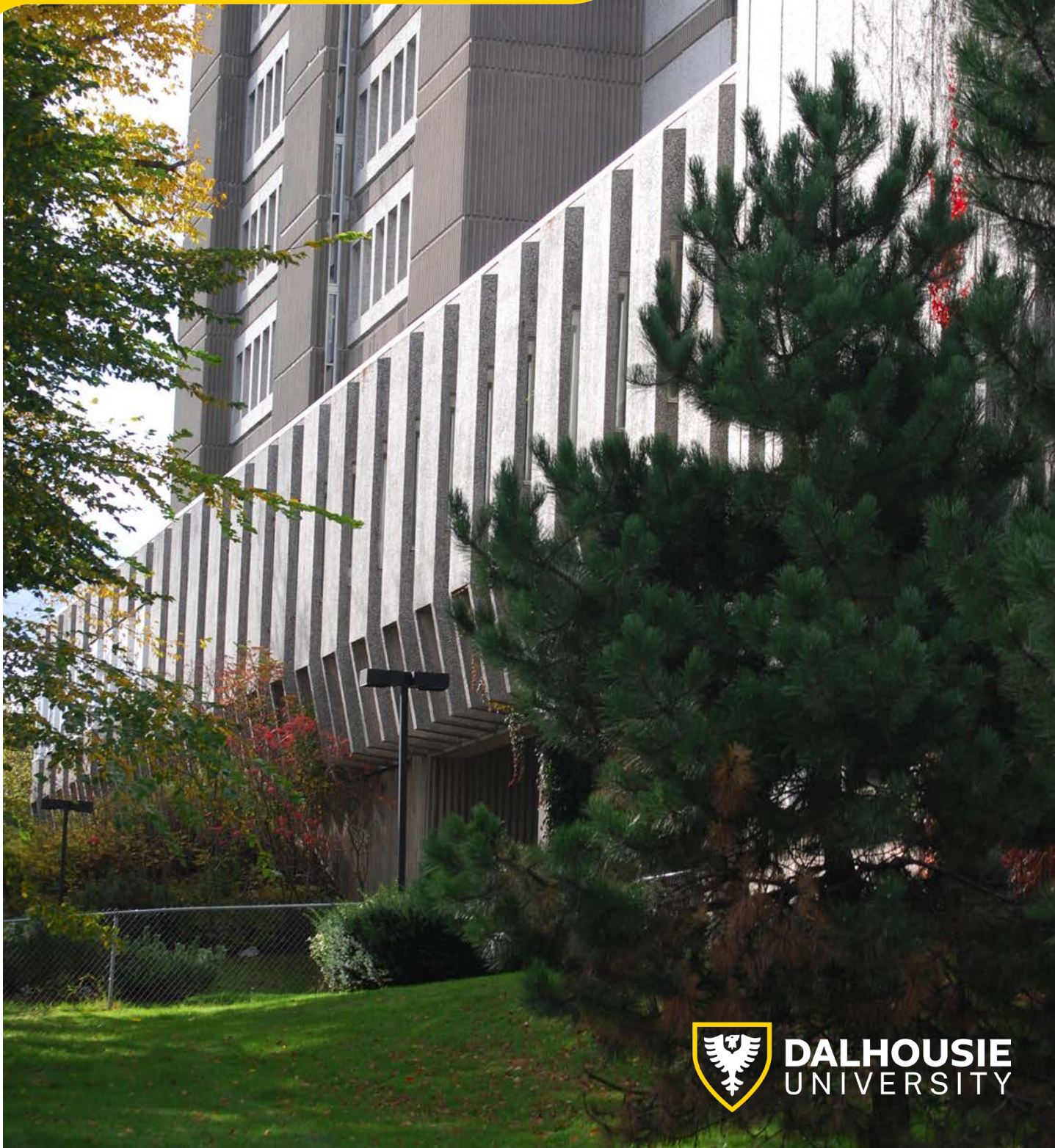


Department of Psychiatry
ANNUAL REPORT
2022/23





**Department of Psychiatry
Dalhousie University**

5909 Veterans' Memorial Lane
8th Floor, Abbie J. Lane Building
Halifax, NS B3H 2E2

Phone: 902-473-2470

Fax: 902-473-4887

Web: psychiatry.medicine.dal.ca

This report covers the period of April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023, with the exception of the education report, which covers the academic year, July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023.

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Message from the Department Head



The Department of Psychiatry has continued to thrive, marking 2022/23 as a productive and exciting year. It is encouraging to see the progress we have made in newer areas of focus in the department. Equally, we are proud of our continued success in education, research, and clinical care.

In September 2022, I hosted my fourth virtual Town Hall meeting to review the progress of the first year of the department's Transformational Plan and to look at building on its success. Following the meeting, a survey seeking feedback on the Transformational Plan was circulated to faculty, learners, and staff, and the results were also shared.

Although many meetings continue to take place virtually, the past year has included the return of in-person events for the department. Our annual Research Day, Academic Day, and graduation celebration

were all held in person for the first time since the pandemic. This has allowed an increased focus on engagement, and collaboration, and has positively contributed to our departmental community.

In the fall, I embarked on a tour of the department's distributed learning sites in the Northern, Eastern, and Western Zones in Nova Scotia, and visited the distributed learning site in New Brunswick. A visit to St. Patrick's University Hospital and Beaumont Hospital in Dublin, Ireland also resulted in excellent opportunities for collaboration for the department. The goal of these visits was to establish collaborations in education and research and to explore how we can expand and enhance our programs.

Research in the department sees continued success with several department members being awarded Canadian Institutes of Health Research grants, and other external and internal funding. In February 2023, the federal government announced funding for research into youth mental health issues. The announcement was held at Dalhousie University and one of our department researchers was invited to speak at the announcement. Our department's research was also showcased at our annual Research Day, where we saw an increase in registrations and abstracts. To

coincide with the department's recently established distributed leadership model, we have made progress in hiring research assistants for two of the clinical academic sections who will support these sections in their scholarly projects.

The department's education programs continue to be in good-standing. All residency spots have been filled, and we are working to expand the department's undergraduate clerkship and residency rotations to distributed learning sites. Students in our graduate programs are successful in securing external funding. The curriculum for graduate programs has also expanded with the addition of new courses. We were pleased to welcome our first international fellow as part of the department's International Fellowship Program, and work continues to establish the International Masters in Clinical Psychiatry. Informative continuing education sessions were held for department members. As well, our annual W.O. McCormick Academic Day conference offered a day of informative presentations about neuropsychiatry.

On April 25, 2023, we were proud to launch the first phase of the Rapid Access and Stabilization Program (RASP). This program is a partnership between the Dalhousie University Department of Psychiatry and Nova Scotia

Health's Central Zone Mental Health and Addictions Program. RASP will provide additional psychiatric support to primary care providers. The Day Hospital Program and Text4Support program also continue to gain momentum.

Our work in transcultural mental health providing psychiatric services to traditionally underserved populations also continues. The program is a collaborative effort between the Department of Psychiatry, Nova Scotia Health's Central Zone Mental Health and Addictions Program, the Brotherhood Clinic, the Newcomers Clinic, and the Friendship Centre. In January 2023, a Ukrainian path was added to the Transcultural Mental Health Program, and services for the Sisterhood Clinic and Friendship Centre are being planned.

In late May 2023, Nova Scotia was struck with wildfires that displaced thousands of people. In response to this tragedy, Nova Scotia Health's Mental Health and Addictions program, in collaboration with the QEII Foundation and the Global Psychological eHealth Foundation, launched a supportive text message tool called Text4HopeNS for any Nova Scotian affected by the wildfires. I participated in media interviews about this and the launch of the Rapid Access and Stabilization Program. Each clinical academic section/division continues its work in delivering high-quality patient care.

The department's new committees in the areas of Social Policy & Advocacy, Wellness, and Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility have made progress in further defining their mandates and implementing new departmental initiatives. These initiatives have included presentations at department meetings, representation on department committees, including in search and selection processes, a draft strategy, an inaugural summer recreational event, and monthly hikes. I look forward to seeing how we can continue to learn and build a more well, inclusive, and diverse department.

I am appreciative of our faculty, learners, and staff for all we have accomplished. Together, we have made this a great year.



Dr. Vincent I.O. Agyapong

Head, Department of Psychiatry
Faculty of Medicine
Dalhousie University
Head, Department of Psychiatry
NSHA Central Zone

A YEAR IN REVIEW

The Department of Psychiatry is a clinical academic department within the Faculty of Medicine at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia. We're home to nearly 300 faculty located across the province, country, and even some around the world. Locally, faculty work out of the Queen Elizabeth II (QEII) Health Sciences Centre, the IWK Health Centre, Nova Scotia Youth Centre, the East Coast Forensic Hospital (ECFH), the Nova Scotia Hospital, the Operational Stress Injury Clinic, and various community clinics across the Central Zone.

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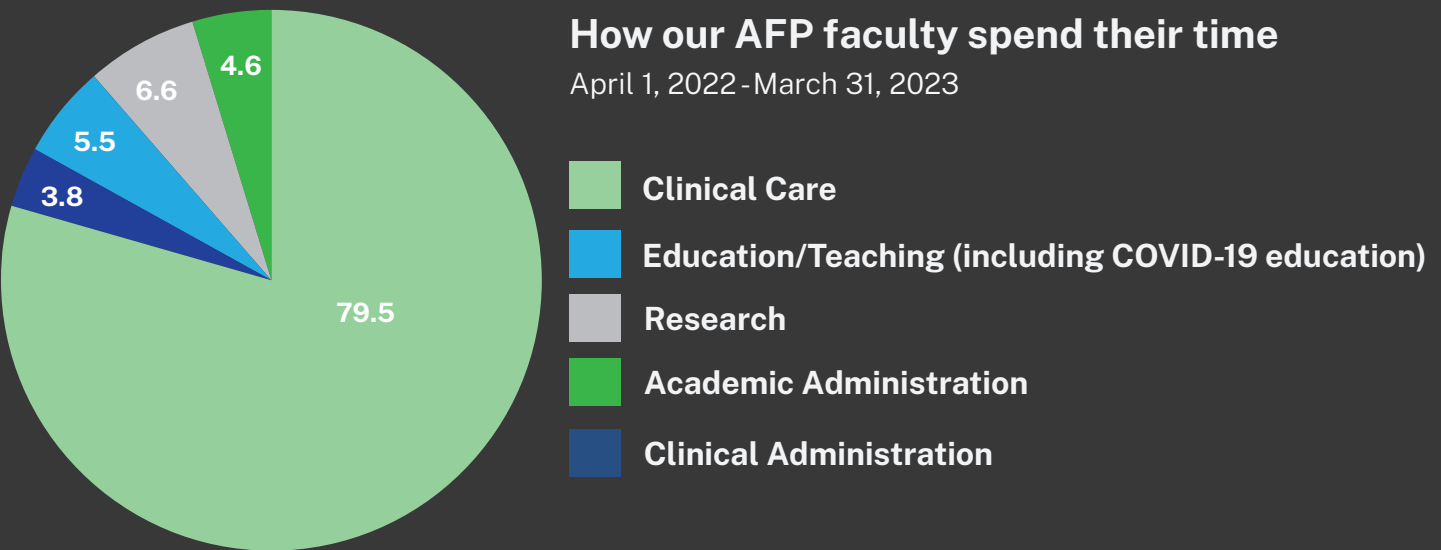
faculty members

21

cross-appointed faculty

17

adjunct faculty



Education

July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023

UNDERGRAD

Clerkship year is from Aug. 29, 2022 – Aug. 27, 2023.

93 core students rotated through our Dalhousie Medicine Nova Scotia (DMNS) sites

71 students in the Halifax Regional Municipality

13 students at distributed sites in Amherst, Charlottetown/Summerside, Kentville, and Truro

9 students at Longitudinal Integrated Clerkship (LIC) sites in Sydney and South Shore

35 core students rotated through our Dalhousie Medicine New Brunswick (DMNB) sites

18 students in Saint John

17 students at Longitudinal Integrated Clerkship (LIC) sites in Fredericton, Miramichi, Moncton, and Upper River Valley

~**91** Elective requests; **54** of the requests completed the elective

~**1,552** Teaching hours to undergraduate medical education

.....

POSTGRAD

44 residents received **521 hours** of instruction from **60 faculty** members

9 applicants matched CaRMS, including **5** Dalhousie graduates

1 geriatric psychiatry subspecialty resident

4 child and adolescent psychiatry subspecialty residents

.....

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND SCHOLARLY WORK

\$8,270.30 in medical education grant funding received

2 funded scholarly projects

1 unfunded scholarly project

24 scholarly projects presented at various conferences

4 scholarly publications

7 residency scholarly projects on medical education

Patient Care

April 1, 2022 - March 31, 2023

ADULT

75,164 days were spent in adult inpatient services

85 per cent occupancy rate in adult mental health and addictions services (including ECFH)

1,216 discharges from adult inpatient care

153,080 visits to adult outpatient services (does not include Mental Health Mobile Crisis Team and Psych ER)

26,990 Mental Health Mobile Crisis Team interventions for clients in the Central Zone (includes telephone and mobile interventions)

2,415 visits to the Psych ER

.....

CHILD AND ADOLESCENT

3,037 days spent in child and adolescent acute inpatient services

58 per cent occupancy rate in child and adolescent acute inpatient services

209 discharges from child and adolescent acute inpatient services

3,466 days spent in child and adolescent inpatient intensive services

56 per cent occupancy rate in child and adolescent inpatient intensive services

66 discharges from child and adolescent inpatient intensive services

54,565 Ambulatory Registrations to MHA Program (this includes all programs and ages)

Extending the Frontiers: Department Head establishes collaborations locally and abroad

With the Transformational Plan in its second year, work continued to advance the plan's goals and priorities.

One such goal is extending the frontiers of the department — the success of which Department Head Dr. Vincent Agyapong believes rests with partnering with local and global institutions.

“We cannot become a great department by just being focused on Nova Scotia,” says Dr. Agyapong. “We cannot become a great department by just working alone or working in silos. We can become a great department if we are able to establish partnerships and *lead* partnerships throughout the world. Countries and institutions become leaders when they have other partners they are able to bring together for the common good.”

In fall 2022, Dr. Agyapong visited Dublin, Ireland and distributed learning sites in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick to explore partnerships.

The Dublin connection

In Dublin he visited St. Patrick's University Hospital and Beaumont Hospital. Having trained at both institutions, and having collaborated with them before, made the hospitals a natural starting place to reach out, he says.

The discussions in Ireland centered around neuropsychiatry, global mental health, and electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) research.

During the visit, Dr. Agyapong consolidated an agreement with Beaumont Hospital, which has a centre of excellence in neuropsychiatry, to offer training to one of our senior-year residents in neuropsychiatry.

“As an academic center, it would be useful for us to have a neuropsychiatrist, and build a neuropsychiatry program,” says Dr. Agyapong.

Part of the agreement includes waiving the usual fee for an international fellow to train at their institution.



Department Head Dr. Vincent Agyapong visits Dublin, Ireland to explore collaborations.

With St. Patrick's University Hospital, he explored opportunities for them to participate in some of our global health initiatives, such as training international fellows from low- and middle-income countries and being a site for the in-person portion of our international masters in clinical psychiatry program, he says.

“We cannot become a great department by just being focused on Nova Scotia. We cannot become a great department by just working alone or working in silos. We can become a great department if we are able to establish partnerships and *lead* partnerships throughout the world. Countries and institutions become leaders when they have other partners they are able to bring together for the common good.”
— Dr. Vincent Agyapong

Another area of potential collaboration is with ECT research says Dr. Agyapong. “We are looking at opportunities to begin collecting systematic data from our ECT program.”

Participating in this international, collaborative research program is something the distributed learning sites across Nova Scotia have also expressed interest in, says Dr. Agyapong.

The groups will continue to meet to discuss these areas of collaboration.

Looking outside of Halifax

In addition to sites across Nova Scotia, from an academic standpoint, the Department of Psychiatry covers New Brunswick and PEI. Dr. Agyapong visited some of these sites to explore opportunities for collaboration in education and research.

It was important to him to visit these sites as Department Head so he could understand what resources and infrastructure are available, what faculty are at the sites, what has been their participation in research, what have been the barriers to research, and to gauge their interest in participating in distributed learning, he says, so we can begin to address those barriers.

Dr. Agyapong sees leveraging the opportunities presented by the distributed learning sites as a way to meet the expectation to increase the number of people in the department’s residency program.

The rationale is for the sites to become more involved in distributed learning, research, and other scholarly activities, he says.

Dr. Agyapong visited the Nova Scotia’s Western, Eastern, and Northern Zones, as well as New Brunswick.

At each site, Dr. Agyapong requests the site chiefs meet with their teams and provide him with feedback about the level of involvement they want to have from an academic standpoint. He notes the visits have been very positively received and feedback indicates excitement and enthusiasm from the faculty at the sites.

He says the next step is determining how they can be involved and sustaining their interest, and that follow-up meetings will be held.

However, Dr. Agyapong notes the collaborations locally and in Dublin are just the beginning.

“We need to begin to build alliances, we need to begin to *lead* alliances.”



Education in Psychiatry

Undergraduate Education

Dr. Alex Whynot was chosen by the clinical clerks to receive the Clerks' Choice Award for outstanding contributions to their teaching. Our residents received 66 nominations from the clerks.

A new seminar was added to the Clerkship curriculum developed by Drs. Laura Downing and Jason Morrison entitled *Optimizing Care for People with Serious Mental Illness*.

Skilled clinician will be delivered in three blocks in the upcoming year, requiring an increased number of tutors from 25 to 28.

The undergraduate psychiatry program continues to work to identify and maintain training rotations for the Med 3 Clerks, including at distributed sites.

Yarmouth will be added as a distributed site in the upcoming academic year, and the Acute Day Hospital will become a core clerkship rotation.

In June, the department received its last annual cohort of students from the International Medical University (IMU) in Malaysia to participate in the psychiatry block of the Link Program administered by the Global Health Office. Several faculty and residents were involved in preparing the three students for entry into clerkship.

The medical student-led Psychiatry Interest Group is in its 12th year. The group's mandate includes highlighting and facilitating discussion of mental

health and encouraging interest in the field of Psychiatry.

The department again welcomed Med 1 students from both campuses of Dalhousie's Medical School for the Summer Internship in Psychiatry (SIIP). SIIP is a resident-led initiative for Med 1 students to increase interest in and exposure to Psychiatry. This initiative took place May 23-26, 2023, with nine Med 1 students participating. The students met with psychiatrists from various subspecialties, psychiatry residents, and allied health professionals. They participated in interactive educational sessions, interview skills practices, clinical elective placements, and social events with the department's residents.

Postgraduate Education

Postgraduate education continued to implement Competency-Based Medical Education (CBME). A double cohort of residents will take the Royal College exam in 2024. The rotation schedule for fourth year will change to reflect new CBME training requirements.

The postgraduate program underwent an internal, mid-cycle program review in November 2022. Another internal review will be conducted by PGME in 2024, and the Royal College external review will occur in 2026.

Started in 2022, residents complete 10 per cent of their training outside of Halifax. After a successful pilot, all incoming PGY-2 residents will now complete a one-month experience in Cape Breton as part of their inpatient training. A pilot for five days of geriatric psychiatry training in the Annapolis Valley is underway with PGY-3 residents.

CaRMS 2023 was successful with all nine positions filled: eight in the first round, and one in the second round. The

department welcomed its incoming class of residents in July 2023.

The program's graduation celebration was held in person for the first time since 2019 on June 16, 2023. Congratulations to the class of 2023: Drs. Mackenzie Armstrong, Madeline Ferracuti, Courtney Handford, Katie Lines, Shiloh Gossen, Michelle MacDonald, Cody Sherren, Cinera States, and Kate Stymiest.



The class of 2023 with Dr. Lara Hazelton, Deputy Department Head and Director of Education; Dr. Ali Manning, Associate Director of Postgraduate Education; Dr. Vincent Agyapong, Department Head; and Dr. Deborah Parker, Director of Postgraduate Education at the graduation celebration on June 16, 2023.

Geriatric Psychiatry Subspecialty Program

Dr. Mackenzie Armstrong will be joining the subspecialty residency program as a PGY-6 resident in September 2023, and Dr. Amy Gough finished her subspecialty training in June 2023. Dr. Gough recently won the Doctors Nova Scotia Resident of the Year Award. The Geriatric Psychiatry section was very pleased to welcome Dr. Gough as staff psychiatrist in July 2023, with part-time duties at the Dartmouth site. The program is seeking to expand to two

subspecialty residency spots for 2024 due to high interest from psychiatry residents.

The subspecialty program continues to implement Competency-Based Medical Education, with regular ongoing faculty development sessions to facilitate this process.

Dr. Terry Chisholm has stepped down as geriatric subspecialty postgraduate program director and the program welcomed

Dr. Kathleen Singh as its new director.

The Seniors Mental Health Web Education Series continues to be very popular, delivered monthly to physicians and allied health professionals across the province. On average 150-200 participants attend, and Dr. Meagan MacNeil will be leading a review of the program to consider expansion to other Maritime provinces.

Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Education

In the 2022/23 academic year, child and adolescent faculty members supervised 31 medical students, 7 PGY-3 pediatric residents, 9 PGY-3 psychiatry residents, and 4 child and adolescent psychiatry subspecialty residents within our services.

Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Subspecialty Program

Nationally, Drs. David Lovas and Celia Robichaud are members of the Royal College subspecialty committee in child and adolescent psychiatry (CAP).

Drs. Lauren Chan and Emily Fraser successfully completed their PGY-5 residency. Dr. Chan entered the CAP subspecialty program as a PGY-6 on July 1, 2022, and Dr. Fraser commenced her PGY-6 year on Jan. 1, 2023.

Drs. Courtney Handford and Kate Stymiest joined the

division on July 1, 2022 as PGY-5 residents. They will begin their subspecialty training on July 1, 2023.

Subspecialty Welcome Day

Faculty and staff had the opportunity to welcome our new residents, Drs. Handford and Stymiest, on Sept. 17, 2022. The welcome day was hosted by Dr. Herb Orlik and his wife Phyllis at their summer home. The event provided an informal opportunity for faculty and staff to meet our incoming subspecialty residents.

The child and adolescent psychiatry subspecialty program are pleased to announce that Dr. Kyle Godden will begin his residency training with us in January 2024.

Subspecialty Rural Rotation

Each subspecialty resident in our program completes a two-month rotation in a rural clinic. Our first

rural rotation was completed by Dr. Lauren Chan in July and August 2022. Dr. Emily Fraser completed her rural rotation in January and February 2023. Both completed their rotation in Truro under the supervision of Drs. Singh and DeBoer. Residents noted that the entire Truro team was incredibly welcoming and made the rotation a great experience. Dr. Fraser stated “In Truro I was able to develop more clinical independence while also receiving excellent support and mentorship.”

Subspecialty Internal Accreditation Review

The child and adolescent psychiatry had their internal accreditation review on Nov. 14, 2022. The review of the subspecialty program was successful, with minor recommendations from the reviewers. The CAP residency program is in a good position for their external review in 2024/25.

Continuing Professional Development

Rounds continue to be delivered virtually with excellent attendance, and will be held virtually for the foreseeable future. Work is underway to devote a dedicated number of rounds spots for each of the five clinical academic sections/divisions, with each clinical section/division being invited to suggest at least one University Rounds speaker per academic year.

The following successful continuing professional

development workshops for faculty were held virtually this year:

- Nov. 18, 2022: Person Centered Mental Health Services: A Workshop, presented by Dr. Abraham Rudnick, Head of the Section of Community Psychiatry (now former)
- Jan. 20, 2023: Academic Career Development for Psychiatrists who Identify as Women, presented by

Dr. Lara Hazelton, Deputy Department Head, and Director of Education

- April 19, 2023: Restrictive practices not coercive measures: Therapeutic environments and proportionality, presented by Dr. Harry Kennedy, Clinical Professor of Forensic Psychiatry at Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland

This series was accredited and participants are able to claim Section 1 credits.

The annual W.O. McCormick Academic Day conference was held in person for the first time since 2019 on April 21, 2023 at the Westin Nova Scotian Hotel. Over 100 attendees heard presentations related to neuropsychiatry, this year's theme. Thank you to the event speakers: Dr. Andrew Howard (University of British Columbia), Dr. Mark Bosma (Dalhousie University), Dr. Celia Robichaud (Dalhousie University), Dr. Karen Chipman (Dalhousie University), and Dr. Abraham Snaiderman (University of Toronto).



Speakers at the 2023 W.O. McCormick Academic Day. Left to right: Dr. Cheryl Murphy, conference chair and Director of Continuing Professional Development, and speakers: Drs. Karen Chipman, Abraham Snaiderman, Celia Robichaud, and Andrew Howard. Missing from photo: Dr. Mark Bosma.

Curriculum Development and Scholarly Work

The department received \$8,270.30 in grant funding for two medical education projects from the department's Education Methods in Psychiatry fund:

- "Improving detection of bias at psychiatry grand rounds using audience feedback." (Hazelton L, Esliger M, Good K, Hill T, Manning A, Murphy C) for \$4,085.30.
- "Psychiatry Simulation: Enhancing experiential learning in CBME." (Manning A, Revell L, Nejati N) for \$4,185.00.

Twenty-four faculty, learner, and staff medical education projects were disseminated via conferences including:

- Psychiatry Research Day
- Dalhousie Faculty of Medicine's Medical Education

Research and Innovations Showcase (MERIS)

- International Congress on Academic Medicine (ICAM)
- The International Conference on Residency Education (ICRE)
- Association for Academic Psychiatry
- Choice & Partnership Approach (CAPA) for Child and Youth Mental Health International Conference
- Annual meetings of the Atlantic Provinces Psychiatric Association and Canadian Academy of Geriatric Psychiatry
- Atlantic Provinces Child & Adolescent Psychiatry Conference

- Other venues including Dalhousie University's PGME Education Day and Dalhousie Child and Adolescent Psychiatry's Retreat

Four medical education projects were published in various journals:

- Canadian Medical Education Journal
- International Journal of Psychiatry in Medicine
- JMIR Research Protocols

Seven learner scholarly projects were supervised by faculty and staff. Projects included needs assessments, curriculum development of medical student and resident teaching materials, and program evaluation of departmental programs.

International Fellowships Program

We have successfully launched the International Fellowships Program in Psychiatry in April 2022.

The program has attracted numerous international applications in several subspecialties:

Dr. Amjad Bin Faith at the Nova Scotia Operational Stress Injury Clinic; Dr. Tariq Alotaibi at the Mood Disorders Clinic; Dr. Awateif Alsupainy at Reproductive Mental Health; and Dr. Jasmine Demiroz at the Recovery and Integration

Services — Community Rehabilitation.

In addition, we have applicants who would like to join the International Fellowships Program in Addictions, but this is awaiting availability of a Clinical/Educational Supervisor.

The International Fellowships Program has obtained unreserved support from Dalhousie to open applications for International Fellows from developing countries and this process is underway.



International Fellow Dr. Demiroz (third from left) joined us in November 2022 and returned to her home country Saudi Arabia.

International Masters in Clinical Psychiatry

Work is underway to launch an International Masters in Clinical Psychiatry, which will help extend the global reach of the department. The program was originally a diploma program, but has since changed to a masters program. This international program is intended for generalist medical doctors, nurse practitioners, nursing specialists, and licensed medical practitioners throughout the Americas, Caribbean Islands, Europe/Middle East, Africa, and other members of the global

community who would like to be able to improve their care of patients with mental health conditions. These practitioners may be working in rural and/or lower socio-economic areas. The program will not confer any credentials that would allow for special licensing or certification beyond practitioners' current scope of practice in their jurisdictions.

The program will provide both didactic and experiential teaching with innovative, high

quality, and inclusive practices. It will provide students with education in diagnostic clinical skills, treatment planning, and an understanding of cultural and systems issues related to providing mental health care in the global community. The program is in stage two of the application process to Dalhousie University with a proposal being developed for approval. The department aims to welcome the first cohort of learners into this program in fall 2024.

Medical Humanities

The Medical Humanities program continued its activities effectively, including the annual student writing competition for medical students and resident trainees across Canada. Medical Humanities seminars continued

for residents and the annual Medical Humanities lecture for the department also occurred. The department's book club continued with attendance of faculty, learners, and staff. The Medical Humanities coordinator

continued in the role of editor of Headlines, the department's newsletter.

Graduate Training in Psychiatry Research

Four students from the department's MSc. 2020 cohort, and one from our 2019 cohort, successfully defended their theses in summer 2022. One student in the 2021 cohort also successfully completed their defense and is now enrolled in Dalhousie Medical School.

Graduates from the program's 2020 cohort include: two students enrolled in the clinical psychology program at Dalhousie University, one student working as a research assistant, one student began a counseling psychology degree at Yorkville University (concurrently enrolled in our program, but on leave), and two students were fast tracked into our PhD program.

Congratulations to Caitlin Robinson, Jenna Bissonnette, Anna Nazarova, and Silvia Marin-Dragu who graduated with their MSc. in Psychiatry research in fall 2022!

In September 2022, we welcomed six new MSc. students and two PhD students.

The 2021 cohort (Masters and PhD) has been busy and has been very successful with obtaining external funding. Many of the students are fully funded, with one student obtaining so many scholarships that they had to hold some of these as honorary.

A new course, Advanced Experiential Psychiatry, was offered in Winter 2023. This course provides PhD students

an understanding of the practice of clinical mental health care and the experience of having a mental illness and how this integrates with research. Clinician experiences, as well as persons with lived and living experience, provided instruction of the content of this course. Drs. Frank MacMaster, Aaron Keshen and Gail Eskes were the leads for this course. This new course was well-liked and will be offered again in 2025.

Three core courses were offered in Fall 2022 and Winter 2023 for our masters students and incoming PhD students (if they did not have similar courses in their masters). One course, Fundamentals of Psychiatry Research was taught/coordinated by Dr. Candice Crocker and another, Core

Perspectives on Psychiatric Disorders (taught/coordinated by Dr. Kim Good), were offered in Fall 2022. The final core course for MSc. students, Fundamentals of Applied Statistics and Research Design (instructed by Dr. Igor Yakovenko), was also offered in Winter 2023. A multivariate statistics course is planned for Fall 2023 or Winter 2024 to be instructed by Dr. Sandra Meier.

In spring/summer 2023, six MSc. students are scheduled to defend their theses. Two second year PhD students have passed their dissertation proposal defense, and one more is scheduled.

We are pleased to welcome a new cohort of six MSc. and two PhD. students in September 2023.



The September 2022 new class of graduate students: Nick Murray, (MSc.) Medard Adu (PhD), Thomas Snooks (MSc.), Gloria Obuobi-Donkor (PhD), Anastasia Harris (MSc.), Isaiah Burton (MSc.), Akua Agyare (MSc.), and Simon Leger (MSc.).

Department Researcher Participates in Federal Research Funding Announcement

On Feb. 28, 2023, the Honourable Carolyn Bennett, Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, announced that the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), is investing nearly \$5 million in 25 research projects to examine existing standards, best practices and guidelines for the delivery of mental health and substance use services for children, youth and young adults. The announcement was held at Dalhousie University with Dalhousie leaders and researchers, and government officials.

Dr. Lori Wozney along with a team from IWK, Dalhousie, Maritime SPOR Support Unit, and youth advocate from local chapter of Jack.org were awarded a grant as part of the funding initiative. Among the team are Department of Psychiatry members Drs. Jill Chorney, Sabina Abidi, and Sameh Hassan. They will lead an international group of collaborators to develop Pan-Canadian Inclusive Practice Principles for Working With Goals in Community Mental Health Services. Dr. Jill Chorney, Associate Professor in the Department of Psychiatry, spoke at the event on behalf of the team about the need to ensure all youth in Canada have a stronger voice in their care.

“We need to develop guidance that is flexible, and equity focused,” said Dr. Chorney. “And we will be most successful in doing this when we design our work intentionally with, and for, those most affected.”

“This is a task we approach with flexibility, open minds, and a commitment to both scientific evidence, and, crucially, the voice of lived experience. Our twin objectives of this work are to provide guidance to clinicians and health systems leaders on how to become more inclusive and culturally responsive in working with goals, and to help youth feel heard, stay engaged, and be able to realize their best hopes.”



Dr. Jill Chorney speaks at the announcement. Photo by Nick Pearce/Dalhousie University.

Research in Psychiatry

Hiring is underway for research assistants to aid each section/division with their research work. In collaboration with their section/division leadership and input from clinicians, projects have been identified and will begin once the research assistants are in place. Two of the hires have been completed for the sections of Geriatric Psychiatry and for Acute, Consultation, and Emergency Psychiatry.

2022 DPRF Summer Students

The Psychiatry Summer Studentship Program is designed to provide qualified undergraduate students with an opportunity to become involved in research in the Department of Psychiatry over the summer. This program offers students an opportunity to learn new research techniques as they acquire hands-on experience in running experiments and analyzing data.

In 2022, summer studentships were awarded to four learners:

- Tessa Cosman (Supervisor: Dr. Sherry Stewart)
- Steven Jackson (Supervisor: Dr. Barbara Pavlova)
- Catherine Standage (Supervisor: Dr. David Gardner)
- Adam Makarov (Supervisor: Dr. George Robertson)

Internal Research Funding

The department provided funding to the following research projects through the Department of Psychiatry Research Fund (DPRF).

April 2022 DPRF competition:

- Dr. George Robertson: “Development of an intranasal nanoparticles of lithium”
- Dr. Igor Yakovenko: “Risk factors and support needs in Canadian Online fantasy sports gamblers”

October 2022 DPRF competition:

- Drs. Emilie Lacroix & Aaron Keshen: “Toward an integrated treatment for comorbid eating disorders and substance use disorders”

External Grants for Department Investigators

Some of the external research grants department members* received included:

**Note only Dalhousie Department of Psychiatry faculty members who are part of the grants are included in the lists below.*

Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) Grants:

- Dr. Derek Fisher (Co-PI); Co-Investigators: Drs. Phil Tibbo and Tomas Hajek. CIHR Project Grant: “Characterizing the Neural Profiles of Bipolar Disorder with and without Auditory Hallucinations”
- Drs. Tomas Hajek and Martin Alda. CIHR. “Obesity, brain structure and cognitive functioning in major psychiatric disorders-large scale, multicenter study”
- Dr. Rudolf Uher. CIHR clinical trial project grant: “Optimized Predictive Treatment In Medications for Unipolar Major Depression (OPTIMUM-D)”
- Dr. Phil Tibbo (Co-PI); Dr. Jason Morrison (Knowledge User). CIHR Catalyst Grant: “Engaging Stakeholders in the Development of Standards for a Canadian Rapid Learning Health System in Early Intervention Services for Psychosis”
- Dr. Phil Tibbo (Co-Applicant). CIHR Catalyst Grant: “Policy Research for Health System Transformation: Strengthening the Delivery of Integrated Care in Specialized Mental Health Settings for Adults Experiencing Serious Mental Illness”
- Drs. Lori Wozney, Sabina Abidi, Sameh Hassan, and Jill Chorney. CIHR Standards for Children and Youth Mental Health Services Grant: “Where do you want to go?: Developing Practice Principles for Inclusive Goal-Based Outcome Monitoring With Youth in Community Mental Health Services”
- Dr. Sandra Meier (Principal Applicant); Co-applicants: Drs. Alexa Bagnell, Patricia Lingley-Pottie, Patrick McGrath, and Sherry Stewart; Principal Investigator: Dr. Manuel Mattheisen. CIHR Project Grant: “The GAYA Study-Exploring the Genetic Architecture of Youth Anxiety”
- Dr. Sandra Meier (Principal Applicant); Co-applicants: Drs. Alexa Bagnell, Jill Chorney, Leslie-Anne Campbell, Lori Wozney, Patrick McGrath, Rudolf Uher, and Sherry Stewart; Principal Investigator: Dr. Patricia Lingley-Pottie. CIHR Project Grant: “An AI-based Mobile Sensing Approach to Optimize Clinical Monitoring of Anxiety among Youth Patients”
- Penny Corkum (Principal Applicant); Dr. Sandra Meier (Co-Applicant); Dr. Jill Chorney (Knowledge User). CIHR Team Grant: Sleep Research Consortium –Sleep across the lifecycle: “Better Nights, Better Days for Canadians: An innovative national sustainable strategy to prevent and treat insomnia across the lifespan using digital approaches for sleep promotion, intervention, and provider training”
- Drs. Chelcie Soroka, Joanne Gusella, and David Pilon. CIHR. “Implementing Canadian Practice Guidelines for Treating Children and Adolescents with Eating Disorders”
- Dr. Selene Etches. CIHR Catalyst Grant: Standards for Children and Youth Mental Health Services: “Vaping in Adolescents Pan-Canadian Evidence-Informed Standards of Care”
- Drs. Igor Yakovenko, Sandra Meier, Penny Corkum, Patricia Lingley-Pottie, and Lori Wozney. CIHR: “DIVERT Mental Health: The Digital, Inclusive, Virtual, and Equitable Research Training in Mental Health Platform”
- Dr. Patrick McGrath (Principal Applicant); Dr. Sandra Meier (Co-Applicant). CIHR New Frontiers in Research Fund: “Health Anxiety from the Pandemic Initiative (HAPi)”
- Dr. Martin Alda (Co-Applicant). CIHR Project Grant: “Deciphering Mitochondrial Interplay in Bipolar Disorder”

- Drs. Martin Alda and Rudolf Uher (Co-Applicants). CIHR Project Grant: “Objectively derived biorhythm measures for a staging model: towards research exactness and appropriate treatments in bipolar disorder (TREAT-BD)”
- Drs. Sabina Abidi, Alexa Bagnell, and Jill Chorney (Co-Applicants). CIHR Project Grant: “Developing collaboratively a shared decision-making tool for home-based videoconferencing versus in person care in child and youth mental health”

Other external grants:

- Drs. Aaron Keshen (PI), Susan Gamberg, Abraham Nunes, Phil Tibbo. Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation (NSHRF): “Utilizing Peer Mentors to Improve Transitions for Youth with Eating Disorders: A Feasibility Study”
- Dr. Aaron Keshen (PI), Susan Gamberg. QEII Foundation (Nova Scotia), Translating Research into Care (TRIC): “A feasibility study examining the implementation of a brief, group-based intervention for eating disorders in Nova Scotia”
- Dr. Phil Tibbo. Vice-President Research & Innovation International Seed Fund (VPRIIS Fund): “Cross-validation of outcome prediction models in Early Intervention Services in Psychosis Programs internationally”
- Dr. Kara Dempster. Brain and Behavior Research Foundation 2022 Young Investigator Grant: “A prospective study of anterior cingulate cortex glutamate in first episode psychosis and subsequent treatment resistance”
- Dr. JianLi Wang (PI); Co-Investigators: Drs. Phil Tibbo, Rudolf Uher, Martin Alda, Sherry Stewart, Sandra Meier, Vincent Agyapong; Collaborators: Drs. Andrew Harris and Lori Wozney. Research Nova Scotia New Health Investigator Grant: “Predicting emergency department visits and hospitalization among the clients of Nova Scotia Mental Health and Addiction central intake assessment”
- Dr. Cynthia Calkin. Brain Repair Centre: “The role of insulin resistance, inflammation, and brain vasculature in psychiatric illness”
- Dr. Abraham Nunes, Research Nova Scotia. New Health Investigator Grant: “Computational Modelling of Memory Impairment Mechanisms in Bipolar Disorder”
- Dr. Abraham Nunes, QEII Foundation, TRIC: “Clinical Predictors of Response to IV Ketamine in Treatment-Resistant Depression: A Randomized Double-Blinded, Midazolam-Controlled Pilot Study”
- Drs. Abraham Nunes and Jared Allman, Nova Scotia Health Research Fund Grant, Category 4: “Prediction of Lithium Response Using Chronobiological Data”
- Dr. Sandra Meier (Principal Applicant); Co-Applicants: Drs. Alexa Bagnell, Mutiat Sulyman, Olugbenga Williams, and Penny Corkum. Nova Scotia Health Research Fund, Category 2: “AID - An App for Youth with Intellectual Disabilities”
- Drs. Sherry Stewart, Amy Bombay, Selene Etches, and Pamela Arenella. Team Grant: Canadian Research Initiative in Substance Misuse (CRISM) Phase II: Regional Nodes: “CRISM Atlantic Node: Establishing a Fifth Node in the Multidisciplinary, Multisectoral Canadian Research Initiative in Substance Misuse (CRISM) Research-Practice Network-of-Networks”
- Dr. Vincent Agyapong. Canadian Aid and Action Fund (CAAF) program of the Royal College Foundation (RCF): “Wellness4MDs”
- Dr. Phil Tibbo. RFP to the Standards Council of Canada: National Workshop Agreement (NWA) for Early Psychosis Intervention (EPI) in Canada
- Dr. Martin Alda. Agency for Health Research, Czech Republic: “Genomics of physiological regulations in bipolar affective disorder”

The Department of Psychiatry 32nd Annual Research Day

The department's 32nd Annual Research Day was held on Oct. 21, 2022 at the Atlantica Hotel. The event saw an increase in registrations and abstracts with 175 people registered for the event, and a total of 67 abstracts accepted. The keynote speaker was Dr. Paul Kurdyak, a psychiatrist at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) in Toronto. His presentation "Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Ontario's Mental Health System: lessons learned and a way forward," opened the event. There was a total of 15 oral presentations and a total of 52 poster presentations.

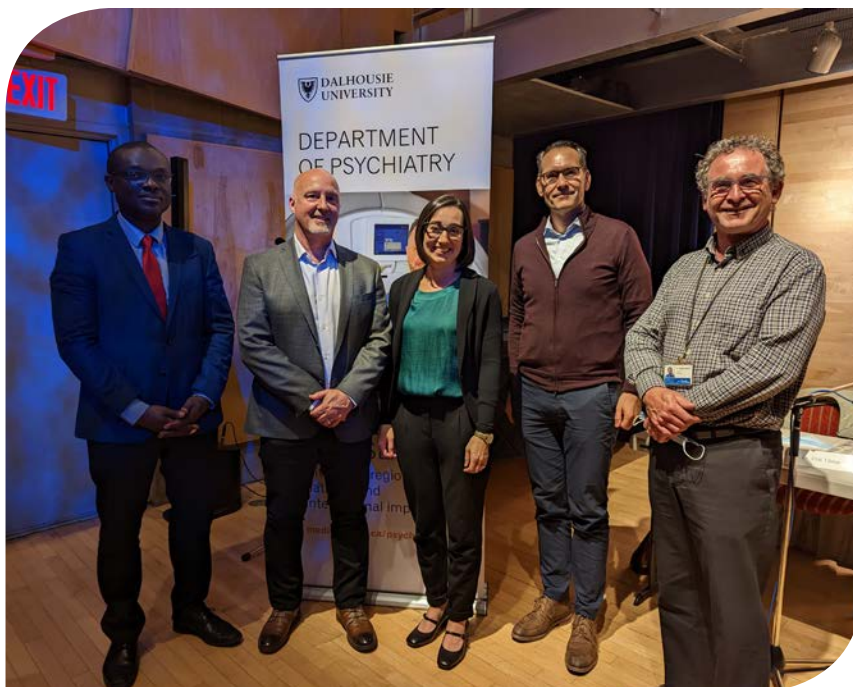
The annual Café Scientifique was held the evening prior on Oct. 20, 2022 at the Peggy Corkum Music Room, and was titled "Mental health service delivery post-pandemic: Lessons learned." Attendees heard from panelists: Dr. Paul Kurdyak, Psychiatrist, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) Toronto; Dr. Vincent Agyapong, Head, Department of Psychiatry, Dalhousie University and Head, Department of Psychiatry, Nova Scotia Health Central Zone; Dr. Jill Chorney, Associate Professor, Department of Psychiatry, Dalhousie University; Clinical Psychologist and Advance Practice Leader, Mental Health and Addictions Program, IWK; Dr. Andrew Harris, Senior Medical Director, Mental Health and Addictions Program, Nova Scotia Health; and, Dr. Phil Tibbo (moderator), Director of Research, Department of Psychiatry, Dalhousie University;

Psychiatrist, Nova Scotia Health Central Zone. The discussion explored important themes such as the long-term impact of long-covid, virtual care, collaborations, measurement, future of

psychiatric education, echo pandemic, burnout, collective mourning, and prevention.



Research Day 2022 Award Winners. Left to right: Dr. Phil Tibbo (Director of Research, Department of Psychiatry, and event chair), Dr. Vincent Agyapong (Head, Department of Psychiatry), Ross Langley (Best Presentation Award Graduate Student), Nicole Stinson (Best Presentation Award Psychiatry Staff), Dr. Matthew McAdam (Best Presentation Award Psychiatry Resident), Dr. Abraham Nunes (Best Presentation Award Junior Faculty/Post-Doctoral Fellow). Missing from photo: Tessa Cosman (Best Presentation Award Undergraduate Student).



2022 Café Scientifique panelists. From left to right: Drs. Vincent Agyapong, Phil Tibbo, Jill Chorney, Paul Kurdyak, and Andrew Harris.

LIST OF RESEARCH TOPICS

Aboriginal mental health	Executive functioning	Perfectionism
Addiction	First episode psychosis	Personality
ADHD	Gender	Personality disorder
Alcohol abuse	Gene expression	Pharmacogenetics
Alzheimer's Disease	Genetics	Pharmacological interventions
Animal model	Group resilience	Problem gambling
Anxiety disorders	Health psychology	Programming of gene expression
Attachment	Imaging	Psychoeducation
Autism	Implementation science	Psychopharmacology
Biomarkers	Implicit cognition	Psychosis
Child and adolescent mental health	Knowledge translation	Psychotherapy
Chronic pain	Medical education	PTSD
Cognitive behaviour therapy	Medical sociology	Rehabilitation
Cortical development	Medically unexplained physical symptoms	Schizophrenia
Cross cultural mental health	Memory	School mental health
Cross cultural psychology	Mental health education	Sleep
Dementia	Mindfulness	Smart health technology
Depression	Mood disorders	Social behaviour
Dopamine	Multiple sclerosis	Social media
Early interventions	Neurodegenerative diseases	Socio-economic factors
Eating disorders	Neurodevelopmental disorders	Somatic symptoms
Emotional processing	Neuroplasticity	Somatization
Emotions and health	Neuropsychology	Somatoform
Endocrine and behavioural stress responses	Neuroscience	Substance abuse
Epidemiology	Pain	Suicide

Canada Research Chair in Addictions and Mental Health: **Dr. Sherry Stewart**



The Canada Research Chair in Addictions and Mental Health, Dr. Stewart, focuses on understanding underlying mechanisms and effective interventions for concurrent mental health-addictive disorders. Dr. Stewart spent her sabbatical at l'Université de Montréal with Dr. Patricia Conrod adapting their personality-targeted interventions for opioid agonist therapy (OAT) clients (CIHR-funded 'OpiVenture').

Dr. Stewart is director of a \$2.5 million SSHRC grant testing an adaptation of her personality-targeted adolescent mental health promotion/substance misuse prevention program for undergraduates. 'UniVenture' is taking place at five universities, in collaboration with 20+ methodological/knowledge translation partners. This year, the adapted intervention was delivered to Cohorts 3 and 4; the consortium published several papers on undergraduates' mental health/substance use.

Dr. Stewart is NS Site Lead on the Canadian Underage Substance Prevention trial (\$1.7 million CIHR-funded), to disseminate her personality-targeted substance use prevention program to Canadian high schools. Her team has been busy training/supervising SchoolsPlus staff as facilitators, running surveys in schools, and delivering interventions. Dr. Stewart organized/delivered an invited symposium on personality-targeted interventions for youth substance misuse at the Canadian Association for Cognitive Behavior Therapy annual meeting.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Dr. Stewart studied effects of mandatory homeschooling and lockdown on romantic couples'/families' mental health/addictive behaviours. She provided a keynote address at the Canadian Institute for Pandemic Health Education and Response conference on this work.

Dr. Stewart's lab completed a trauma cue-induced automatic cognitions study to help explain PTSD-addictions comorbidity, which was presented at a Veterans' conference in Montreal. She delivered an invited talk on her collaborative work on PTSD-addictions comorbidity in public safety personnel at the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences Annual Forum in Montreal. She

delivered two invited talks on her ancillary study on the sexual side effects of two forms of OAT in men and women with opioid addiction at a Canadian Research Initiative in Substance Misuse (CRISM) conference in Banff and via webinar to the Atlantic Pain & Addiction Network.

Dr. Stewart is the Nominated Principal Investigator of the new fifth node of CRISM, located in Atlantic Canada (\$2.4 million). This year they have hired staff, developed working groups/advisory councils, launched their research development program, and planned an Indigenous research conference. During her Montreal sabbatical, Dr. Stewart has benefitted from the accumulated expertise of the CRISM-Quebec Node in setting up CRISM-Atlantic operations. She presented on the Node's vision and accomplishments to the Institute Advisory Board meeting of CIHR's Institute for Neurosciences, Mental Health & Addictions.

Canada Research Chair in Developmental Psychopathology and Youth Mental Health: **Dr. Sandra Meier**



The Canada Research Chair in Developmental Psychopathology and Youth Mental Health, Dr. Sandra Meier, and the PROSIT (Predicting Risk and Outcomes of Social Interactions) lab are leveraging mobile technology to improve the mental health care of youth and families. Close to 7,000 youth and families have so far participated in Dr. Meier's research.

A key area of the lab's research focuses on recording objective markers of people's behaviour to personalize risk assessments and treatment. To this purpose, Dr. Meier has developed an innovative mobile sensing app that has now been downloaded by more than 2,500 users, with more than 1,700 of them providing data for at least 14 days. The app is currently used in an SSHRC-funded project to predict new onsets of mental disorders in youth as well as in a CIHR-funded project to identify youth with anxiety disorders who are likely to not respond well to

CBT. Data collected by the app has already provided valuable insights, highlighting that not all types of screen usage are detrimental to mental health. Primarily passive screen usage was found to pose a negative effect on mental health by reducing youth's sleep, while active screen usage seemed to support mental health. Translating these observational findings to clinical care, the lab has co-designed a mental health app called SMILE that provides personalized, just-in-time interventions to youth based on their individual mobile-sensing profiles. The lab also completed a clinical trial of another mental health app called GIA involving 120 youth, compared to the control group the app significantly improved the mental health of youth with an effect size of 0.7.

Dr. Meier also leads an initiative aiming to develop online interventions for families of children with rare genetic syndromes. Over 120 families indicate their needs and wishes in an initial pilot study. The initiative has currently partners in over eight countries and is involving >19 patient organizations. In November 2021, Dr. Meier received >\$1M of funding from the European Joint Programme on Rare Diseases for the initiative. Dr. Meier was invited by patient organizations to present the study at the European and International

Patient Organization Meetings. She also received funding to develop a mental health app for families living with rare genetic syndromes. Finally, Drs. Meier and Mattheisen lead a Pan-Canadian consortium funded through CIHR to uncover the genetic underpinnings of youth anxiety, for which Dr. Meier was awarded the Maud Menten Prize in Clinical Genetics in 2022. Dr. Meier further supervised 15 students (four graduated in 2022) and four postdocs in the last year across disciplines and has authored 14 publications, with 10 more in review, and three close to submission.

Canada Research Chair in Early Intervention: Dr. Rudolf Uher



Dr. Uher carries out clinical research with the aim to reduce the burden of psychosis, bipolar disorder, and major depressive disorder, through early identification of risk, prevention, and personalized treatment. The year 2022/23 has seen the publication of three key discoveries based on Dr. Uher's research program and an expansion of efforts to personalize treatment for depression.

The Families Overcoming Risks and Building Opportunities for Wellbeing (FORBOW) project continues to follow 600 youth participants, and has launched a second site in New Glasgow to help support youth mental health in the Pictou country and surrounding regions. The discoveries stemming from FORBOW published in the last year changed the way we see brain development, clarified how anxiety is passed on from parents to children, and brought genetic testing to early identification of risk in families.

Brains aging too early?

Adolescents who experienced adversity, developed depression, or struggled with school and relationships had brains that looked older than their calendar age on a magnetic brain scan. We reported this for the first time in an open access Biological Psychiatry Cognitive Clinical Neuroscience article published in April 2022. Seeing developmental brain age deviation in early teens makes it clear that interventions need to start earlier to help young people return to healthy developmental trajectory.

Like father like son. While we had known for a long time that anxiety tends to run in families, the relative importance of mothers and fathers was unclear. In July 2022, we reported that anxiety is transmitted from mothers to daughters and from fathers to sons. Having a non-anxious parent of the same gender provides strong protection against anxiety. This finding, published in JAMA Network Open, was covered by over a hundred news stories. It brought calls to investigate how treating anxiety in parents can help prevent anxiety and mood problems in children.

Can a genetic test help predict mental illness? For a long time, it has been known that family history is the strongest predictor of mental illness. In February 2023, we showed that a genetic test can improve on family history when predicting

who is at risk for developing depression, bipolar disorder, or psychosis. This work, based on a collaboration of researchers from six countries and a combined cohort of 2,000 youth, was published in the American Journal of Psychiatry in February 2023. It offers a mean to improve targeted early intervention to prevent mental illness in young people.

The intervention program led by Dr. Uher, has expanded to examine early treatment of first episode depression and test a personalized way of selecting treatment for major depressive disorder in addition to preventive interventions.

The Treatment Interrupts Depression Early (TIDE) project, is the first study to examine personalized treatment for the first episode of depression in youth. Supported by the Medavie Health Foundation, TIDE enrolled the first 12 participants in 2022/23. TIDE uses an innovative combination of activity tracking, brain wave recording, and voice analysis to find out who will benefit from psychological treatment and who required medication to overcome depression and build resilience. The companion Open Clinical Experience for Adolescents in Neuroscience (OCEAN) project invites young people age 12-24 to experience clinical neuroscience first-hand and become champions for the prevention and early treatment of depression.

In April 2023, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research awarded 5-year funding to Optimized Predictive Treatment In Medications for Unipolar Major Depression (OPTIMUM-D), a multi-side project led by Dr. Uher and supported by the Canadian Biomarker Integration Network in Depression (CAN-BIND) that tests whether a biomarker-based personalized selection of antidepressant medication improves the outcomes of major depressive disorder.

Dr. Uher further contributes to the fight against depression

by serving as the Canadian Commissioner on Depression, coordinating the data science platform of the Canadian Biomarker Integration Network for Depression, and by leading the initial treatment selection work group of the Canadian Network for Mood and Anxiety Treatment 2023 clinical guidelines.

The projects and activities of Dr. Uher's team present unique opportunities for exceptional graduate students to obtain experience on cutting-edge work that improves prevention

and treatment of mental illness. The program continues to produce exceptionally trained professional who have the skills and expertise to link neuroscience and computer science with clinical practice. In the year 2022/23, two students completed Masters degrees under Dr. Uher's supervision, two graduate students obtained competitive funding, and two team members started doctoral training in clinical psychology or medical school.

Killam Chair in Mood Disorders: Dr. Martin Alda



Dr. Martin Alda, the Killam Chair in Mood Disorders, and the research team at the mood disorders program have been active in several areas during the 2022/23 academic year. Dr. Alda has taken one-year sabbatical from July 2022 to June 2023 to advance research collaborations of his group. These collaborations cover joint projects with research groups in Israel, Czech Republic, and Italy among other countries.

This year, we successfully completed two major projects — one on Early Detection of Bipolar Disorder and Optimized Selection of Long-term Treatment funded by Genome Atlantic / Genome Canada, and the other on Personalization of Long-term Treatment in Bipolar Disorder (PLOT-BD) funded by ERAPerMed European program.

At the same time, we have initiated two major projects funded by CIHR and by Czech Agency for Medical Research, both focused on digital monitoring in people with bipolar disorder and the connection between mood variability and the longitudinal course of the illness.

We also continue their clinical and genetic studies of bipolar disorder and pharmacogenetics of treatment response. Most recently, we helped co-found an international consortium to study the genetic underpinnings of

long-term response to treatment with anticonvulsants. In this consortium we coordinate the clinical phenotyping of the sample and analyze the clinical predictors of valproate and lamotrigine response. Our work on transcriptomic profile of stem cell-derived neurons from responders and non-responders to lithium has led to a patent application jointly with the University of Haifa and with Salk Institute.

Continuing work with several international consortia, Dr. Alda and colleagues reported a number of findings from molecular genetic studies. As part of the Psychiatric Genomics Consortium, they contributed to the largest genome-wide association study of the genetics of suicide (Mullins et al. 2022) and a new genome-wide association study of bipolar disorder (in preparation).

Dr. Paul Janssen Chair in Psychotic Disorders: **Dr. Philip Tibbo**



Dr. Philip Tibbo, as the Dr. Paul Janssen Chair in Psychotic Disorders, continues in his mandate to lead, foster, and mentor research in psychosis and schizophrenia. His research focus has remained in the field of early intervention for psychosis, covering neuroimaging to service delivery and novel treatment options.

Over the last year, research continued into the understating of the effects of cannabis on psychosis development and outcomes. Completed in early 2023 is a CIHR-funded neuroimaging study, aiming to characterize the effects of various levels of cannabis use on brain white matter (WM) structure and connectivity, examining groups of young adults with and without early phase psychosis (EPP). Data is currently at the analyses stage. The chair is also co-leading a CIHR Team catalyst grant with colleagues across

the country to examine the genetic, pharmacologic and psychosocial factors linked to cannabis-induced psychosis and the neurodevelopmental mechanisms underlying risk. The Halifax arm is actively recruiting non-help seeking adolescents (15–16-year-olds) to investigate neuroinflammation, neuronal connectivity and function with adolescent exposure to cannabis via neuroimaging. A CCSA-funded collaborative project with members of the Department of Emergency Medicine completed data collection in the spring of 2023, examining physical and mental health cannabis-related presentations to the emergency department. Ongoing is another CIHR-funded study examining the use of cognitive enhancement therapy for problematic alcohol use in early phase psychosis, complementing the recently completed TRIC funded psychotherapy study for those with past adverse events, substance use and psychosis.

Collaborations with other researchers locally, nationally, and internationally remains important to the chair. Projects with collaborators are aimed to further our understanding of substance use in psychosis and treatment of this comorbidity. Ongoing non-substance misuse focused EPP collaborations include investigations of ERP markers in high-risk populations, neuroimaging markers of

clozapine eligibility in EPP and problematic gambling in EPP.

Newly awarded research grants in the last year with collaborators include standardizing approaches to transitions in care in EPP programming (CIHR), development of standards for a Canadian rapid learning health system (CIHR), strengthening the delivery of integrated care in specialized mental health settings (CIHR), cross-validation of outcome prediction models in Early Intervention Services in Psychosis Programs internationally (VPRIISF), and characterizing the neural profiles of Bipolar Disorder with and without auditory hallucinations (CIHR).

The chair continues as President of the Canadian Consortium for Early Intervention in Psychosis (CCEIP), and Clinical Director of Early Psychosis Intervention Nova Scotia (EPINS).

Rapid Access and Stabilization Program to Create Opportunities for Researchers and Learners

A new program aimed at improving access to mental health care in Nova Scotia's Central Zone will also create opportunities for researchers and learners at Dalhousie University's Department of Psychiatry.

The Rapid Access and Stabilization Program (RASP) will provide timely access to psychiatry consultations, so patients are assessed sooner by a specialist.

Psychiatrists and other mental health clinicians will participate in a rotating roster to provide care that will include direct patient assessments and telephone consultations with primary care providers. Patients can continue to be cared for by their primary care provider with specialist input. The assessment and consultations will mainly focus on diagnostic clarification and treatment recommendations.

The program aims to reduce wait times for community mental health services, to provide short-term psychiatric care to patients earlier, and to lessen the burden on hospital emergency departments.

It also presents new opportunities for researchers and learners, with the goal of establishing a collaborative education, training, and research program.

All patients assessed through RASP will have the opportunity to participate in research, including clinical trials.



RASP launched on April 25, 2023. From left to right: Dr. Vincent Agyapong (Department Head), Dr. Sherry James, Dr. Sanjana Sridharan (Head, Section of Acute, Consultation, and Emergency Psychiatry), Dr. Barani Sambandan, Dr. Shiloh Gossen, Dr. Anthony Pianosi, Dr. Ngozi Ezeanozie, Dr. Jason Morrison, and Matt White (Co-Director, MHAP Central Zone).

"I am looking forward to the new clinical research opportunities the Rapid Access and Stabilization Program will bring to the department," says Dr. Phil Tibbo, Director of Research, Department of Psychiatry. "This program will provide unique quality improvement and quality assurance opportunities, administrative data analyses, as well as other research avenues that can be explored, expanding and complementing the already existing research excellence of our department."

Currently, patients can opt to enroll in the Text4Support research study which has received NS Health ethics approval and funding from the QEII Foundation.

Patients may also be asked to consent to their data being used for health services research and evaluation purposes with no identifying information.

Other research programs within the RASP initiative are under development.

It is anticipated the Rapid Access and Stabilization program will provide opportunities for residents and other learners to receive training in mental health assessments and management.

"We are looking forward to exploring what educational opportunities the program may present for learners in our department," says Dr. Lara Hazelton, Director of Education, Department of Psychiatry.

Excellence in **Patient Care**

Section of Acute, Consultation, and Emergency Psychiatry

The Section of Acute, Consultation, and Emergency Psychiatry has been working to fill vacancies, has increased patient capacity through the Day Hospital Program, has generated research ideas, and the Text4Support program has been gaining momentum. The Day Hospital has expanded its interdisciplinary team to include an occupational therapist.

The Rapid Access and Stabilization Program launched on April 25, 2023. The program is a partnership between the Mental Health and Addictions Program, NS Health, and the Dalhousie Department of Psychiatry and provides additional access to psychiatry support for primary health care providers including nurse practitioners in the Central Zone. The program has been very well received and garnered some media attention.

An inpatient psychiatry retreat was held the afternoon of Dec. 16, 2022. All members of the inpatient psychiatric team were present, joined by Dr. Agyapong, Department Head, and Matt White, Co-Director of Mental Health and Addictions Program Central Zone.

Physicians took turns presenting on a variety of topics including enhancing respectful and collegial working relationships,

building trust, enhancing patient care, and culture of continuous quality improvement. The presentations were excellent, and the conversations were productive in keeping with the department's goals of being leaders in leading practice and professional collaboration.

The Section of Acute, Consultation, and Emergency Psychiatry filled three Clinical Academic Leader (CAL) positions effective March 6, 2023, and two CAL positions effective June 1, 2023. Additionally, the section appointed a new Hospitalist Lead, effective May 8, 2023. In May 2023, Dr. Pamela Arenella stepped down as Associate Head of the section.

Keeping with the goal of appointing a research assistant for each clinical academic

section/division, the section's research director has hired a research assistant to aid the section in its research work. The section was pleased to welcome new faculty members, filling vacancies in Acute Care, Psychiatry Emergency Services, and the Rapid Access and Stabilization Program.



Participants at the inpatient psychiatry retreat.

Section of Community Psychiatry

The Section of Community Psychiatry completed its first year of operation at the end of March 2023 with the leadership of the inaugural section head Dr. Abraham (Rami) Rudnick, who stepped down from this role at the end of March 2023 and was replaced by Dr. Mahmoud Awara.

Community Psychiatry is comprised of three subsections: general outpatient psychiatry (including various sites), specialized psychiatry (including various services), and Connections services. The section and subsections meet and involve related Nova Scotia Health administrative leaders and staff as needed. Short and longer-term priorities of the section have been discussed, planned, and are being actioned, such as addressing clinical service gaps as well as educational needs and research opportunities.

Securing the section's leadership structure has been important in its first year. This includes working to establish an associate section head with primary

responsibility for education, Clinical Academic Leaders (CALs) for some of the section-related units, and a research director for the section.

The section has been working on enhancing access to community psychiatry and other ambulatory mental health and addiction services, such as by increasing efficiency of referrals to psychiatrists and other mental health clinicians, and timeliness of their encounters with referred patients. This process is complete for external referrals and work continues for internal referrals.

Work processes of section members, such as semi-standardizing direct vs. indirect psychiatry care ratios, have also been standardized.

Shared care with primary care providers has been expanded to include Dalhousie family medicine clinics in the Halifax area.

The section has been working on enhancing transcultural

mental health care, such as for Newcomers, African Nova Scotians, and Indigenous people. Services are offered at the Brotherhood and Newcomer clinics, a Ukrainian path was added in January 2023, and services for the Sisterhood clinic and the Friendship Centre are being planned.

Community Psychiatry is also engaged in quality improvement and service development. In planning with Autism Nova Scotia, the section is working on a joint venture for psychiatrists and other clinicians to help with autism spectrum disorder assessment capacity. A collaboration with Mobile Outreach Street Health (MOSH) to address patients who are homeless or precariously housed is also underway.

The section is encouraging its members' involvement in undergraduate medical education, is continuing its recruitment of psychiatrists to the section, and is collaborating with other sections in the department.

Section of Forensic Psychiatry

The Section of Forensic & Correction Psychiatry is undergoing an overhaul of all services and procedures including a review of security and model of care. They established a transparent and structured process to involve every member of the service and the patients under their care. Clinical leadership and input

from clinicians are being heard and acted upon. The section has a well working Clinical Advisory Committee that feeds into the Clinical Leadership Committee. Decisions are transparent and discussed at all levels.

The section underwent a major review of the service that led to many recommendations.

They established a timeline for implementing these recommendations, and overall, are on schedule. The recommendations, presented in large categories, include understanding patient needs, identifying best practices and standards, organizational structure/governance, facilities, equipment, policies and

procedures, and role definitions and intra-professional team functioning.

The section has had accomplishments towards these recommendations which include recruitment, patient care needs assessment (more than 50 per cent complete), standard operating procedures, and organizational structure. Of note, work to improve patient flow which included a reorganization of units A and B, grouping patients based on acuity and risk, demonstrated success in reduction of contraband and safety incidents, and an increase in patient and staff satisfaction overall. Other accomplishments include a general orientation revamp for all staff, a shift to prime nursing model of care on rehab units, improvements to physical space, adoption of

Dynamic Appraisal of Situational Aggression (DASA) for East Coast Forensic Hospital and incorporating that as part of the documentation. The section continues to innovate and improve morale and clinical care with an eye on research and outcome measures.

In April 2023, the East Coast Forensic Hospital was visited by Dr. Harry Kennedy, a Clinical Professor of Forensic Psychiatry at Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland, who is one of the doctors involved in reviewing and reporting on the forensic service. He assisted in the development of the Model of Care moving forward. This was facilitated by a joint effort between the NSH Mental Health and Addictions program and the Dalhousie Department of Psychiatry.

The section also welcomed a recent addition to the team — a Criminal Code Review Board (CCRB) coordinator to develop/modify the process of CCRB submissions and make it streamlined and consistent.

We are almost done with the important first element of the MOC that establishes the Principles and Goals of the service and started tackling the other large part of the elements of recovery (Personal, Symptomatic, Functional and Forensic) and the identified seven pillars of care.

We are adding a position of CAL for Correction Services and we are expecting a new addition to our psychiatry complement starting around the end of August 2023.

Section of Geriatric Psychiatry

The Geriatric Psychiatry Outreach Team, located at the Abbie Lane and NSH (Mount Hope), continues to provide high-quality clinical care in a variety of settings. Assessment settings include outpatient clinics, home visits, long-term care settings, and inpatient settings which include Psychiatry adult acute care units and the Geriatric Assessment Unit. The Geriatric Acute Inpatient Unit, a 19-bed acute care unit for older adults with psychiatric disorders, also continues to deliver high-quality care at the NSH site. Meetings regularly occur at all clinical sites to review and improve processes.

The section is compiling a list of current research projects and generating ideas for future projects. In spring of 2023, a search for a research assistant took place and a research assistant has been hired to aid the section with its research work. The section has strong output, with frequent collaboration between physicians and medical learners, and representation at national specialty society meetings.

The section is re-evaluating its team triage process to ensure triage processes are aligned

between the two clinical service delivery sites. An individual has been identified who will manage the triage process for both sites, and who will collaborate with Central Intake and Geriatric Medicine to ensure patient referrals are properly directed.

Division of **Child & Adolescent Psychiatry**

The Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, together with the Mental Health and Addictions program at the IWK, provide quality mental health and addictions care to children, youth, and families locally, provincially, and in the Maritimes. Services include child and adolescent emergency/crisis, inpatient, intensive, outpatient, and community based clinics.

The year 2022/23 has welcomed a return to more normalcy and the opportunity to move out of the pandemic reaction and response, to more generative and future thinking. The coming back together in person for meetings and social events was most welcome, and supported reconnecting and excitement in moving forward. These changes also enabled space for planning, visioning and generative thinking for the division.

In September 2022, the Department of Psychiatry Head engaged faculty around the transformative plan for the overall department. The Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and IWK Mental Health and Addictions Program work focused on equity, diversity and inclusion, distributed education for residents, faculty wellness, scholarship vision, and increased clinical access to psychiatry consultations aligned well with the overall department transformative plan.

In January 2023, the Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry held a half day strategic direction retreat which was well attended and had great participation and enthusiasm in creating the key strategic directions across our four pillars (clinical, education, research, and governance/advocacy). The round table, in-person format was a welcome change from Zoom, and the division executive took the lead for each of the tables. This engagement has given the faculty a clearer sense of direction as we move into the next several years and our areas identified aligned well with Dalhousie Psychiatry and IWK strategic future directions.

Our provincial government has been highly invested in provincial mental health and addictions services across the continuum, and the ministerial mandate of Office of Addictions and Mental Health established universal mental health care to increase access for Nova Scotians and to reduce barriers. Several business cases have been funded over the past year including provincial intensive outreach services for children and youth with ASD, the African Nova Scotia Service, and trauma informed care expansion all led by IWK mental health and addictions. There has also been



a provincial leadership table established for mental health and addictions care with IWK (Chief of Psychiatry & Director MHA), NSH (Senior Psychiatry Lead & Senior Director) and Office of Addictions and Mental Health to lead this work together supporting a true provincial strategy for Nova Scotians.

The continuous improvement work of IWK psychiatry and IWK Mental Health and Addictions Program has been recognized nationally this year as a leading practice in using data to inform service design, resource allocation, quality, and engagement. The IWK Chief and Associate Chief of Psychiatry were invited to present at the University of Toronto Cundill lecture series on this work in spring 2022 and presented at Department of Psychiatry academic rounds in fall 2023. This has led to national consultations with other child and adolescent psychiatry divisions working to

develop a data-informed and quality approach to services. Excitingly, this year we launched Greenspace, an online platform to monitor patient outcomes, and psychiatry faculty were the first group to be trained in and to implement this program in the specific care clinics.

Our subspecialty CAP psychiatry residency program has been very successful with four residents in the program and achieving excellent reviews in the fall internal review at Dalhousie. The residents really enjoyed working in the distributed sites rurally in Truro and the Valley, and highly rated these experiences. In research, our tier 2 Canada Research Chair has been very productive and successful in two major grants and multiple publications, and our faculty have presented over 50 talks and published 16 peer reviewed papers. We were excited to welcome our new education and research coordinator to help support this work in spring 2022.

Our provincial child and adolescent psychiatry network have been continuing to strengthen and grow our work together. We had two successful retreats this year, and we had the most well attended Atlantic Provinces Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Conference to date at White Point in June 2022, the first time in person since the pandemic. Many of our faculty were recognized with university and provincial awards for their contributions to mental health and addictions in the region. We are so proud of the leadership, capacity building, scholarship and incredible clinical care provided by our

faculty in collaboration with the Department of Psychiatry and IWK Mental Health and Addictions. Thank you to all the members of our division and administrative team who bring their best to delivering excellence in their clinical and academic roles and who are so supportive of each other.



Attendees at the 14th Atlantic Provinces Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Conference in June 2022.

Social Policy & Advocacy

Social Policy & Advocacy is a newer area of priority of the department's strategic plan, and the Social Policy & Advocacy Committee was recently established. The committee held its first meeting in September 2022, and is led by Dr. Keri-Leigh Cassidy, the Social Policy & Advocacy Director.

The purpose of the committee is to develop and implement a social policy & advocacy strategy for the department based on the departmental strategic plan.

The committee's membership is comprised of representatives from different department groups, including EDIA and wellness, as well as community partner organizations, and lived experience representatives.

The Social Policy & Advocacy Committee has conducted an engagement survey of its members to provide input into the committee's focus and actions. It has advertised for and welcomed lived experience representatives to

the committee. The committee also developed a Social Policy & Advocacy funding policy and expression of interest form to help determine which Social Policy & Advocacy initiatives are funded. Lastly, the committee has initiated a draft Social Policy & Advocacy strategy. Once complete, the strategy will help guide the department's actions in this important area.

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHIATRY MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

MISSION

To improve the mental health of society and advance the field of psychiatry through education, research, advocacy, and psychiatric care.

VISION

Excellence and innovation in education, research, and psychiatric care.

VALUES

Integrity
Creativity
Professionalism
Accountability
Collaboration
Compassion
Inclusivity

Wellness in the Department of Psychiatry

From March to December 2021, a departmental task force developed an action plan for four, high-level actions pertaining to wellness from the department's strategic plan. This action plan and available research evidence were used to draft the Department of Psychiatry Wellness Strategy, which was approved by Dr. Agyapong in May 2022 and presented to the executive in June 2022.

The Wellness Committee was established in July 2022 with representatives from stakeholders across the Department of Psychiatry. Committee representation includes research and clinical faculty, administrative staff, graduate students, resident physicians, representation from the EDIA Committee, and representation from each clinical section, Nova Scotia Health Zones, and Horizon Health in New Brunswick.

The committee began meeting in September 2022 and is led by Dr. Zenovia Ursuliak, the department's Wellness Chair. The committee's work has included the following initiatives.

1) Organizational Analysis: Beginning in fall 2022, the committee, in partnership with departmental leadership, began an organizational analysis with the following objectives:

a) Use available Dalhousie wellness/burnout data to raise awareness about our current state of wellbeing of department members. Dr. Ursuliak presented departmental results of the Faculty of Medicine's wellness survey at the department's bi-annual full faculty meeting on May 2, 2023.

b) Determine department member's priorities in addressing drivers of burnout and promoting wellness and professional fulfillment, and identify local wellness strengths/resources that can be leveraged. To accomplish this, the committee launched A Solutions for Wellness Survey in May 2023. Committee representatives consulted their local leadership to create the solutions-oriented survey based on three domains that promote professional fulfillment. The survey will be used to identify local and department-wide initiatives that will be actioned by the Wellness Committee in partnership with Department of Psychiatry leadership.

2) Wellness Events:

a) A department-wide summer event, planned by a working group, was held on June 23, 2023 at Hatfield Farm. The working group was comprised of members of the Wellness Committee, resident representative, and staff who planned this event based on

survey results from over 100 Department of Psychiatry members.

b) Monthly hiking outings to promote community and healthy activity. Hikes to explore nature in our beautiful province are happening monthly on a Sunday, from April 2023 through to October 2023. All department members are welcome to participate.

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility in the Department of Psychiatry

The Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility (EDIA) Committee is a newly-established committee in the Department of Psychiatry. The committee, with a broad representation from the department and partners, is led by Dr. Mutiat Sulyman, EDIA Director.

In preparation for the work of the committee, the department consulted Dr. Gaynor Watson-Creed (Associate Dean, Serving and Engaging Society) from the Faculty of Medicine and representatives from the physician performance office at the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia (CPSNS) to discuss their new initiative of orientation for new International Medical Graduates (IMGs) to Nova Scotia.

An initial focus has been on establishing EDIA representation on department committees, and on education. Dr. Sulyman, EDIA Director, is serving on numerous committees, including the department's Executive Committee, and search committees for leadership positions within the department. In addition, members of the EDIA Committee are representatives on the department's Awards, Wellness, and International Fellows Program Committees.

Drs. States and Sulyman presented on EDIA at ground rounds on Oct. 12, 2022, where the results of the 2021 EDIA survey conducted by the Continuing Professional Development Committee were presented. Dr. States presented a poster on the EDIA survey results, titled "Educating for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Within the Department of Psychiatry: Results of a Needs Assessment," at the department's Research Day on Oct. 21, 2022.

On Oct. 18, 2022, Drs. Sulyman and Sridharan presented at the CPSNS to IMGs who have recently arrived in Nova Scotia. Feedback was excellent, and they presented again in April and in June 2023.

Committee members were invited to speak at the DPRA Presidents Symposium in August 2023 about their EDIA work.

Dr. Gaynor Watson-Creed spoke to the committee at its November 2022 meeting. We were also fortunate to hear a presentation by Dr. Gaynor Watson-Creed on EDIA at the department's bi-annual full faculty meeting on May 2, 2023.

The EDIA Committee focused on bringing speakers who work in the EDIA field to talk to the committee during the first six months. The committee will be planning workshops on priority

topics such as microaggressions, ableism, and intersectionality. They will also be collaborating with the Faculty of Medicine's EDIA committee on projects.

The department has also been working to increase the profile of EDIA among its members by reinforcing messages shared by Dalhousie University to increase awareness and help recognize, include, and celebrate the diversity of its membership.

Highlighted Meetings and Events

in the Department of Psychiatry



Meeting with the Department of Health & Wellness

In November 2022, the department participated in a meeting with Barbarie Palmer, Project Executive at the Department of Health & Wellness, to share information about the department and the Transformational Plan.

From left to right: Dr. Vincent Agyapong, Head, Department of Psychiatry; Dr. Alexa Bagnell, Division Head, Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, IWK; Barbarie Palmer, Project Executive, Department of Health & Wellness; Dr. Risk Kronfli, Head, Section of Forensic Psychiatry; and, David Potter, Chief Operating Officer (now former), Department of Psychiatry.



Dr. Vincent Agyapong Participates in Transform Project Annual Meeting

In February 2023, Dr. Vincent Agyapong, Head of the Department of Psychiatry, travelled to Warwick University in the UK in his role as Chair of the External Advisory Board.



Minister Tours Nova Scotia Hospital

On April 5, 2023, the Honourable Brian Comer, Minister, and Kathleen Trott, Associate Deputy Minister, Office of Addictions and Mental Health, toured the Nova Scotia Hospital and met with Department Head Dr. Vincent Agyapong; Dr. Andrew Harris, Senior Medical Director, MHAP; Dorothy Edem, Director, Forensic Psychiatry Services/Central Zone MHAP; and, Matt White, CO-Director, Central Zone MHAP.



Dr. Vincent Agyapong Delivers International Lecture at the American Psychiatric Association Annual Meeting

Dr. Vincent Agyapong, Head of the Department of Psychiatry, was invited by the President of the American Psychiatric Association (APA) to present this year's international lecture at the 2023 APA Annual Meeting in San Francisco, CA. The conference was held from May 20 to May 24, 2023.

Dr. Agyapong's international lecture was on the topic: Innovation, access to care, and promoting psychiatry and mental health.

APPLAUDING OUR PEOPLE

We are so proud of our department members who continue to be recognized for their outstanding work.

PROMOTIONS

Dr. Jason Morrison
Associate Professor
Effective July 1, 2023

Dr. Igor Yakovenko
Associate Professor
Effective July 1, 2023

Dr. Joseph Sadek
Professor
Effective July 1, 2023

Dr. Claire O'Donovan
Professor
Effective July 1, 2023

RETIREMENTS

Dr. Ben Rusak
Effective July 2022

Dr. Philip Mills
Effective September 2022

Dr. Ezio Dini
Effective March 1, 2023

Dr. Joanne MacDonald
Effective March 31, 2023

Dr. Herbert Orlik
Effective June 30, 2023

AWARDS & HONOURS

Below are some of the awards and honours department members received:

Academic All-Canadian Distinction
Temí Toba-Oluboka (MSc. Student)

Alzheimer's Society of Canada
Dementia-Friendly Grassroots
Group Award
*Memory Café NS (developed by Dr.
Beverley Cassidy)*

Appointment to the Royal College
Health and Public Policy Committee
Dr. Abraham (Rami) Rudnick

Best Resident Presentation Award,
Atlantic Provinces Psychiatric
Association conference
Dr. Jared Allman

Canada's 13 Premiers Council of
Federation's Award for Innovation in
Mental Health and Addictions
*Dr. Patricia Lingley-Pottie and
members of the Strongest Families
Institute IT Team*

Canadian Academy of Geriatric
Psychiatry Resident Award
Dr. Aditya Nidumolu

Canadian Academy of Geriatric
Psychiatry and Canadian Coalition
for Seniors' Mental Health Annual
Scientific Meeting Resident Award
for Poster Presentations
*Dr. Amy Gough
Dr. Aditya Nidumolu*

Canadian Institutes of Health
Research Maud Menten New
Principal Investigator Prize
Dr. Sandra Meier

Canadian Psychological Association
Donald O. Hebb Award for
Distinguished Contributions to
Psychology as a Science
Dr. Sherry Stewart

Commonwealth Judicial Education
Institute Award of Merit
Dr. Joseph Sadek

Dal Impact Student Employee Award
Ashley Francis (PhD student)

Dalhousie University Department
of Psychiatry Dedicated Service
Awards
*Dr. Ezio Dini
Dr. Herbert Orlik
Dr. Joanne MacDonald*

Dalhousie University Department
of Psychiatry Dr. Aidan Stokes
Mentorship Award
*Dr. Alexa Bagnell
Dr. Sherry Stewart*

Dalhousie University Department
of Psychiatry Dr. Larry Buffett
Outstanding Teacher Award
Dr. Zenovia Ursuliak

Dalhousie University Department
of Psychiatry Educator of the Year
Award
Dr. Nicole Herschenhous

Dalhousie University Department
of Psychiatry Outstanding Clinician
Award
*Dr. Sreenivasa Bhaskara
Dr. Nachiketa Sinha*

Dalhousie University Faculty of
Medicine Excellence in Education
Award
Dr. Mark Bosma

2022 Dalhousie University Faculty of
Medicine Dr. Allan Cohen Memorial
Award for Community Service
Dr. Selene Etches

2023 Dalhousie University Faculty of Medicine R. Wayne Putnam Award for Outstanding Contributions to Community CME
Dr. Sabina Abidi

Distinguished Fellow of the Canadian Psychiatric Association
Dr. Abraham (Rami) Rudnick

Doctors Nova Scotia Outstanding Resident Award
Dr. Amy Gough

Doctors Nova Scotia Physician Health Promotion Award
Dr. Beverley Cassidy

Early Psychosis Intervention Nova Scotia (EPINS) program recognized as a leading practice
Dr. Phil Tibbo and the EPINS team

eMental Health International Collaborative 2022 Implementation Leadership Award for Canada
Dr. Patricia Lingley-Pottie

Invitation to Present International Lecture at the American Psychiatric Association Annual Meeting
Dr. Vincent Agyapong

IWK Board Award of Distinction
Dr. Herbert Orlik

Maritime Resident Doctors Resident of the Month
Dr. Holly Greer

NS Health Service Awards
Dr. Emmanuel Aquino

Paul Wender Best Paper in the Journal of Clinical Psychiatry Award
Dr. Cynthia Calkin

Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee Medal

Dr. Maria Alexiadis
Dr. Emmanuel Aquino
Dr. Alexa Bagnell
Maureen Brennan
Dr. Andrew Harris
Dr. Jackie Kinley
Dr. Patricia Lingley-Pottie

Selected as one of Dal's 2023 cohort of OpenThinkers
Gloria Obuobi-Donkor (PhD student)

Resident Recognition Awards

Above & Beyond Award
Jen Brown

Alexander H. Leighton Resident of the Year Award
Dr. Nadine Nejadi

Clerks' Choice Award
Dr. Alex Whynot

Dr. Charles J. David Memorial Prize in Psychiatry
Dr. Talia Bond

Dr. Herb Orlik Child & Adolescent Psychiatry Resident Award
Dr. LeAnne Revell

Dr. Robert and Stella Weil Fund in Psychiatry Prize
Dr. Aditya Nidumolu
Dr. Matthew McAdam

Dr. W.O. McCormick Award
Dr. Alex Whynot

Geriatric Psychiatry Resident Award
Dr. Lauren Haslam

Horizon Health Network Saint John Zone PGY-1 Resident of the Year
Dr. Jasmyn Cunningham

Junior Mentorship Award
Dr. Holly Greer

Senior Mentorship Award
Dr. Tanya Tulipan

PGY-5 Excellence Award
Dr. Marissa LeBlanc

Junior Resident Professionalism Award
Dr. Cameron Taylor

Senior Resident Professionalism Award
Dr. Michelle MacDonald

Teacher of the Year Award
Dr. Greg MacMullin

Research Day 2022 Awards

Best Presentation Award Graduate Student
Ross Langley

Best Presentation Award Junior Faculty/Post-Doctoral Fellow
Dr. Abraham Nunes

Best Presentation Award Psychiatry Resident
Dr. Matthew McAdam

Best Presentation Award Psychiatry Staff
Nicole Stinson

Best Presentation Award Undergraduate Student
Tessa Cosman

LEADERSHIP

LEADERSHIP

Dr. Vincent Agyapong
Head

Dr. Lara Hazelton
Director, Education

Dr. Mahmoud Awara
Head, Community Psychiatry

Dr. Sanjana Sridharan
Head, Acute, Consultation &
Emergency Psychiatry

Dr. Alexa Bagnell
Head, Division of Child &
Adolescent Psychiatry

Dr. Phil Tibbo
Director, Research

Dr. Risk Kronfli
Head, Forensic Psychiatry

Dr. Mark Bosma
Head, Geriatric Psychiatry

Vacant
Chief Operating Officer

Dr. Claude Botha
Interim Head
Dalhousie Medicine, NB

EDUCATION

Dr. Lara Hazelton
Director, Education

Dr. Katharine Black
Director, Undergraduate Education

Dr. Kathleen Singh
Director, Geriatric Subspecialty
Residency Program

Dr. Celia Robichaud
Director, Child and Adolescent
Subspecialty Residency Program

Dr. Cheryl Murphy
Director, Continuing Professional
Development

Dr. Abraham Rudnick
Humanities Coordinator

Dr. Deborah Parker
Director, Postgraduate Education

Dr. Alexandra Manning
Associate Director, Postgraduate
Education

Dr. Lukas Propper
Director of Education, Child and
Adolescent Psychiatry

Dr. Celia Robichaud
Pediatric Residency Coordinator

Dr. Ejemai Eboreime
Interim Coordinator, International
Masters in Clinical Psychiatry

Dr. Sherry Stewart
Graduate Program Coordinator

Dr. Mahmoud Awara
Director of International
Fellowships Program

COMMUNITY PSYCHIATRY

Dr. Mahmoud Awara
Head, Community Psychiatry

Dr. Aaron Keshen
Associate Head, Community
Psychiatry

ACUTE, CONSULTATION & EMERGENCY PSYCHIATRY

Dr. Sanjana Sridharan
Head, Acute, Consultation &
Emergency Psychiatry

Vacant
Associate Head, Acute,
Consultation & Emergency
Psychiatry

CHILD & ADOLESCENT PSYCHIATRY

Dr. Alexa Bagnell
Head, Division of Child &
Adolescent Psychiatry

Dr. Sabina Abidi
Associate Head, Division of Child &
Adolescent Psychiatry

RESEARCH

Dr. Phil Tibbo
Director, Research

Dr. David Gardner
Director of Research,
Community Psychiatry

Dr. Candice Crocker
Director of Research,
Acute, Consultation and
Emergency Psychiatry

Dr. Kim Good
Director of Research,
Forensic Psychiatry

Dr. Gail Eskes
Director of Research,
Geriatric Psychiatry

Dr. Jill Chorney
Director of Research,
Child & Adolescent Psychiatry

ADMINISTRATION

ADMINISTRATION

Vacant
Chief Operating Officer

Anila Balakrishnan
Research Coordinator

Janet Bardon
Physician Resource Manager

Jennifer Brown
Operations Manager

Petra Corkum
Postgraduate Education
Coordinator

Vacant
Education Coordinator

Mandy Esliger
Evaluation & Curriculum Specialist

Linda Ford
Administrative Assistant

Ariann Greenidge
Administrative Assistant to the
Department Head

Parisa Abdi Sabouhi
Undergraduate Coordinator

Sandra Millar
Finance Assistant

Penney Miller
Communications Coordinator

Neha Singh
HR Coordinator

DIVISION OF CHILD AND ADOLESCENT PSYCHIATRY

Michelle LeBlanc
Administrative Manager

Jennifer Cunningham
Administrative Assistant

Melissa Davis
Administrative Assistant

Debi Follett
Administrative Assistant

Megan Lee
Booking and Registration Clerk

Adrienne McCarthy
Education and Research
Coordinator

Robin Stinson
Administrative Assistant

Joan Sweet
Booking and Registration Clerk

PSYCHIATRIC SERVICES

Adult Psychiatry Services

Addiction Prevention and Treatment Services

Adult Neurodevelopmental Psychiatric Unit (Mental Illness & Intellectual Disabilities)

Centre For Emotions and Health

Community Mental Health

Consultation/Liaison

Early Psychosis

Eating Disorders

Emergency

Forensic Psychiatry Services

Geriatric Psychiatry

Inpatient Psychiatry

Mental Health Day Treatment

Mobile Crisis

Mood Disorders

Recovery and Integration Services

Reproductive Mental Health

Shared Care

Short Stay Unit

Sleep Disorders

Child & Adolescent Psychiatry Services

IWK Acute Care Psychiatric Inpatient Unit (Garron Centre)

IWK Consultation/Liaison Service

IWK Emergency Mental Health and Addictions Service (EMHAS)

Children's Intensive Services (CIS)

Adolescent Intensive Services (AIS)

Youth Forensic Services (Includes Nova Scotia Youth Facility Secure Care Unit)

Community Mental Health and Addictions Clinics

Specific Care Outpatient Clinics:

- Eating Disorders
- Bipolar Disorders
- Concurrent Disorders

- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
- Forensic Clinic
- 0-5 Years Clinic
- Early Psychosis
- Autism Spectrum Disorders

Provincial Programs

Adult Neurodevelopmental Stabilization Unit

Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Services

East Coast Forensic Hospital

Eating Disorders Program

Mental Health Day Treatment Program

Mood Disorders Program

Nova Scotia Operational Stress Injury Clinic

Nova Scotia Provincial Early Psychosis Intervention Service (EPINS)

Reproductive Mental Health Program

Seniors Mental Health Program



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