

research report

6

education report

9

child and adolescent report

10

report from the sun life chair

11

report from the janssen chair

12

report from primary mental  
healthcare education leader

13

meet a staff member

14

news and announcements

19

humanities corner

16

photo feature

This newsletter is published for the Department of Psychiatry at Dalhousie University.  
5909 Veterans' Memorial Lane,  
8th Floor, Abbie J. Lane Building  
Halifax, NS B3H 2E2

Editor: Dr. Aidan Stokes

Compilation, Layout, and Design:  
Kate Rogers

Submissions should be sent to:  
Kate.Rogers@nshealth.ca

## Message from the Head

Congratulations to **Dr. Ron Fraser** on receiving the C.A. Roberts Award for Clinical Leadership, a well-deserved honour! Dr. Fraser worked closely with the program directors, Mr. Trevor Briggs and Ms. Rachel Boehm, and later **Dr. Philip Mills** to achieve major positive change in the approach to the treatment of addictions in our health zone. Among other things, withdrawal management has been linked much more effectively with relapse prevention, making treatment for addictions more likely to be successful. In addition, some ineffective approaches were eliminated and replaced with evidence-based treatments. Dr. Fraser had to fight some battles to achieve this change, and his commitment to seeing that persons with addictions are treated with as much care and attention as other patients is an example to us all. Dr. Fraser is an exemplar of the difference that a single person can make, and of "medical citizenship."

The article on our Killam Chair in Mood Disorders, **Dr. Martin Alda**, describes a typical day in the life of a hard-working clinical scientist, who is at the same time a superb clinician and cutting-edge, world-renowned researcher. At the time of publication of this issue of Headlines, Dr. Alda has papers in press in the prestigious journals, *Lancet*, and *Nature*.

It is great to see that our departmental Research Day has just reached its 25th anniversary – see page 5 for a picture of a very nice birthday cake! Congratulations to the Research Day award winners.

We will soon be recruiting tutors for the 2016-2017 undergraduate medical



Dr. Nick Delva

program, and are also looking for interviewers for CaRMS in January. Please give some thought to your teaching engagement in the next academic year.

Congratulations also to **Drs. Alexa Bagnell, Sabina Abidi, Aidan Stokes, Pippa Moss, Ryan Wilson, Normand Carrey, and John Aspin** on their recent awards. We welcome to the department my new assistant, **Ms. Kate Porter; Mr. Leigh Thibideau**, who will be assuming the duties of postgraduate coordinator while **Ms. Carrie Wipp** is on maternity leave; and new faculty members, **Drs. Tolulope Alugo, Beverley Cassidy, Anthony Njoku, and Angela Cooper**. We are happy that **Ms. Megan Bellefontaine** will be staying on with us as research and education coordinator for child and adolescent psychiatry.

We will soon bid farewell to **Dr. Jerry Gray**, who has accepted the position of Chief of Psychiatry for the new Western Zone of the Nova Scotia Health Authority. Dr. Gray has contributed immensely to our provision of child and adolescent psychiatry services, having been the director of inpatient care at the IWK. He will remain a member of the university department and we will look forward to his continued participation as an educator, clinician and administrator.

## CPA Award *continued from page 1*

both the therapist and patient could look at to find the most clinically relevant topics that would be of most assistance for the patient.

For many people, six intensive sessions focused on their addiction may well be sufficient, but for those who needed further treatment, Dr. Fraser and his team developed group therapy based on structured relapse prevention (SRP), an evidence-based therapy combining principles of motivational interviewing and cognitive behavioural therapy.

Dr. Fraser and his team also focused on incorporating multidisciplinary care into clinical programming at CDHA. They worked to integrate social work and recreational therapy into the withdrawal management unit, renamed the Inpatient Treatment Program, and also integrated social work into the opiate treatment program. They hired the first psychologist for addictions services and incorporated occupational therapy into the program. There was also a gradual increase of physician involvement from other services and significantly more involvement from learners. "When I first arrived in 2008 there was little interest by residents or medical students in the field of addictions," says Dr. Fraser. "And now we always have at least one and sometimes up to three psychiatry residents at any given time, and receive numerous requests for electives from medical students. In fact, we've gotten to the point where the service is so popular I actually have to decline requests for electives, which I really hate to do. We have medical students coming from all across Canada, as well as outside Canada, to work with our staff."

Over the past few years Dr. Fraser has worked to further transform the addictions program. Working with Trevor Briggs, the current Director of the Nova Scotia Health Authority's Mental Health and Addictions Program for Central Zone, they determined there was a great deal of community dissatisfaction with addictions services. "We concluded it was probably time for us to have a major overhaul of our clinical programming, with the idea that we wanted to focus on continuity of care across the service continuum," recalls Dr. Fraser. "We wanted patients to flow across our various services as part of their path to recovery. We also knew that we wanted to focus on implementation of evidence-based interventions, meaning treatments for addictions that had been scientifically demonstrated to be effective and beneficial for patients."

Dr. Fraser maintains that, in his opinion, addictions are the disease that receives the poorest management and treatment in North America. "Despite overwhelming evidence that this is a brain disease, many people in North America continue to view addiction as a social condition or a moral failing, and as such there's not really any collective imperative that the healthcare system provide treatment for it." He goes on to say that, "the healthcare system has a moral imperative to provide effective evidence-based treatments for the individuals struggling with this disease. We all see the individual and collective costs of addiction every day, yet not nearly enough is being done to address this in an effective manner. We need to do better." Dr. Fraser said he spends a lot of time advocating for better treatments of addictions, as well as working hard

to convince people that addiction is a brain disease. Despite the obstacles, he is feeling optimistic with addictions taking a more significant place in psychiatric education in the country.

Beyond Dr. Fraser's changes to the clinical model for addictions, he also helped develop a psychotherapeutic program aimed at helping the rehabilitation of people suffering from severe and persistent borderline personality disorder (BPD). The program was based on a BPD program he developed at McGill University some 10 years ago. Capital Health was experiencing a group of heavy resource utilisers, just as McGill had experienced years before. Dr. Fraser partnered with **Drs. Deborah Parker and Jacquie Cohen**, as well as a variety of other interested clinicians, to develop what he jokingly referred to as the "BPD Program Version 2.0."

Dr. Fraser has been unstinting and most effective in the provision of care of patients with addictions. He literally transformed the nature of addiction services in Halifax. Along with Mr. Trevor Briggs, and later Ms. Rachel Boehm and **Dr. Phillip Mills**, he worked to create a much better and more responsive and effective system of care for persons with addiction. He is a highly esteemed teacher and educates and inspires learners in many professional disciplines. He is a remarkable individual and is highly respected by all who know of his commitment, effectiveness and compassion on the treatment of persons with addictions. He is a most deserving recipient of the C.A. Roberts award which was presented to him during the CPA President's Gala in Vancouver in October.

# Research Report

BY MS. JANET BARDON, ADMINISTRATOR, RESEARCH

## meet a researcher: dr. martin alda

This issue profiles Dalhousie psychiatrist, researcher and the Killam Chair in Mood Disorders, **Dr. Martin Alda**. Meet a Researcher is a recurring article in the Research Section of *Headlines*. If you are interested in being profiled in an upcoming publication, please contact **Ms. Jen Brown** at [Jennifer.Brown@dal.ca](mailto:Jennifer.Brown@dal.ca).

**Current research interests:** Perhaps the main one is to better understand the role of genes in the risk and outcome of psychiatric disorders. Ultimately, our work should help develop individualized treatment for people with bipolar disorder.

**Research projects I'm currently participating in:** My colleagues and I are involved in genetic studies of bipolar disorder including whole genome and exome sequencing, in genomewide association study of response to lithium, a study of clinical predictors of lithium response, prospective clinical and brain imaging studies of children of parents with bipolar disorder, impact of metabolic abnormalities on bipolar disorder and its outcome, and investigations of factors influencing the risk of suicide in people with mood disorders. Much of the work we do is in collaboration with people from all over the world – literally.

**A typical day in my work life:** I try to be at work shortly after 8am. Usually mornings are spent in meetings with research and clinical staff. I also try to answer emails then, although this is a never-ending process. We may also have new assessments of patients or relatives for research studies then. In the afternoons I usually have my clinics between 1:00 and 5:00pm, and then I dictate and write notes. I try to



Dr. Martin Alda

be at home between 6:00 and 7:00, have supper and usually start working again around 9:00 – usually writing, reviewing manuscripts, or preparing

lectures.

**What I wish I knew when I first contemplated becoming a researcher:** There is no “When I

have more time....”

**The most satisfying and frustrating aspects of doing research:**

The most satisfying is meeting interesting and smart people, be they colleagues and collaborators, students and fellows or mentors. On the other hand, doing research means a constant worry about funding, as well as frustrations from rejected papers or grant applications (fortunately occasionally punctuated by strikes of success).

**The experience that best prepared me for this position:**

There was

no single experience. Practice is important, seeing lots of patients and their family members gave me appreciation for clinical aspects of research; analyzing my own data has been useful for thinking better about research design. Reviewing grant applications helps to write better proposals.

**My research mentor:** I have been fortunate to have met several exceptional people, such as Mogens Schou or Theodore Reich. Václav Filip and Petr Zvolský in Prague were among my research mentors in Prague, and Paul Grof in Canada.

But I owe most to my father. He was a scientist and showed me and my brother the importance of logical thinking, learning and curiosity.

**My second career choice:**

Mathematics was my first choice most of high school; only in the senior year of high school did I decide to apply to medical school in order to become a psychiatrist. Mathematics has been a useful background for much of what I do to this day.

## research day

On October 23, the 25th annual Department of Psychiatry Research Day took place at the Lord Nelson Hotel in Halifax. Research Day 2015 saw 78 people gather together for some outstanding presentations from faculty, students and researchers, not to mention an enlightening talk by Dr. Jeff Daskalakis, Temerty Chair in Therapeutic Brain Intervention and Chief of the Mood and Anxiety Division of the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health titled, “Innovations in Brain Stimulation for Depression.” Research Day prizes were awarded to:

Best Undergraduate Presentation:  
Ms. Ana Jemcov

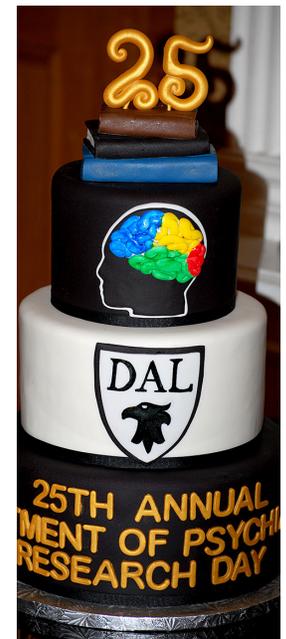
Best Graduate Student Presentation:  
Ms. Fiona Davidson and Ms. Lynn MacKenzie

Best Resident Presentation: **Dr. Michael Butterfield**



Research Day winners and presenters, clockwise from left: Drs. Michael Butterfield, Michael Teehan, Jeffrey Daskalakis, Alessio Squassina, Ms. Lynn MacKenzie, and Dr. Amanda Hudson.

Best Junior Faculty Presentation:  
Dr. Amanda Hudson and Dr. Alessio Squassina



25th anniversary cake.

Special thanks to all those who made Research Day 2015 such a success.

## café scientifique

The department hosted a Café Scientifique at the Royal Bank Theatre on the evening of October 22, entitled “New Approaches in Treatment: Depression and Anxiety.” The event was moderated by Ms. Beth McDougall, project coordinator and analyst for CDRIN (Canadian Depression Research and Intervention Network) Maritimes Depression Hub, and featured presentations by **Drs. Alexa Bagnell and Rudolf Uher**, Mr. Aaron Goodwin and the Research Day keynote speaker, Dr. Jeffrey Daskalakis. Following the presentations there was a lively question-and answer session among members of the audience and the



(L-R) **Drs. Alexa Bagnell, Rudolph Uher, Jeffrey Daskalakis, and Mr. Aaron Goodwin.**

panel. There were 115 health care professionals, students, researchers

and members of the public in attendance.

# Education Report

BY **MS. ANNETTE COSSAR**, ADMINISTRATOR, EDUCATION

## undergraduate news

Another successful year of the Med 2 Skilled Clinician interviewing sessions has come to a close. This was the first year we had a full complement of tutors and volunteer patients. Thank you to our keen faculty and residents for tutoring and to our outpatient clinics for their much needed assistance with patient recruitment.

Undergrad and postgrad teamed up to implement new resident teaching expectations approved by the Residency Program Committee.

The expectations include residents teaching clerkship seminars, co-facilitating Med 2 Skilled Clinician interviewing sessions and clinical supervision of clerks. Please see the postgraduate news section for more details.

Tutor recruitment will soon begin for the 2016-2017 year. The information will be distributed once the UGME finalizes the academic schedule.

Dalhousie Med 4 Clinical Clerk, Ms. Tara Riddell, presented a poster on

her *Beyond the Body* project at CPA in October; winning second place! Congratulations, Tara! Check out the website at [www.beyondthebody.org](http://www.beyondthebody.org).

Would you like to be more involved in teaching, but don't know how? Contact the undergraduate coordinator, **Ms. Mandy Esliger**, undergraduate coordinator at [mandy.esliger@nshealth.ca](mailto:mandy.esliger@nshealth.ca) or the director of undergraduate education, **Dr. Cheryl Murphy** at [murphyc@dal.ca](mailto:murphyc@dal.ca).

## postgraduate news

The Department of Psychiatry was involved in the annual Career Evening for Medical Students on Oct. 15, 2015. Various residents and faculty volunteered and helped promote psychiatry as a career. Our booth offered a psychosis simulation experience for students, a draw for a textbook, and tasty treats!

The postgraduate program is busy preparing for the upcoming internal review that will be happening on Nov.

2, 2015. This review is organized by the Postgraduate Medical Education office to ensure all medical programs at the university are following Royal College accreditation standards. This review will also serve to help us prepare for our next external review in 2018. Many thanks in advance to all of the faculty and residents who will be participating.

It's recruitment time once again! The education section is busy preparing

for CaRMS 2016, with interview dates set for Jan. 16, 22 and 25, 2016. Faculty and residents will be contacted in the next few weeks regarding participation in this very important process.

Residents continue to have a very important role in teaching in our program, the expectations of which have recently been modified by the residency program committee. Residents are expected to supervise clinical clerks while on service and on call, as well as facilitate many of the teaching seminars throughout the year. At least once during training, residents will co-facilitate the Skilled Clinician course for Med 2s. Residents will also present at Clinical Academic Rounds at least once, with many of them choosing to participate in the very successful Dalhousie Debates.

Finally, it is important to acknowledge that many of our residents recently presented at the CPA. Dr. Michael Butterfield facilitated a session on practicing formulation skills using popular media, and Drs. Marie Claire Bourque, Mahgul Malik, and Lesley Kirkpatrick presented on resident wellness. Congratulations are to be given for representing our program so well at a national conference.



The associate program director and director, fellowship and subspecialty training programs, Dr. Sherry James, and the director of postgraduate education, Dr. Mark Bosma, at the psychiatry booth at the Career Evening.

## continuing education news

We have now dedicated a page on the website to continuing education activities. You can access all of the latest information at your

convenience, including *This Week in Psychiatry* and the complete 2015-2016 Clinical Academic and University Rounds schedule. Go to

[www.psych.dal.ca](http://www.psych.dal.ca) to access the link to this new webpage.

The transition from Telehealth to

the use of Adobe Connect to provide online live webcasting of Clinical Academic and University Rounds has gone relatively smoothly and overall the feedback has been very positive. We have had between 45-80 online participants each week in addition to the approximately 50 attendees in

room 4074 of the Abbie J. Lane.

The change to electronic evaluations has also been successful. Dalhousie faculty psychiatrists and residents complete their evaluations in One45 and non-Dalhousie psychiatrists and non-psychiatrists access the

evaluations via a link on [www.psych.dal.ca](http://www.psych.dal.ca). The number of evaluations submitted each week has increased with the new system and we are able to provide feedback to presenters in a much more timely fashion.

## RECENT HIGHLIGHTS

### 8th Psychiatry Debate.

The 8th in our series of highly successful Psychiatry Debates was held on Oct. 14, 2015 on the motion "Should Patients with Treatment Resistant Depression Have Access to Physician Assisted Dying." Arguing in favour of the motion were **Drs. Ava Muir** and **Maghul Malik** and opposed were **Drs. Curt Peters** and **Jennifer Ojiegbe**. As a result of pre-and-post-debate polling of the audiences, the debate was declared "a draw" with minimal change in pre-and-post-polling results. Many thanks to our moderator **Dr. Michael Teehan** and to our debaters for a truly excellent debate on a very relevant and controversial subject.

### Guest Lecturer, Child & Adolescent Psychiatry Clinical Academic Rounds

On Sept. 23, Dr. Ann York, consultant child and adolescent psychiatrist at St George's Mental Health NHS Trust, Senior Lecturer, St. George's Medical School, London UK and Co-founder of "CAPA," the Choice and Partnership Approach, presented on the topic "Choice, access and what matters to us all. creating services we all want to use and work in."

## UPCOMING CONTINUING EDUCATION EVENTS

### University Rounds

- November 18 Dr. Catherine Harmer, Oxford UK. Topic: "The cognitive neuroscience of depression and its treatment."
- December 16 Dr. A. Sniderman, Assistant Professor, Department of Psychiatry, University of Toronto. Topic: "Myelin, mind and matter: primer of the neuropsychiatric syndromes in multiple sclerosis."

### University Rounds

On Sept. 16 Dr. Eric Teboul, MD, CM Psychiatrist, Hopital Regional de St.-Jerome, Quebec, presented on the topic "Gaining insight into lack of insight. an evidence-based examination of lack of insight and its implications for the treatment of psychotic disorders."

On Oct. 21, Dr. Jon Davine, MD, CCFP, FRCPC, Associate Professor, Psychiatry & Behavioural Neurosciences, McMaster University, presented on the topic "Making your presentations more interactive: the better way!"



Dr. Eric Teboul



Dr. Jon Davine

### Clinical Academic Rounds

- November 4 **Dr. Cynthia Calkin**. Topic: "Treating insulin resistance as a strategy to improve outcome in non-remitting bipolar disorder."
- November 11 CANCELLED Remembrance Day
- November 25 Joint Seniors Mental Health & Geriatric Medicine Rounds: **Dr. Meagan MacNeil**, Danielle Lawrence & Raylene MacDonald. Topic: "Seniors Healthy Living Program"

December 2 Child & Adolescent Psychiatry: **Dr. Selene Etches**. Topic: "Pharmacotherapy of adolescent substance use disorders."

December 9 **Dr. Zenovia Ursuliak**. Topic: "The gut-brain connection: diet, microbiome and brain health."

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Save the Date! XXVII W. O. McCormick Academic Day April 29, 2016

The XXVII W.O. McCormick Academic Day will be held on Friday April 29, 2016 at the Lord Nelson Hotel in Halifax. The theme for this year's Academic Day will be "Psychotherapies in clinical practice." Planning for this conference is moving forward. Nationally and locally recognized speakers will present on a wide range of topics including: group therapy, motivational interviewing, tailoring psychotherapy to the needs of individuals, and third wave cognitive behavioural therapies.

Detailed information about the program and registration will be available in January 2016.

# Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

BY **MS. MICHELLE LEBLANC**, CHILD AND ADOLESCENT PSYCHIATRY ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER

The Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry is pleased to announce that **Ms. Megan Bellefontaine** has accepted the position of child & adolescent psychiatry education/research coordinator. Megan has been with the department since October 2014 when she assumed the research coordinator position when **Ms. Jen Brown** went on maternity leave.

**Dr. Anett Bessenyei** will be moving to the Garron Centre as an inpatient

psychiatrist on Dec. 1, 2015. This change in psychiatry roles is required with the upcoming departure of **Dr. Gerald Gray** from inpatient services.

Thank you to Dr. Bessenyei for her excellent psychiatric care and leadership at AIS over the past year, and her willingness to change roles within our program.

The psychiatry leadership team is working on a plan for coverage of AIS that will be communicated in the next few weeks. Our goal is to continue to

provide the best psychiatry coverage of services we are able to within the capacity of our decreased psychiatry resources.

The IWK Department of Psychiatry underwent a review October 15 & 16, 2015, as part of the search and survey process for IWK Chief of Psychiatry. Thanks to the many faculty and stakeholders who took the time to participate in this review.

# Report from the Sun Life Financial Chair in Adolescent Mental Health

BY DR. STAN KUTCHER, SUN LIFE FINANCIAL CHAIR IN ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH

The Sun Life Financial Chair team has been working on a number of initiatives locally, across Canada, and abroad.

In October, **Dr. Stan Kutcher**, Ms. Yifeng Wei and **Ms. Amy MacKay** were invited to present at the 3rd International Conference on Youth Mental Health (IAYMH) in Montreal. IAYMH provided an opportunity for health professionals, youth workers, educators, policy makers, young people, and family members to come together and learn about new and emerging developments that are striving to make changes that have global impact. Surrounded by international colleagues and other experts in the mental health field, Dr. Kutcher presented on “Integrated mental health literacy in secondary schools: model, practice and results”; Ms. Wei presented on “An evidence-based mental health literacy curriculum resource for secondary schools”; and Dr. Kutcher and Ms. MacKay presented on “*Transitions* – an evidence based mental health literacy resource for first year post-secondary students.” Each presentation was well-received, and generated wide-spread attention to numerous materials such as *The Guide*, *Transitions*, *The Family Pack*, and also, various evidence-based training programs for teachers and health care providers.



Ms. Amy MacKay at the IAYMH conference in October.

One new international initiative that is an example of the Pathways to Youth Mental Health Care approach is the EUTIMIA (European Alliance Against Depression in Portugal) project, currently getting underway in six different locations in Portugal. Led by Dr. Ricardo Gusmão from Lisbon, with the additional collaboration of Dr. Lars Mehlum from the University of Oslo, and Dr. Kutcher, this Norwegian-funded initiative is an innovative application of this model, blending education-based mental health literacy, case identification, triage and support with primary care mental health interventions in a European setting.

The application is scheduled to roll out in six districts starting in late November 2015. To date, materials have been locally adapted and translated into Portuguese, and



Dr. Kutcher (standing left) and the team working in Lisbon, Portugal.

training teams have been established for both education and primary care components. The EUTHIMIA team is also working to develop linkages between schools, municipal psychologists, and primary care physicians. The project will take place over the next two years.

For more information on this work, and to follow its progression, visit <http://eutimia.pt/>.

# Report from the Dr. Paul Janssen Chair in Psychotic Disorders

BY DR. PHIL TIBBO, DR. PAUL JANSSEN CHAIR IN PSYCHOTIC DISORDERS

The Janssen Chair remains active in a number of research projects and initiatives. The following is a summary of a selection of these activities.

## LOCALLY

Recent research has shown that gains made by patients while in an early intervention service for psychosis were lost once transferred to community mental health care teams. There is an extremely important need to develop and provide effective programs when moving from specialized to community care. The Chair leads a team, funded by a TRIC (Translating Research into Care) grant and together with input from young adults with lived experience, they are working to develop an innovative multi-component intervention to sustain the recovery process, as these young adults transition from specialized early intervention services to community-based mental health services. This project will help to define the specifics of what this intervention will look like with the input of young adults who are in the process of, or have completed transitions out of the Nova Scotia Early Psychosis Program.

## PROVINCIALY

Following the successful 2013

NSHRF (Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation)-funded Knowledge Sharing project, **Drs. Phil Tibbo, Sabina Abidi and David Whitehorn** were awarded another NSHRF Knowledge Sharing grant for 2015. A central objective of this knowledge-sharing initiative has been to develop an ongoing provincial `community of learning` that brings together a wide range of stakeholders who are critical to the process of enhancing early detection and treatment of psychosis, and mental disorders in general.

To support this objective, the initiative uses online resources (both written and video), email updates and regional stakeholder meetings. The initiative provides information about research findings in a manner that is accessible to all eight key stakeholder groups: government, health care administrators, mental health clinicians, family physicians, people with psychosis, family members, community support agencies and the general public. In 2015, day-long stakeholder meetings will be held in Amherst, Antigonish, Yarmouth and Halifax. Key topics of research that will be made accessible to the stakeholders include: staging and identification of youth at risk, the role of family engagement, maximizing outcomes and brain imaging findings

as it relates to recovery.

## NATIONALLY

The Janssen Chair remains active on a national level in psychosis research and research development. This includes multi-site leadership and investigator roles in projects investigating: genetics and brain imaging in early-phase psychosis, development of a relapse prevention tool for clinicians and family members for early-phase psychosis, development of a medication side-effect monitoring tool, and the development of national standards/guidelines for early intervention services in Canada. The Janssen Chair also recently co-chaired the CPA Junior Research Colloquium. The colloquium, which provides mentorship, guidance, encouragement and practical discussion on research careers to 16 young investigators in the early phases of their training, is a tangible means to foster the development of Canadian psychiatrist researchers who will lead knowledge transfer in psychiatry. This year, **Dr. Mirka Kolajova** represented Dalhousie at this event.

# Report from the Primary Mental Healthcare Education Leader

BY DR. BIANCA LAURIA-HORNER, PRIMARY MENTAL HEALTHCARE EDUCATION LEADER

## skill-based approaches, effective in reducing stigma in health professionals

Stigma related to mental illness is a reality endured by many. The detrimental impact on health care professionals, specifically medical students and practitioners, has garnered attention in recent literature. Evidence suggests that it begins in medical school. Although medical students experience mental illness at a higher rate than the general population, they may conceal their mental health concerns for fear of being perceived as less intelligent than their peers, unable to manage medical school stresses, make them less competitive for residency training positions or compromise their education. Once in the workforce, physicians continue to hold stigmatized beliefs, and face pressures to appear well for fear their own mental health concerns may be perceived as a weakness or a reflection on competence. The truth is that people's beliefs and attitudes toward mental illness not only determines one's own experience with emotional problems (unwillingness to disclosure and a barrier to help-seeking) but also sets the stage for how they interact with, provide opportunities for, and help support a person with mental illness.

As part of Nova Scotia's mental health strategy "Together We Can," the Department of Health and Wellness has partnered with Opening

Minds, an anti-stigma initiative of the Mental Health Commission of Canada, to launch a demonstration project in Nova Scotia to conduct a full-scale evaluation of the Adult Mental Health Module Practice Support Program. The program, originating in British Columbia, uses a novel learning platform which supports primary healthcare providers with treatment and management of people experiencing mental illness. The model for improvement is action oriented over time. Participants attend three half-day workshops over six months interspaced with a "six-week action period," which provides opportunities to redesign office flow and implement the tools and learned skills. Practice support is provided through diagnostic assessment tools, and evidence-based supported self-management tools/strategies: Cognitive Behavioral Interpersonal Skills Manual, Bounce Back program, Antidepressant Skills Workbook. In addition, a practice-support coordinator visits offices to help with office redesign, problem-solve barriers, and share ideas from other practices. Participants are also compensated for their time to train and participate in the program.

Dalhousie University Department of Psychiatry led the research study. The team conducted a double blind, parallel cluster randomized control

trial involving 77 practices across Nova Scotia to determine program effectiveness in reducing stigma, increasing comfort level in providing treatment to those living with mental illness, and improving clinical outcomes (changes in depression ratings, occupational functioning, patient QOL, patient satisfaction with care received, and economic impact). Depression is the primary lens used for the PSP study because of its high prevalence in primary care, but many of its principles are broadly applicable to other mental illnesses. The research team completed the first part of the study analysis: "Between group" changes in family physician stigma levels (a primary outcome), physician-perceived comfort level, confidence and skills in caring for patients with mental illness, and the correlation between the two. They hypothesized that enhanced skills in program participants would lead to increased comfort on the part of practitioners, diminished social distance and stigmatization.

Practices were randomly assigned to intervention (Adult Mental Health Practice Support Program) or control group (treatment as usual). Randomization was stratified on the total number of physicians per practice as well as urban and rural physicians to ensure equal distribution. In total 101 Nova Scotia

family physicians participated resulting in 51 participants in the intervention group and 50 in the control group. Medical office staff (assistants nurses allied health professionals) were also invited to participate in the training.

### KEY FINDINGS:

Primary care physicians' confidence/comfort/skills in all areas (depression management, use of assessment and management tools) improved significantly more in those who received the program compared to

those who had not.

Increase in confidence/comfort/skills in the use of program assessment and management tools was associated with a decrease in overall healthcare provider stigma in men but not in women.

## Meet a Staff Member

Meet a Staff Member is a new feature where you will be introduced to all the members of our administrative staff. It was brought to our attention that some faculty don't know who we are or what we do to support them and we'd like to change that. In this issue we introduce you to **Ms. Kate Porter**.

### ms. kate porter: executive assistant to dr. delva

Ms. Kate Porter provides administrative support to the department head and manages his calendar. She also coordinates the meetings for the Executive and Finance Committees, the NSHA/DOP Central Zone, and the Dispute Resolution Committee. Kate is in charge of organizing the Bi-Annual Department of Psychiatry Meetings, the next of which will be held on November 10 at the Atlantica Hotel.

Kate is the department contact for Practimax issues and can be contacted with any questions regarding the Department of Psychiatry's shadow billing or activity reporting processes. She can troubleshoot physician problems and provide direction where needed.

Kate regularly tracks and communicates decision-making surrounding faculty development funding, and assists in orientating new faculty to the department. She also manages special projects as assigned.



Ms. Kate Porter

Kate is located on the 8th floor of the Abbie J. Lane building in the main reception area. She can be reached

at 902-473-2470 or at [katherine.porter@nshealth.ca](mailto:katherine.porter@nshealth.ca).

## news from the department

### DR. CHRISTINE CHAMBERS HOSTS PUBLIC FORUM

On Monday, Sept. 21, **Dr. Christine Chambers**, of the Centre for Pediatric Pain Research at the IWK Health Centre and Dalhousie University, hosted a public forum, “It Doesn’t Have to Hurt (*#itdoesnthavetohurt*)” at the Halifax Central Library. An interactive panel discussion was held with speakers including Dr. Chambers, health researcher and child psychologist; Ms. Isabel Jordan, parent of a child with a rare disease and a patient advocate; Mr. André Picard, health reporter with the Globe and Mail; and Ms. Erica Ehm, creator and publisher of the YummyMummyClub.ca and former MuchMusic host. The event was hosted by Ms. Carole Schadelbauer, senior vice president, science & education and director, training programs at Burness (a communications company specializing in social change). The event integrated cutting edge technology, including a webcast for remote audiences and moderated live tweeting. There were 139 individuals who attended in person, and 131 IP addresses logged in for the live stream.

Building a twitter presence for the hashtag *#itdoesnthavetohurt* was also seen as critical, and over 60 individuals and organizations were recruited to support this work. There were over 1,000 original tweets



during the event and it was the third highest trending hashtag in Canada during the event.

The public forum also served as a launch event for a recently funded Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) Knowledge-to-Action grant led by Dr. Chambers’ team, titled: *It Doesn’t Have to Hurt: A Science-Media Partnership to Mobilize Evidence about Children’s Pain to Parents*. The grant represents a partnership between health researchers (led by Dr. Chambers) and the YummyMummyClub. The initiative will span a 12-month period of targeted dissemination and discussion of content about children’s pain on YMC blogs, videos, Twitter parties, Facebook polls, and social media images, all posted and promoted on the YMC website and social media. The partnership

capitalizes on YMC’s monthly reach of over five million people. Research objectives include documenting the reach of the initiative (e.g., number of content views) and evaluating the impact of the initiative by using surveys and telephone interviews to look at changes in parent knowledge and behaviour to prevent and minimize children’s pain.

Please help spread the word about this initiative by:

1. Following content on YummyMummyClub.ca
2. Following the hashtag *#itdoesnthavetohurt*.

For more information, visit [itdoesnthavetohurt.ca](http://itdoesnthavetohurt.ca).

## DRS. RAJDA AND ABIDI ACCEPTED INTO ELAM PROGRAM

**Drs. Margaret Rajda and Sabina Abidi** have been nominated by Dr. Nick Delva and accepted into the Dalhousie Faculty of Medicine's Emerging Leaders in Academic Medicine (ELAM) program. This is a new program in academic leadership for clinical and basic science faculty. The program provides an opportunity

for faculty with limited leadership experience to become more familiar with the functioning of the medical school and acquire knowledge and skills to take on expanded roles in their academic settings. The four-month program focuses on topics such as: Getting to Know the Faculty of Medicine; Understanding Your

Leadership Style; Goal Setting and Time Management; Collaboration, Collegiality and Productive Conflict; Serving on Committees and Chairing Meetings; Managing Projects; and Mentoring and Coaching.

## DR. STAN KUTCHER NOMINATED TO BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF ROYAL COLLEGE CANADA INTERNATIONAL

**Dr. Stan Kutcher** has been nominated to the Board of Directors of Royal College Canada International for a three year term beginning Oct. 16, 2015. Royal College International (RCI), a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (Royal College), conducts international outreach

by forming academic partnerships worldwide with organizations sharing the Royal College's values. RCI is a start-up corporation having been first established as not-for-profit corporation in 2010, and becoming registered as a charity in 2011.

RCI is described as one of three "means" through which the Royal

College is intent on achieving the "ends" of key result area (KRA) 5 - International outreach – of its strategic plan. Residency education conferences, and international development / humanitarian responses are also included in the Royal College's international efforts.

## staff and faculty changes

**Dr. Tolulope Alugo** has joined the department as an assistant professor, effective Oct. 1, 2015. Dr. Alugo is located in Saint John, NB, and can be reached at (506) 607-7205 or by email [Tolulope.AdedayoAlugo@gnb.ca](mailto:Tolulope.AdedayoAlugo@gnb.ca).

**Ms. Megan Bellefontaine** has joined the child and adolescent psychiatry team as the education/research coordinator. She can be reached at [Megan.Bellefontaine@iwk.nshealth.ca](mailto:Megan.Bellefontaine@iwk.nshealth.ca) or by phone at 902-470-8376.

**Ms Jennifer Brown** has returned to the department as the research coordinator after maternity leave. She

can be reached at 902-473-7358 or [Jen.Brown@dal.ca](mailto:Jen.Brown@dal.ca).

**Dr. Beverley Cassidy** has joined the department as an assistant professor, effective Sept. 1, 2015. She will be located in Wolfville and will also be doing some work with the Seniors Mental Health Team. She can be reached at [Beverley.cassidy@dal.ca](mailto:Beverley.cassidy@dal.ca).

**Dr. Angela Cooper** has joined the department as an assistant professor, cross-appointed with the Department of Family Medicine, effective October 1, 2015. Dr. Cooper will be located on the 7th floor of the Abbie J. Lane Building and can be reached at

[Angela.cooper@nshealth.ca](mailto:Angela.cooper@nshealth.ca).

**Dr. Anthony Njoku** has joined the department as an assistant professor, effective Sept. 1, 2015. Dr. Njoku is located in Fredricton and can be reached at [Dr.Anthony.Njoku@horizonNB.ca](mailto:Dr.Anthony.Njoku@horizonNB.ca).

**Mr. Leigh Thibideau** has joined the department, effective Nov. 5, 2015, as the postgraduate coordinator, taking over for Ms. Carrie Wipp who will be on maternity leave until next November. Leigh can be reached at 902-473-7122 or [LeighJ.Thibideau@nshealth.ca](mailto:LeighJ.Thibideau@nshealth.ca).

## awards & honours

### DR. ALEXA BAGNELL WINS DALHOUSIE ALUMNI AWARD

Congratulations to **Dr. Alexa Bagnell** who was recently presented with the Dalhousie Medical Alumni Association's (DMAA) Young Alumna of the Year Award. This award recognizes a Dalhousie Medical School graduate in the first two decades of his/her career who has made a significant contribution to Dalhousie Medical School, other medical schools or to their

community. Dr. Bagnell is recognized for her dedication to the mental health of children and adolescents in the Maritime Provinces. She received the award at the 57th annual DMAA Alumni Awards Gala Dinner on October 16. Congratulations once again, Dr. Bagnell. Well deserved!



Dr. Alexa Bagnell accepts the DMAA Young Alumna of the Year Award.

### DR. ABIDI, STOKES AND MOSS PRESENTED WITH CACAP AWARDS

Congratulations to three of our child and adolescent psychiatry faculty who were recognized with national awards at the Canadian Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (CACAP) meeting in October 2015. **Dr. Sabina Abidi** was awarded the Naomi Rae Grant Award for her work in community outreach and innovative service development for children and youth with mental illnesses. **Dr. Aidan Stokes** received the Award of Special Recognition for his career in leadership, clinical care and advocacy in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, and the significant impact he has had on the field regionally and nationally. **Dr. Pippa Moss** was presented the Dr. Paul Steinhauer Award for advocacy in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, for her work as a rural Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, which has had significant impact locally, nationally and internationally.



(L-R) Drs. Sabina Abidi, Aidan Stokes and Pippa Moss with their CACAP awards.

## FIRST IRMINGARD LENZER AWARD FOR DEDICATION TO PSYCHOTHERAPY TRAINING PRESENTED

The Centre for Emotions and Health awarded the first Irmigard Lenzer award to Dr. Ryan Wilson, the trainee at the centre who is most dedicated to learning psychotherapy. The award includes a plaque and a cash prize. Dr. Irmi Lenzer was a former department member who helped launch the Emergency Department service for Medically Unexplained Symptoms and a long-time colleague and trainee at the

Centre for Emotions and Health. She exemplified excellence and dedication to self study, videotape review and other elements that help develop psychotherapy mastery. The fund to provide this annual award has been supported by family members, colleagues and others who deeply appreciate her contributions to psychology and clinical care over her career.



Dr. Allan Abbass (right) presents Dr. Ryan Wilson with the Irmigard Lenzer award.

## DR. CHRISTINE CHAMBERS NAMED TO COLLEGE OF NEW SCHOLARS, ARTISTS AND SCIENTISTS



Dr. Christine Chambers

Congratulations to **Dr. Christine Chambers**, who was recently named to The Royal Society of Canada's (RSC) College of New Scholars, Artists and Scientists. Those named to the College represent the emerging generation of scholarly, scientific and artistic leadership in Canada. The college is Canada's first national system of multidisciplinary recognition for scholars who have demonstrated a high level of achievement at an early stage in their career

The members of the College will address issues of particular concern to new scholars, artists

and scientists, for the advancement of understanding and the benefit of society, taking advantage of the interdisciplinary approaches fostered by the establishment of the College.

Dr. Chambers is recognized internationally for her significant contributions to the understanding of pain in children. The RSC describes her as "a tireless advocate who uses social media and other means to provide parents and health professionals the information needed to ensure optimal pain care for children." Dr. Chambers is one of 48 who were named to the College for 2015.

## CHILD AND ADOLESCENT PSYCHIATRY FACULTY RECEIVE IWK AWARD

Congratulations to **Drs. Normand Carrey** and **John Aspin**, who, along with Ms. Amy Jones, MSW, received the IWK Family Leadership Council's Annual Award for Excellence in Patient and Family Centered Care.

The Family Therapy Team was nominated for the exceptional work that they do with the Family Therapy Level I and Level II Training Clinic in the Mental Health and Addictions program. The nominator, Ms. Tony Grant, commented on how the "Family Therapy Learning Clinic partners with the family focusing

on the needs and values of the patient and family." In addition she highlighted how through this clinic, "right from the beginning the family is in charge of what type of services they would like to receive" and how "families are respected and considered the experts in their own lives. [And how] they are an equal partner in their treatment, sharing responsibility and success." She summarized the work of this team by saying: "over the past few years, Amy Jones, Dr. Normand Carrey and Dr. John Aspin have demonstrated

great commitment to maintaining this wonderful and needed service for our community members. They have also provided excellent leadership and collaboration with both IWK and community partners to ensure that the next generation of family therapists are trained to work in partnership with families to ensure they are getting the best care possible."

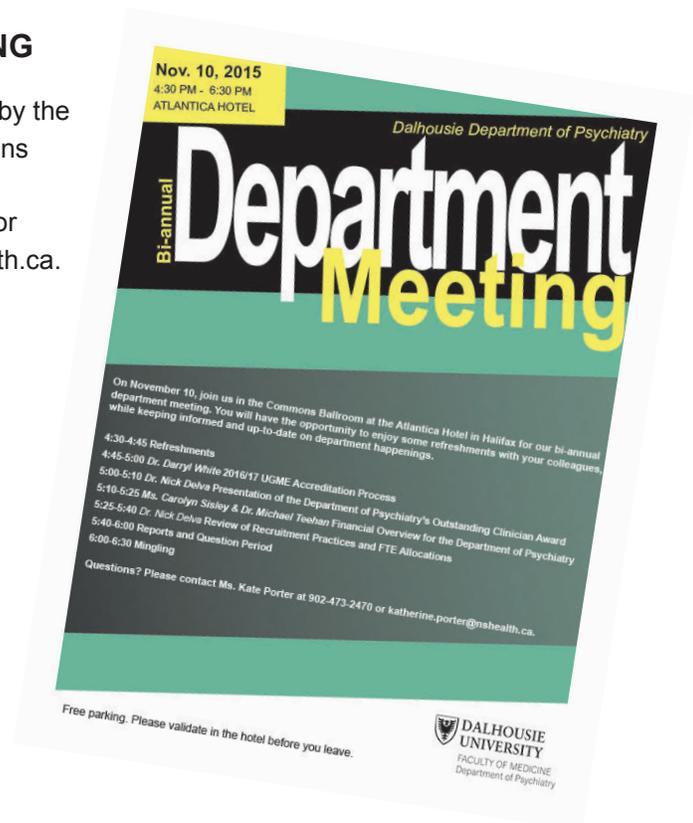
The team was presented with the award on September 21 at the IWK Annual General Meeting.

## announcements

### DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHIATRY BI-ANNUAL MEETING

On November 10, join us in the Commons Ballroom at the Atlantica Hotel in Halifax for our bi-annual department meeting. You will have the opportunity to enjoy some refreshments with your colleagues, while keeping informed and up-to-date on department happenings.

Parking will be validated by the hotel. If you have questions please contact **Ms. Kate Porter** at 902-473-2470 or [katherine.porter@nshealth.ca](mailto:katherine.porter@nshealth.ca).



# Humanities Corner

BY DR. JOANNE MACDONALD, PSYCHIATRIST, DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY AND NSHA

**Dr. Joanne MacDonald** began the role of Humanities coordinator in the Department of Psychiatry in January 2015. She sought the review and advice of **Dr. Lara Hazelton**, the former coordinator, and canvassed the experience of views of several senior department education faculty and staff.

Dr. MacDonald's initial focus will be on resident engagement, with the hope that both undergraduate medical students and faculty would be further recruited if we can create projects and modalities of interest and ease. An introductory session with residents was held on August 19, indicating expressed interest in new media, visual and film artist contributions, writing and social media applications to speed access to humanities information and further a more interactive component. A Department of Psychiatry Humanities Facebook page is in development and all faculty and learners will be invited to connect.

First initiatives include the re-launch of the 2015 Medical Humanities Writing Contest with a deadline for submission of December 6.

Submissions can be sent to [joanne.macdonald@iwk.nshealth.ca](mailto:joanne.macdonald@iwk.nshealth.ca). More information can be found on the department's website at <http://medicine.dal.ca/departments/department-sites/psychiatry/education/medical-humanities/writing-competition.html>. In the past creative submissions have been received from medical schools across Canada. Stay tuned for winning announcements in January 2016.

Dr. MacDonald has put together a video project in which she is in conversation with **Drs. Delva, Bagnell, Bosma and Teehan** about their ideas of what medical humanities includes and how it relates to their practice of psychiatry. Look for the video on the website at <http://medicine.dal.ca/departments/department-sites/psychiatry/education/medical-humanities/humanities-media.html>, and ask yourself the same questions she poses to the faculty members.

A second video submission project will invite our residents to submit their experience and activity within the Medical Humanities spectrum. We hope this will be the start of a

larger project to explore the idea of how a personal mission statement could be crafted through humanities explorations, and inform meaning and resilience in a psychiatric life and practice.

Dr. MacDonald is hoping to bring several visiting artists to the department to explore how their art-making expresses themes relevant to mental health and illness.

If you have ideas on medical humanities themes to add to our fledging Facebook project, please forward to [joanne.macdonald@iwk.nshealth.ca](mailto:joanne.macdonald@iwk.nshealth.ca). Send us something that interested you - a review, an opinion, reflection or visual from the arts, social sciences and humanities.

Also check out the Dalhousie Medical School HEALS webpage at <http://medicine.dal.ca/departments/core-units/DME/medical-humanities.html>.

# Photo Feature

BY DR. SHABBIR AMANULLAH, PSYCHIATRIST AND ASSISTANT PROFESSOR



Changi Airport, Singapore.

## 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. 8, 2016, with the deadline for submissions to be Dec. 18, 2015.

Please send all submissions to Ms. Kate Rogers: [Kate.Rogers@nshealth.ca](mailto:Kate.Rogers@nshealth.ca)

## UPCOMING AWARD DEADLINES

There are many awards that Department of Psychiatry faculty, fellows, residents, and staff are eligible to win each year. The following is a list of awards with upcoming deadlines. If you would like to nominate someone please contact **Ms. Kate Rogers** at [Kate.Rogers@nshealth.ca](mailto:Kate.Rogers@nshealth.ca). The awards committee will work with you to organize nomination materials. For further details and terms of reference for the awards please visit our website (<http://www.medicine.dal.ca/departments/departments-sites/psychiatry/about/awards.html>).

Granting Body: **Doctors Nova Scotia**

- Doctors NS Distinguished Service Award (Jan. 15)
- Doctors NS Rural Physician of the Year (Jan. 15)
- Doctors NS Physician Health Promotion Award (Jan. 15)
- Doctors NS Dr. William Grigor Award (Jan. 15)
- Doctors NS Senior Membership (Jan. 15)

Granting Body: **Graham Boeckh Foundation**

- Dr. Samarthji Lal award for mental health research (Jan. 7)

Granting Body: **Dalhousie University**

- Dalhousie Alumni Association Excellence in Teaching Award (Jan. 31)
- Contract and Sessional Instructor Award of Excellence for Teaching (Jan. 31)
- President's Graduate Student Teaching Award (Jan. 31)
- Educational Leadership Award for Collaborative Teaching (Jan. 31)
- Early Career Faculty Award of Excellence for Teaching (Jan. 31)
- Award for Excellence in Graduate Supervision (Jan. 31)
- Academic Innovation Award (Jan. 31)
- Award for Excellence in Education for Diversity (Jan. 31)

Granting Body: **Canadian Psychiatric Association**

- C.A. Roberts Award for Clinical Leadership (Feb. 1)
- J.M. Cleghorn Award for Excellence and Leadership in Clinical Research (Feb. 1)
- Paul Patterson Education Leadership Award (Feb. 1)
- Alex Leighton Joint CPA-CAPE Award in Psychiatric Epidemiology (Feb. 1)
- Joint CPA-COPCE Award for the Most Outstanding Continuing Education Activity in Psychiatry in Canada (academic) (Feb. 1)
- COPCE Best Paper Award by a Psychiatry Resident (Feb. 1)