

HEADLINES



WELCOMING THE NEW PGY-1 RESIDENTS



DALHOUSIE
UNIVERSITY

Department of Psychiatry

IN THIS ISSUE

FEATURE

WELCOMING THE NEW PGY-1 RESIDENTS *page 5*

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

Message from the Department Head



Dr. Vincent Agyapong.

Despite the recent snow, spring is here, and I hope everyone is enjoying the (mostly) warmer weather and preparing for summer. As we near the end of another academic year, the department is busy preparing to celebrate learners and welcome new ones, to recognize the accomplishments of students and faculty, and to engage with each other in upcoming academic, strategic, research, and wellness initiatives.

In March we received the welcomed news the Dalhousie Board of Governors has approved the Centre for Global Mental Health, a new research centre in the department, and the Masters in Global Clinical Psychiatry, a new graduate program, which is still pending MPHEC approval. These initiatives will significantly enhance the global leadership of the department and will have a meaningful impact on improving mental health care in underserved communities locally and abroad. A new [global mental health report](#) outlining the department's initiatives in Ghana and Nigeria was also published in March.

We again filled all spots in the department's general residency training program this year. Thank you to everyone involved in CaRMS for this successful result. Learn more about the incoming PGY-1 residents in this issue of Headlines. We look forward to welcoming them to the department.

Our annual [W.O. McCormick Academic Day](#) will be held on Friday, April 25. This year's theme is Trauma and Related Disorders, with a full day of informative presentations around this topic.

On May 2, the Department of Psychiatry and the Mental Health and Addiction Program in Nova Scotia Health Central Zone are hosting an event in celebration of the second anniversary of the Rapid Access and Stabilization Program (RASP). The event, "[Expanding access, enhancing care: The role of rapid access programs and digital tools in meeting individual and community mental health needs](#)," will feature special guest speaker Dr. Jitender Sareen, head of the Department of Psychiatry, University of Manitoba and chair, Association of Chairs of Psychiatry in Canada (ACPC). Speakers will also include Nova Scotia Health physician and operational leaders, representatives of community partner organizations, those with lived experience, and RASP psychiatrists.

Department leaders will convene in May for a strategic planning retreat where they will reflect on the previous strategic plan and potential new strategic directions to guide our work over the next five years. As department members, your voice is important to this process. When you see a call to respond to a survey, I hope you take time to answer and share your input.

Our annual Year-End Celebration is coming up on Friday, June 13 at the Prince George Hotel, where we will celebrate learners and our education programs. Watch for registration details for this celebration of education.

The Summer Celebration event is taking place on Sunday, July 20 at St. Mary's Boat Club in Halifax. Watch for registration details for this annual wellness initiative.

Several department researchers were successful in obtaining departmental, local/provincial, SSHRC, and CIHR grants. Congratulations to Dr. **Lara Hazelton**, Dr. **Kara Dempster**, Dr. **Sherry Stewart**, Dr. **Phil Tibbo**, Dr. **Candice Crocker**, Dr. **Susan Gamberg**, Dr. **Aaron Keshen**, Dr. **David Pilon**, Dr. **Ejemai Eboime**, Dr. **Cinera States**, Dr. **Linda Liebenberg**, Dr. **Sandra Meier**, Dr. **Alexa Bagnell**, Dr. **Lori Wozney**, Dr. **Kim Good**, Dr. **Ali Manning**, Dr. **Cheryl Murphy**, Dr. **Celia Robichaud**, and **Mandy Eslinger**.

We also congratulate the following members on their recent publications: **Bala Harri**, Dr. **Ejemai Eboime**, **Mandy Eslinger**, Dr. **Abraham (Rami) Rudnick**, Dr. **Lara Hazelton**, Dr. **Heather Milliken**, Dr. **Lori Wozney**, Dr. **Sherry Stewart**, Dr. **José Mejía**, Dr. **Alexa Bagnell**, Dr. **Sandra Meier**, and Dr. **Amy Gough**.

The department also recently welcomed the following department members: Dr. **Adekunle Bamidele**, Dr. **Sannie John**, and **Minh Nguyen**. We also said farewell to Dr. **Winnifred Twum**, from Ghana, who recently completed a six-month international fellowship in Geriatric Psychiatry. Congratulations and best wishes to Dr. Twum.

Department members continue

to be recognized for their work. We also wish to congratulate Drs. **Alexa Bagnell**, **Aidan Stokes**, and **Cinera States** for receiving the King Charles III Coronation Medal; Dr. **Patrick McGrath**, recipient of the Canadian Psychological Association Award for Distinguished Contributions to the International Advancement of Psychology; Dr. **Ahmed Saleh**, recipient of the Leadership Excellence Award – Physician Leader, one of the NS Health 2024 Making Waves Awards; and Dr. **LeAnne Revell**, recipient of the Faculty of Medicine’s 2025 Dr. TJ (Jock) Murray Award for Resident Leadership in Global Health.

Dr. Vincent Agyapong
Head, Department of Psychiatry,
Dalhousie University
Head, Department of Psychiatry,
NS Health Central Zone



Save the **Date**

DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY
Department of Psychiatry

SUMMER CELEBRATION

Sunday, July 20, 2025 | 1 to 8 p.m.
St. Mary’s Boat Club, Halifax, NS

Watch for more details. This event is for all members of the Department of Psychiatry.

Expanding access, enhancing care: The role of rapid access programs and digital tools in meeting individual and community mental health needs

Join the Dalhousie Department of Psychiatry and the Mental Health and Addiction Program at Nova Scotia Health Central Zone in celebration of the second anniversary of the Rapid Access and Stabilization Program (RASP).

Learn more & register [HERE](#) by 5 p.m. on Monday, April 28, 2025.



Expanding access, enhancing care:
The role of rapid access programs and digital tools in meeting individual and community mental health needs

Friday, May 2, 2025
12 to 1:30 p.m. ADT
In person & Online

DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY **nova scotia health**

Ketut Subiyanto photo/Pexels

On the **Cover**

Welcoming the new PGY-1 residents

Please welcome our newest PGY-1 cohort!



Rifaa Ali

Where I did my medical school training: McMaster University

One thing I am excited about for my residency at Dalhousie Psychiatry is: Getting to know all my co-residents and living in a new city :)

One thing I'm nervous about starting residency is: Road-tripping over to Halifax with my dog!



Sadeef Anjum

Where I did my medical school training: Dalhousie (New Brunswick)

One thing about the Maritimes I love (or think I'll love) is: The nature! Conrad's beach and Crescent beach are two of my favourite places in Nova Scotia and I'm excited to get to explore Nova Scotia on a deeper level these next few years! I'll also be closer to Cape Breton now which means it will be even easier for my annual fall camping trip to the Island!

One person I hope to get to know as a mentor during my residency is: Dr. Cinera States who I met briefly during my elective at the Newcomer Clinic last year. It was so exciting to hear about all the work she is doing in the area of Transcultural Psychiatry around Halifax!



Emily Kervin

Where I did my medical school training: Dalhousie University (Saint John campus)

One thing I am excited about for my residency at Dalhousie Psychiatry is: Getting to know my co-residents and growing together throughout residency.

One thing I hope to learn during my residency is: Approaches to working with Newcomer populations in the context of mental health care.



Neha Khanna

Where I did my medical school training: Dalhousie University

One thing I am excited about for my residency at Dalhousie Psychiatry is: The opportunity to learn from and work alongside an incredible team of staff and co-residents!

One thing about the Maritimes I love (or think I'll love) is: I love that the stunning coastline is always within reach! One of my favourite things about the Maritimes is how easy it is to escape to a beach or hiking trail. I also love the warm, welcoming sense of community that makes the East Coast feel like home.



Min Joon Kim

Where I did my medical school training: University of British Columbia

One thing I am excited about for my residency at Dalhousie Psychiatry is: Meeting my university friends and family (who live in New Brunswick).

One thing about the Maritimes I love (or think I'll love) is: A good lobster roll!



Nikki Mattocks

Where I did my medical school training: Island Medical Program (UBC)

One thing I am excited about for my residency at Dalhousie Psychiatry is: The amazing teachers in the faculty! I'm thrilled to be starting my psychiatry residency at Dal. I began my post secondary education at the Dalhousie School of Nursing, so it only feels right to be returning.

One thing about the Maritimes I love (or think I'll love) is: The Atlantic Ocean! I've had so much fun playing in the pacific the last several years, but it is time for a change. I can't wait for sunny post-call naps at the beach and stormy winter wave searches.



Elycia Monaghan

Where I did my medical school training: NOSM University

One thing I am excited about for my residency at Dalhousie Psychiatry is: The friendly and welcoming atmosphere amongst staff and residents!

One thing about the Maritimes I love (or think I'll love) is: The seafood and the East Coast vibes.



Emily Howes Vallis

Where I did my medical school training: Dalhousie University

One thing I am excited about for my residency at Dalhousie Psychiatry is: The people! I am looking forward to continuing to learn from the faculty and supportive group of residents at Dalhousie Psychiatry, who have already helped shape my career path.

One thing about the Maritimes I love (or think I'll love) is: A tie between nature and the food. I love trying new restaurants (my current favourite is Daryâ) and never being too far from a beach.



Alyson Zwicker

Where I did my medical school training: Dalhousie University (DMNB campus in Saint John, NB)

One thing I am excited about for my residency at Dalhousie Psychiatry is: Having the opportunity to get excellent general psychiatry training close to home.

One thing about the Maritimes I love (or think I'll love) is: A beach is always just a short drive away.

We look forward to seeing you in July!

Research Report

GRANTS

Departmental research funding

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning grant recipient (2024 intake):

- Dr. **Lara Hazelton**
Awarded on January 29, 2025
Project title: *Detecting and Mitigating Bias in Continuing Professional Development and Residency Teaching*

2025 Psychiatry Summer Studentships recipients:

- Dr. **Barbara Pavlova** and Yanna Kachafanas (incoming MSc in Psychiatry Research student — fall 2025 intake)
Project title: *Sleep and perseverative thinking in people with mood disorders*
- Dr. **Kara Dempster** and Lee-Ann Olmstead (incoming MSc in Psychiatry Research student — fall 2025 intake)
Project title: *Exploring the Use of Mismatch Negativity on EEG and Anterior Cingulate Cortex Glutamate as Prospective Markers of Treatment Resistant Schizophrenia*
- Dr. **Sherry Stewart** and Sam Hawkins
Project title: *How and For Whom Does Gambling-Specific Cyberloafing Explain the Links of Problem Gambling Severity to Adverse Work and Mental Health Outcomes?*
- Dr. **Phil Tibbo** and Disha Sharma
Project title: *Assessing Fidelity to Care in Early Intervention Services for Psychosis in rural and urban NS.*
- Dr. **George Robertson** and Kelly Meaney
Project title: *Metabolic Mechanisms Responsible for Ibogaine-Induced Brain Repair*

BRC grant

- Drs. **Phil Tibbo, Candice Crocker, Kara Dempster, and Sherry Stewart** “Cannabis potency effects on brain white matter in early phase psychosis: A pilot feasibility treatment study” Brain Repair Center 2025 Innovation Grant

TRIC grants

- Drs. **Susan Gamberg** (PI), **Aaron Keshen** and **David Pilon** (Co-Applicants) “Initiation of an eating disorder prevention program in Nova Scotia: Phase 2-Facilitator training and implementation in a high school, a university, and online” Nova Scotia Health QEII Foundation Translating Research Into Care (TRIC) Healthcare Improvement Research Funding Program
- Drs. **Aaron Keshen** (PI), **Susan Gamberg** (Co-Applicant) “Implementing an Interdisciplinary Eating Disorder Screening and Treatment Program for Post-Bariatric Surgery Patients in Nova Scotia” QEII Foundation Translating Research Into Care (TRIC) Healthcare Improvement Research Funding Program

CIHR grants

- Drs. **Ejemai Eboreime** and **Cinera States** (PIs); Dr. **Vincent Agyapong** (Co-Investigator) “Resilience and Inequity: Examining the Aftermath of the 2023 Upper Tantallon Wildfire in African Nova Scotian Communities” CIHR Catalyst Grant Community Based Research in Climate Change Priority Areas. [Learn more.](#)

- Dr. **Aaron Keshen** “Creating a Global Network of Experts, Knowledge Users, and Individuals with Lived Experience to Address Challenges and Opportunities in Glucagon-Like Peptide-1 Agonist and Eating Disorder Research: Developing Comprehensive Research and Clinical Recommendations” CIHR Planning and Dissemination Grant -Institute Community Support

SSHRC grant

- Dr. **Linda Liebenberg** “Relational Change: Understanding the mechanisms of resilience-promoting service delivery for youth” SSHRC Insight Grant

PUBLICATIONS

- **Harri BI**, Ogunboye I, Okonkwo A, Yakubu A, Kung JY, Fofah J, Masseyferguson OT, **Eboreime E**. Addressing the mental health needs of healthcare professionals in Africa: a scoping review of workplace interventions. *Glob Ment Health* (Camb). 2025 Feb 26;12:e31. doi: 10.1017/gmh.2025.19.
- **Eboreime E**, Anjorin O, Obi-Jeff C, Ojo TM, Hertelendy A. Climate, conflict and displacement in the Sahel. *Bull World Health Organ*. 2025 Apr 1;103(4):230-230A. doi: 10.2471/BLT.24.292700. PMID: 40207246; PMCID: PMC11978414.

PRESENTATIONS

- Dr. **Joseph Sadek** provided a day of Judiciary Education on mental health issues to several of the Commonwealth judges on Friday, January 31. He has been invited to provide a lecture to the United Nations Judiciary Conference in August 2025.

IN THE MEDIA

- February 27 Statements by Members: Lori Wozney MLA Lisa Lachance recognized Dr. **Lori Wozney** for her research in the Nova Scotia House of Assembly. [View the statement.](#)
- [QEII Foundation raising funds for ketamine treatment program](#) (Dr. **Abraham Nunes**).

Dr. Paul Janssen Chair in Psychotic Disorders: Dr. Phil Tibbo

Currently the Janssen Chair is on a six-month sabbatical (Jan.–June 2025 inclusive) to allow some more time to focus on research endeavours, write/read, reflect and future visioning. The 2024 year saw 21 publications from the Chair's research group and collaborators, with the focus on psychotic disorders and comorbid substance use. Seeing the graduate students publish their research is always satisfying. Mental health

research grant funding/support struggles in Canada and will be a concern moving forward. However, the Chair has recently secured funding to continue work on cannabis and psychosis, in addition to service delivery research. Of note, the Chair was part of a large international team who recently received funding from Wellcome Trust (valued at over 9 million CAN), *“Understanding disorganization: A language focused global initiative in*

psychosis.” Additionally, the Chair continues to speak on his group's work, most recently as an invited speaker at a cannabis policy summit in Washington, D.C. (Feb. 2025). A number of abstracts have also been already accepted early in 2025 for two leading psychosis conferences, that being the Schizophrenia International Research Society annual meeting (April) and the International Early Intervention in Psychiatry conference in September.



Dr. Phil Tibbo was an invited speaker at a cannabis policy summit in Washington, DC.



Dr. Phil Tibbo's team representing psychosis research at the Brain Repair Center's (BRC) Brain Fair on March 13. This is a community event, drawing awareness to various brain based research of the BRC. Pictured are Joey Nosko (MSc student Psychiatry Research), Nicole Ponto (MSc Medical Neuroscience), Rachel Church (Research OT), and Ella Hodgson-Pageau (DPRF Summer Studentship 2024).



Young voices from Nova Scotia shape global conversations at international conference

At this year's 7th *International Association of Youth Mental Health (IAYMH) conference held in Vancouver*, two young leaders from Nova Scotia, 21-year-old Robyn Black and 18-year-old Luther Stronach spoke with global audiences through their compelling

presentations on valuing youth voice in developing Nova Scotia's Integrated Youth Services (IYS).

Robyn, an IYS Youth Advisory Council member and research assistant in Dr. **Lori Wozney's** lab, shared initial results from a Phase 1 photo-elicitation study funded

by Canadian Institutes of Health Research and complimentary work with Dr. **Linda Liebenberg's** Spaces and Places research. Robyn detailed themes co-developed with youth in two communities involved in the study and facilitated an interactive mini photo-elicitation activity for session attendees.

Luther, also a member of the Provincial IYS Youth Advisory Council from Kingston, presented on the ways in which IYS acts as a navigational beacon for youth and the caregivers of youth facing mental health challenges. Luther shared personal experiences in navigating supports and contrasted rural and urban experiences of youth. His talk illuminated how “solving” mental health is not a one-time event but something communities need to evolve over time.

Daphne Hutt-MacLeod the Director of IYS Nova Scotia who attended the presentations, noted:

“It was so fulfilling to see the confidence and poise of our young people sharing key findings, networking and pushing for social justice. Not only did they contribute novel east-coast research to the global conversation but their message — that youth need to be co-designers and co-creators of the services they use - was stronger coming from them than anything people could have said on their behalf.”

The conference had close to 1000 delegates from 48 countries.



The quiet camaraderie of youth presenters at IAYMH 2025.

DaRT program survey study

Hello colleagues,

Trauma training and service needs. I need your help!

Complex Trauma involves repeated exposure to trauma experiences, especially during childhood. Relational trauma can result in Complex PTSD, a new diagnosis that has the clinical features of PTSD including re-experiencing symptoms, as well as symptoms that reflect the prolonged impact of sustained trauma on self and interpersonal relationships.

CPTSD is a challenge to treat. Exposure to relational trauma is commonly found among individuals seeking mental health support, and associated with high levels of comorbidity with other mental health concerns including depression and anxiety disorders.

As clinicians, we believe we can all greatly benefit from having a solid foundation for recognizing and treating this disorder.

The DaRT program designed a survey study to examine mental

health clinicians’ self-reported knowledge/training and experience in identifying and treating Complex PTSD in their clinical work with adult clients. The intention is to identify areas in which further education, training, and systemic support for clinicians could assist the successful treatment and healing of clients with relational trauma.

We are asking clinicians from across the province who provide care to adults within Nova Scotia’s Mental Health & Addictions programs to take a few minutes to complete a brief survey about treating trauma-related disorders.

- The survey includes 34 multiple-choice questions
- The survey is anonymous
- It takes less than 15 minutes to complete
- The results will inform future education, training, and the development of system supports to enhance care and capacity for treating individuals with

complex trauma throughout Nova Scotia.

How to get started:

Click [here](#).

Or scan the QR code:



Thanks for your support!

Dr. **Jackie Kinley**, DaRT program

Education Report

UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION NEWS

Undergraduate teaching recruitment for 2025/26

Our undergraduate teaching recruitment for the academic year 2025/26 is set to begin on April 1 and will run for 14 days. The IPP database has been meticulously updated and is ready for faculty assignment. To explore available teaching opportunities, please reach out to **Parisa Abdi Sabouhi**, undergraduate coordinator, at Psych.Undergrad@dal.ca

2025/26 clerk schedule update

We're thrilled to announce that the 2025/26 clerk schedule is in its final stages! By the end of March or early

April, supervisors can expect to receive their schedules, ensuring a smooth transition for the upcoming academic year.

Med 4 electives

Dalhousie Med 4 students can submit their elective requests through the AFMC portal starting March 29, 2025.

MPAS program update

The first three PA students have successfully completed their rotations in our units! We received very positive feedback from the students about their experience.

Summer Internship in Psychiatry (SIIP) welcomes 10 Med 1 students

We are delighted to welcome 10 Med 1 students from both NS and NB Dalhousie campuses to our Summer Internship in Psychiatry (SIIP) program. Scheduled from May 26 to May 29, 2025, this immersive initiative will feature small group didactic sessions, resident panels, site tours, and simulations. We eagerly anticipate hosting our participants and providing them with a glimpse into the fulfilling field of psychiatry.

POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION NEWS

Year -End Celebration

The annual Department of Psychiatry Year-End Celebration will be held on **June 13, 2025**, at the Prince George Hotel. The event is a celebration of education and an opportunity to honour teachers and learners in the department. Stay tuned to your email for more information.



Royal College exam update

Our PGY-4 residents sat the written Royal College Exam on March 4, 2025. We wish all our residents the best as they prepare for the oral portion in May.

Pilot simulation at Collaborative Health Education Building enhances training experiences for residents

A new simulation at the Dalhousie Simulation Centre was piloted in March. In collaboration with Dr. **Alexandra Manning** and Simulation Patient Educator, Melanie MacLeod, Drs. **Nadine Nejati** and **LeAnne Revell** co-developed this valuable learning opportunity for psychiatry residents, providing opportunities to deliver psychoeducation about pharmacological management of psychiatric disorders to simulated patients and families. Guided by the goal of enhancing opportunities to obtain required, but often difficult-to-obtain, training experiences, this simulation enables residents to hone their skills in a controlled, high-fidelity environment.

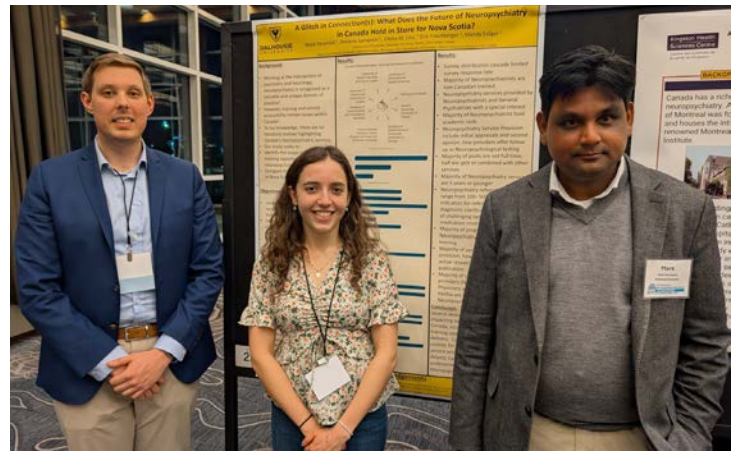
By offering experiential learning, this simulation ensures that residents can develop essential skills while maintaining patient safety and learning in an environment that fosters professional growth. The program marks a significant step toward enhancing psychiatric education at Dalhousie.

Special recognition is extended to Drs. **Holly Greer**, **Kyle Godden** and **Sophie Church** who facilitated the simulations and provided direct observation and feedback to our learners.



Resident spotlight

Dr. **Erik Fraunberger** presented at the American Neuropsychiatric Association in March.



Left to right: Dr. Erik Fraunberger, Sophia Georgoudis, and Dr. Mark Paramlall.

CaRMS Match Day was on March 4, 2025

All the faculty and residents who participated in the CaRMS process were gracious and enthusiastic ambassadors of our program; they made this very successful result possible, and we are most grateful for their efforts!

PSYCHIATRY GRADUATE PROGRAM NEWS

Dalhousie Psychiatry Graduate Students Association (PSYR GSA)

The Psychiatry Graduate Students Association (PSYR GSA) was ratified on May 1, 2024, to support and represent graduate students in the Department of Psychiatry, Faculty of Medicine at Dalhousie University. The association fosters academic and professional development, advocates for student interests, promotes wellness, and strengthens peer support and community engagement.

Inaugural Executive Team

- President & Wellness Representative: **Medard Adu** (Md269491@dal.ca)
- Vice-President: **Julia Fraiha Pegado Nobrega Mafra** (Julia.Fraiha@dal.ca)
- General Secretary: **Joey Nosko** (joseph.nosko@dal.ca)
- Financial Secretary: **Maxwell Seward** (Maxwell.Seward@dal.ca)
- Academic Coordinator: **Ashley Francis** (ashley.francis@dal.ca)
- Ph.D. Representative: **Bala Harri** (bharri@dal.ca)
- MSc Representative: **Samuel Obeng Nkrumah** (sm416395@dal.ca)

PSYR GSA is committed to enhancing the graduate student experience through advocacy, mentorship, and professional growth opportunities. Graduate students are encouraged to participate and connect with the association.

INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

The International Fellowship Program continues to welcome international fellows across a wide range of subspecialties, including Mood Disorders, Forensic Psychiatry, Geriatric Psychiatry, Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (IWK and northern zone), the Nova Scotia Operational Stress Injury Clinic, Reproductive Mental Health, the Centre for Emotions & Health, Neuropsychiatry, and Psychotherapy. Recently, it has

expanded to include Addiction Psychiatry and Transcultural Psychiatry, with fellows now training in these essential areas. The program remains committed to addressing disparities in mental health services worldwide by disseminating knowledge, building capacity, and nurturing expertise among mental health professionals worldwide.

MEDICAL EDUCATION NEWS

Medical education publications:

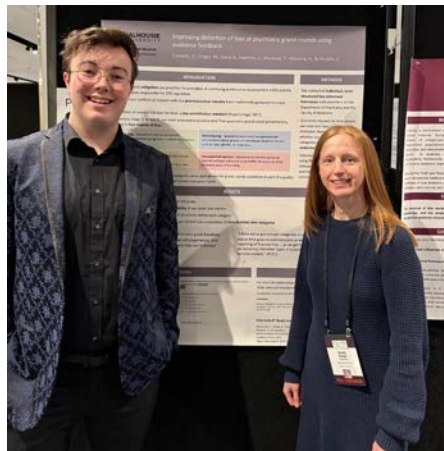
- **Esliger M, Rudnick A** (2024). Mentorship for clinical academic psychiatrists: a qualitative study of a pilot program. *Canadian Journal of Physician Leadership*, 10(3), 94-112. [Case Report -Published] DOI: 10.37964/cr24785.
- **Hazelton L**, Ho C, **Connolly O**, Mak C, Ma E, Wei W, McNeely HE, **Milliken H**, Rasasingham R, Sockalingam S. Considerations for continuing professional development in the post-pandemic era: national experiences from psychiatry. *Can Med Educ J*. 2024 Nov 13;15(5):83-94. doi: 10.36834/cmej.77048. PMID: 39588037; PMCID: PMC11586013.

Have you published medical education scholarship?

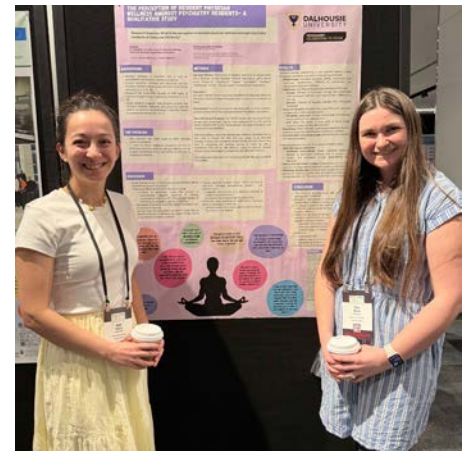
Send the citation to **Mandy.Esliger@nshealth.ca** to have it included in a future issue of *Headlines*.

International Congress on Academic Medicine (ICAM)

Department of Psychiatry faculty and learners participated in the [International Congress on Academic Medicine \(ICAM\)](#) held April 3-6, 2025 at the Halifax Convention Centre. **Mandy Esliger**, **Owen Connolly**, Dr. **Kara Yeung**, and Dr. **Talia Bond** presented posters.



Owen Connolly, research assistant (left) and Mandy Esliger, evaluation and curriculum specialist (right).



Dr. Kara Yeung, PGY-4 (left) and Dr. Talia Bond, PGY-4 (right).

Division of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry

AWARDS/RECOGNITION

Congratulations to Dr. **Alexa Bagnell** for receiving the King Charles III Coronation Medal, presented by Sen. Stan Kutcher on January 31, 2025. This medal recognizes individuals who have made a significant contribution to Canada or to a particular province, territory, region or community of Canada, or have made an outstanding achievement abroad that brings credit to Canada. Congratulations also to Dr. **Aidan Stokes** (Professor Emeritus Department of Psychiatry & retired division faculty member).



Left to right: Dr. Aidan Stokes, Senator Stan Kutcher, and Dr. Alexa Bagnell.

Congratulations to Dr. **Lori Wozney** for being recognized in the NS House of Assembly by MLA Lisa Lachance, for receiving the Robert Bortolussi Mentorship Award & also for the work she is doing as the Sun Life Chair in Youth Mental Health, to improve mental health outcomes for youth.

CAP PRESENTATIONS

- Dr. **Alexa Bagnell** presented to parents of Woodlawn family of schools (Michael Wallace Elementary), "Anxiety in Kids: how parents can help" on Feb. 10, 2025.
- Dr. **Lori Wozney** was invited as speaker at the Research Nova Scotia Focused Research Investment public announcement, Halifax Convention Centre, Halifax, NS on Jan. 28, 2025.
- Dr. **Celia Robichaud** presented at Crisis Intervention Training for HRP/RCMP, "Supporting Neurodiverse Youth in Crisis" on Feb. 24, 2025.
- Dr. **Lukas Propper** presented at the Department of Psychiatry Clinical Academic Rounds: "Pharmacotherapy of psychiatric comorbidities in children and adolescents with autism spectrum disorder" on Feb. 5, 2025.
- Dr. **Jill Chorney** presented at the Department of Psychiatry Clinical Academic Rounds: "From data to practice and back again: practical applications of learning health system" on March 5, 2025.
- Dr. **Kyle Godden** (PGY-6 Child and Adolescent Psychiatry) co-presented with Dr. Dax Bourcier (Pediatric Neurology Fellow) "Walking Two Paths: An interdisciplinary approach to functional neurological disorders (FNDs) for the general pediatrician" at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Grand Rounds (Charlottetown, PEI) on April 4, 2025.

CAP GRANTS

- Paul Arnold, Chad Bousman, Gina Dimitropoulos, Jennifer Zwicker (Co-Leads); **Sandra Meier** (IWK site Lead) **Alexa Bagnell, Lori Wozney** (Team Members) et al. *Pan-Canadian Initiative Linking Genomic, Environmental and Mental Health Data in Children and Youth: (Pan-GEM) – Genome Canada*. Funded by Canadian Precision Health Initiative Pillar 1: Generating population-level genomic data. \$10M over four years received in February 2025.
- **Lori Wozney** Co-Principal Investigator with Jennifer Lane (PI). *Partnering with Communities to Better Understand Structural Inequities*. Canadian Institutes of Health Research Catalyst Grant. \$124,479.00 for one year received in February 2025. [Learn more.](#)
- *Detecting and Mitigating Bias in Continuing Professional Development and Residency Teaching*. **Lara Hazelton, Mandy Esliger, Kim Good, Tanya MacLeod, Alexandra Manning, Cheryl Murphy**, Emma Burns, Robyn McLaughlin, **Celia Robichaud**. Department of Psychiatry Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Psychiatry Grant. \$4792.36 received in February 2025.

CAP RESEARCH

CAP research highlight

The **CALM** Study is A Randomized Placebo-Controlled Trial of Sertraline vs. Placebo in the Treatment of Anxiety in ChiLDren and Adolescents with NeurodeveloPmental Disorders (NDDs).

Led by pediatric neurologist and senior clinician scientist Dr. Evdokia Anagnostou of Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital (University of Toronto), the research study will be conducted at eight different sites across Canada, including the IWK Health Centre. This study is a collaboration between Pediatrics and Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, with Dr. Megan Thomas as site qualified investigator, and co-investigators Drs. Sarah Shea, Isabel Smith and **Lukas Propper**.

The CALM study is a 16-week trial to evaluate the efficacy and safety of sertraline in the treatment of comorbid anxiety disorders in

children and adolescents with NDDs including autism spectrum disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, tic disorders, or genetic diagnosis of fragile X, tuberous sclerosis or 22q11 deletions, as use of this medication remains unexplored in this population.

A basket design will be utilized with the aim of assessing feasibility of recruiting sixteen suitable participants locally (130 across all sites) and their compliance with study protocol. To be eligible, participants must be aged 8-17 and will undergo extensive screening including diagnostic and cognitive assessments prior to randomization to sertraline or a placebo. Regular follow-up over 16-weeks will take place to assess tolerability and safety.

This study will address a significant gap in the literature by providing foundational data that can inform future trials and ultimately improve

treatment strategies for comorbid anxiety in children and adolescents with NDDs.

For more information about the CALM study or to discuss a potential participant, please reach out to **CALMstudy@iwk.nshealth.ca** or one of the previously listed investigators.

CAP publications

- Lane, J; Barber, B; McCulloch, H; Wong, H; Forbes, N; Alizadeh Takhtehchoobi, N; Kuri, M; Lackie, K; Cassidy, C; **Wozney, L**; Curran, J; Lane, K; MacEachern, K; Thompson, H; O'Brien, C; Obeng Nkrumah, E; Pennell, C; Sheppard, D; Burchell, D; Macdonald, M. Equitable health care delivery for adult Nova Scotians: a scoping review protocol. JBI Evidence Synthesis ():10.11124/JBIES-24-00138 published on Jan 7, 2025
- Burns, H., Hurst, A., Garay, P., Murray, N. E., **Stewart, S. H., Mejia, J., Bagnell, A.**, Klein, R. M., & **Meier, S.** (2025). Attentional biases for dynamic stimuli in emerging adults with anxiety: A preliminary eye-tracking study. Journal of Psychiatric Research, 184, 262–271 published on Feb,27, 2025 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpsychires.2025.02.046>

Section of Community Psychiatry

We have been actively advertising and recruiting to fill positions created by retirements and the erosion of FTEs over the years. Dr. **Shazia Hashmi** has joined the Dartmouth CMHT, and Dr. **Emmanuel Babalola** is now working with both the Cole Harbour and Cobequid CMHTs. Additionally,

Dr. Jeffery MacDonald will join the Hants/Windsor and Dartmouth CMHTs. We have also posted a 1.0 FTE position dedicated to community services, and we hope to receive applications soon.

The Transcultural Psychiatry Service has been restructured to

integrate more closely with the core CMHTs, allowing a broader group of physicians to contribute. Furthermore, our Addiction Services have expanded and now include outreach initiatives targeting marginalized populations through MOSH.

Section of Forensic Psychiatry

- Over the past few months, the implementation of the Model of Care is underway and we are adapting to the challenges that any “new” system brings to the logistics of day-to-day activity.
- The hospital was invited to present the New Model of Care in an international conference in Dublin in June 2025. The IAFMHS annual conference.
- An international fellow that started in May 2024, Dr. **Majed AlMarshedi**, is finishing at the end of April and another one is starting in May.
- We are all sad to see Dr. **Laura Downing** leaving us at the end of May. In the short time that she worked here, she showed dedication and care that will leave a mark on our service and the patients she cared for. We all wish her the best in the new challenges she is embarking on.
- We are looking forward to welcoming a new forensic psychiatrist who is in the final stages of moving to Nova Scotia and we are also receiving a visit from a forensic psychiatrist who is looking to relocate from Vermont and exploring her options.

Section of Geriatric Psychiatry

PUBLICATIONS

- A systematic review and meta-analysis on physical activity for the treatment of anxiety in older adults, International Psychogeriatrics, 2025 Feb 13
Authors: Zahra Goodarzi, AnneMarie Levy, Carly Whitmore, Titus Chan, Juliette Mojgani, Iulia Niculescu, Abitha Suthakaran, Alastair Flint, **Amy Gough**, Sébastien Grenier, Heli Juola, Kristin Reynolds, Sarah Neil-Sztramko, Shanna C. Trenaman, Erica Weir, Michael Van Ameringen, Anthony Yeung, Andrea Iaboni.
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1041610225000110>
- Factors associated with anxiety and fear of falling in older adults: A rapid systematic review of reviews. PLoS One. 2024 Dec 18;19(12):e0315185. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0315185. PMID: 39693333; PMCID: PMC11654959.
Authors: Whitmore C, Neil-Sztramko S, Grenier S, **Gough A**, Goodarzi Z, Weir E, Niculescu I, Suthakaran A, Adedeji I, Akram M, Mojgani J, Chan T, Flint AJ, Juola H, Reynolds K, Trenaman S, Van Amerigen M, Yeung A, Levy A, Iaboni A.

Geriatric Psychiatry subspecialty program

Dr. Winnifred Twum completes international fellowship

The Geriatric Psychiatry subspecialty program is delighted to announce that Dr. **Winnifred Twum** has successfully completed her six-month international fellowship in Geriatric Psychiatry. To mark this significant achievement, the program organized a celebratory bowling event, where colleagues and mentors gathered to honour her hard work and accomplishments. We extend our warmest congratulations as she embarks on improving Geriatric Psychiatry care of older adults back home in Ghana.

Pilot rural rotation

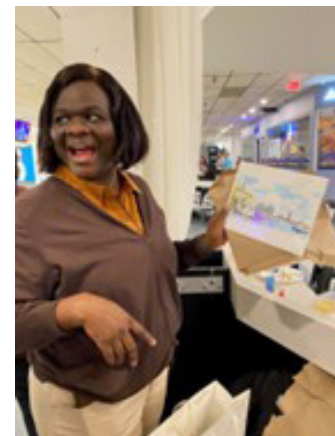
The Geriatric Psychiatry subspecialty program is excited to announce the launch of a one-month pilot rural rotation.

This initiative aims to expand training opportunities by providing hands-on experience in geriatric mental health care within rural communities. The pilot rotation will include placements in Kentville and Bridgewater and virtual care to Northern and Eastern Zones. By incorporating this rural rotation into the program, we hope to foster

a greater understanding of the diverse needs of aging populations across different geographic regions and inspire future geriatric psychiatrists to consider careers that support underserved communities.



The Geriatric Psychiatry subspecialty program organized a bowling event to celebrate Dr. Winnifred Twum successful completion of her six-month international fellowship.



One Person **One Record**

The scope for the One Person One Record Clinical Information System (OPOR-CIS) is vast and varied across the healthcare system and will impact nearly every area of patient care. The initial implementation will begin with IWK Health and then roll out across Nova Scotia Health facilities and sites over 18 months.

After consultation and many discussions with Nova Scotia Health primary health care leadership, it was decided that primary care clinics would not be included until the completion of the OPOR-CIS implementation. Once implemented across acute care, the OPOR Program will continue to work with Nova Scotia Health primary health care teams and partners to finalize design and scope, including virtual care. Chronic disease management clinics are included in the first implementation timeline and will go-live with their IWK Health and Nova Scotia Health sites.

Consultation with Nova Scotia Health primary health care teams and partners, along with the implementation of the CIS in other acute care ambulatory services, will inform the future design. This is an important step in ensuring we have the right system features to properly serve primary health care.

OPOR Town Halls continue the fourth Wednesday of each month, open to all Nova Scotia Health and IWK Health employees/physicians. Town Halls provide a platform to discuss the OPOR vision, and share insights, creating a collaborative environment that promotes readiness and shared ownership throughout the transformation journey.

Global Mental Health

Global Mental Health Report — March 2025



We are pleased to share the March 2025 [Global Mental Health Report](#), the first from the new Centre for Global Mental Health. Read about the Department of Psychiatry's recent global mental health initiatives in Ghana and Nigeria.

[View the Global Mental Health Report — March 2025](#)

Centre for Global Mental Health and Masters in Global Clinical Psychiatry approved by Dalhousie Board of Governors

We are pleased to share an exciting development with two new global mental health initiatives in the Department of Psychiatry. The **Centre for Global Mental Health** and **Masters in Global Clinical Psychiatry** were approved in March by the Dalhousie Board of Governors.

Centre for Global Mental Health

The Centre for Global Mental Health is a new Dalhousie research centre promoting Global Mental Health education, research, and knowledge translation.

Masters in Global Clinical Psychiatry *(pending MPHEC approval)*

The Masters in Global Clinical Psychiatry is a part-time, online masters program designed to enhance mental healthcare delivery globally through advanced education in clinical psychiatry.

The program emphasizes cultural competence, evidence-based practice, and practical skills development.

The Centre for Global Mental Health and Masters in Global Clinical Psychiatry were key elements of our department's transformational and strategic plan and will significantly enhance the department's leadership in closing treatment gaps globally.

Dr. Mutiat Sulyman delivers capacity-building session for the Asido Foundation

In January 2025, Dr. **Mutiat Sulyman**, a psychiatrist and director of EDIA for the Department of Psychiatry, delivered a capacity-building session for volunteers and staff of the Asido Foundation in Old-Bodija Estate, Ibadan, Nigeria.

During the session, Dr. Sulyman shared her experiences in her career path, particularly the disparities and inequalities in access to equitable and affordable mental health care. This underscored the need for the government, NGOs, and civil society organizations to prioritize mental health.

Dr. Sulyman also discussed her passion for ensuring that individuals with intellectual disabilities who are especially vulnerable receive the care they need. This passion has significantly influenced her professional journey as a psychiatrist. She emphasized the urgent need for mental health advocacy to improve public perception and reduce the stigma and shame associated with mental health conditions, especially in Nigeria and across Africa.

Finally, she shared insights on the benefits of volunteering, aiming to inspire and encourage all volunteers to become more involved and support the foundation's efforts in promoting optimal mental well-being for everyone. She commended the foundation's work and discussed potential opportunities for collaboration and partnership to enhance and amplify the impact of the Asido Foundation in the field of mental health. She also stressed on the importance of self-care as a volunteer and community mental health champion.



A section of the Asido team and Dr. Mutiat Sulyman.



Dr. Sulyman delivering her training session to a section of the Asido's team.

About the Asido Foundation

The Asido Foundation is a not-for-profit mental health organization established in 2019 to counter the ignorance, shame, and stigma associated with mental health. They do this through advocacy, the provision of evidence-based information, and intervention activities. They envision a society where everyone can enjoy optimal mental health regardless of age, gender, socio-economic status, religious creed, or ethnicity. [Learn more about the Asido Foundation.](#)

Dr. Pippa Moss' update on the Fundy Peace Foundation's work in Kenya

Dr. **Pippa Moss** recently returned from Kenya, having visited the projects there run through The Fundy Peace Foundation (fundypeace.com). The four children in Nakuru, who started life as AIDs orphaned and abandoned babies with complex medical needs and who have been adopted and fostered into a local family, are all doing well. The older two will be in their final year of schooling soon and plan to go on to study nursing and plumbing. Many thanks to their aunties and uncles here in Canada who have sponsored and cared for them from infancy, as well as those who give spontaneously. This has literally saved their lives.

Having spent the last 14 years ensuring that these children are healthy and well cared for, overcoming initial problems such as starvation, cerebral palsy and cardiac defects, we now face a huge challenge. The cuts to US foreign aid mean that the supply of antiretroviral medications, needed to keep some of the family alive, is in question. We will know more in April when the next medical appointments are due.

The oldest boy in the family, now an adult, has schizophrenia and we are still looking for an individual or small group to sponsor him and ensure that his depot medications are covered. There is very little mental health care available in Kenya and we have been extremely fortunate to find a psychiatrist who follows his progress locally.

The other projects, in the Masai Mara, are also doing well. Having the local population at Empoo enumerated (by a young man who went through school and teacher training under our care) has meant that the politicians are now playing a role in road and school maintenance. And the government



A joyous welcome.



The clinic is being built at Empoo—two consultation rooms, a reception area, waiting area, a maternity ward and general in patient ward, pharmacy and lab.



The water supply for drinking established in partnership with AMREF, after we put in the borehole. In the background, Tatamagouche and Malagash classrooms with another classroom to the left, off the picture, and two to the right, whose red roofs can be seen. The black tank is for harvesting water from the roof.

has promised to staff a clinic/ inpatient unit if we can build it, as lives are being lost when health care cannot be accessed, especially in the rainy seasons. The walls are going up, a bit at a time as funds are raised.

Children are being registered at birth now they can attend school. We built the school for girls, though boys are welcome to attend, and hope that by ensuring this education, at least to Grade 7, we will counter local traditions such as child brides and female genital

mutilation, which are (theoretically) illegal in Kenya.

Dr. Moss will be presenting on this project, as well as the school, clean water for the school and community, and land for refugees from Tanzania to settle, at the Child Psychiatry Conference at White Point in June. She can be reached at pippa@drmoss.ca if anyone is interested to find out more, or inspired to donate to or join in these projects. (The Fundy Peace Foundation is a registered charity and tax receipts are provided.)

Department News

FACULTY & STAFF CHANGES

Arrivals

- Dr. **Adekunle Bamidele** joined the department as an assistant professor effective March 3, 2025. Dr. Bamidele will be working on 6 Lane, Acute Care and PES. Dr. Bamidele can be reached at **Adekunle.Bamidele@nshealth.ca**
- Dr. **Sannie John** joined the department as an assistant professor effective March 1, 2025. Dr. John is working as a child and adolescent

psychiatrist in PEI. Dr. John can be reached at **sanniejohn@ihis.org**

- **Minh Nguyen** joined the department's operations team as administrative coordinator effective March 17, 2025. He can be reached at **Minh.Nguyen@dal.ca**

Welcome to you all!

Staff changes

Chelsea Mantin has recently taken on the role of HR coordinator, effective April 1, 2025. During this transition, she will continue to provide support to the department head to ensure continuity in operations.

At the same time, we are actively recruiting for the administrative assistant to the department head position. We will share further updates as the process moves forward.

Congratulations Chelsea!

AWARDS & HONOURS

Dr. Vincent Agyapong and Dr. LeAnne Revell recognized with 2025 Global Health Awards

Congratulations to Dr. **Vincent Agyapong**, Head of the Department of Psychiatry, on being awarded the 2025 Dr. John Savage Memorial Award for Faculty Leadership in Global Health!

The Dr. John Savage Memorial Award for Faculty Leadership in Global Health was established in 2003 in memory of Dr. John Savage, a friend and colleague of the Dalhousie Medical School and a tireless champion of the need to promote healthy communities worldwide. A former physician, Premier of Nova Scotia and Mayor of Dartmouth, Dr. Savage had a long-standing commitment to global health projects in Africa with the Nova Scotia Gambia Association and other organizations. The Dr. Savage Memorial Award for Faculty leadership in Global Health recognizes an outstanding humanitarian contribution to global health by a Dalhousie Medical School faculty member.

Congratulations to Dr. **LeAnne Revell** (PGY-5) on being awarded the 2025 Dr. TJ (Jock) Murray Award for Resident Leadership in Global Health!

The Dr. TJ (Jock) Murray Resident Award for Leadership in Global Health was established in 2010 to recognize excellence within residents at Dalhousie Medical School who demonstrate commitment to global health as they advocate for marginalized populations and explore new ways to engage in clinical service, education and research in underserved populations in Canada and abroad.

Dr. Murray is a world-renowned expert in multiple sclerosis, medical humanities and medical history. Dr. Murray is a former Dean of Dalhousie Medical School; Professor Emeritus at Dalhousie University and remains active in the Medical Humanities Program. He is an

Officer of the Order of Canada and member of the Order of Nova Scotia. Dr. Murray is a strong advocate for the values within global health.

Dr. Ahmed Saleh recognized with a NS Health Making Waves Award

Congratulations to Dr. **Ahmed Saleh** on being awarded the 2024 Leadership Excellence Award – Physician Leader, one of the NS Health 2024 Making Waves Awards!

belairdirect, is to recognize the high level of dedication of the people that make up Nova Scotia Health and advance its vision, mission, values, and strategic directions.

The goal of the Making Waves Awards Program, co-sponsored by

Dr. Patrick McGrath recognized with Canadian Psychological Association Award

Congratulations to Dr. **Patrick McGrath** on being awarded the Canadian Psychological Association Award for Distinguished Contributions to the International Advancement of Psychology!

This award is presented to recognize a CPA Member or Fellow who has made significant contributions to the international cooperation and advancement of knowledge in psychology.

Dr. Alexa Bagnell, Dr. Aidan Stokes, and Dr. Cinera States recognized with King Charles III Coronation Medals

Congratulations to Drs. **Alexa Bagnell, Aidan Stokes, and Cinera States** on being awarded King Charles III Coronation Medals!

significant contribution to Canada or to a particular province, territory, region or community of Canada, or have made an outstanding achievement abroad that brings credit to Canada.”

Marking the coronation of King Charles to the throne in 2023, the medals are intended to recognize individuals who “have made a

Recognizing our administrative staff

Do you know a Dalhousie University Psychiatry administrative employee who deserves to be recognized for their extra efforts?

Let us know by filling out the form on the homepage of dalpsychiatry.ca.

Dr. Agyapong and department managers in the Department of Psychiatry have launched a new employee appreciation program that will recognize employees regularly for their contribution to the academic, research, and clinical work of the department.

This is a great way to recognize staff who make sure services are staffed, learners feel supported, research is productive, and budgets are balanced.

Questions or issues with the form?

Contact jen.brown@nshealth.ca



EXTRA MILE AWARD

Do you have a colleague who deserves to be recognized for going “the extra mile?”
Consider nominating them for the Extra Mile Award!

The Department of Psychiatry’s Extra Mile Award recognizes exceptional contributions by faculty and staff who have truly gone “the extra mile” in service to the department by advancing its mission in the areas of education, research, clinical care, and advocacy.

LEARN MORE & MAKE A NOMINATION [HERE](#).

Photo Feature



Carnations

Photo by Dr. **Lara Hazelton**.

All are welcome to submit their picture of nature for the newsletter to **Penney Miller** at **Penney.Miller@nshealth.ca**

Medical Humanities



Student Writing Competition 2025

Do you enjoy writing?

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

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

*Awards in each category may not be given each year depending on the number and/or quality of the submissions.

Contest Rules

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

Maximum word count: 2,000 words

Deadline: This year's deadline is **May 1, 2025**. Winners will be announced in fall 2025.

Entries can be sent as PDF attachments to the Department of Psychiatry Medical Humanities Coordinator, Dr. Leigh Meldrum, at Psych.Education@dal.ca. Please indicate in your email whether you are a medical student or a resident/fellow.

To ensure confidentiality is maintained, patients and anyone else described in essays, stories, or poems **must be fictional or composite characters (with the exception of the narrator him/herself).*

For complete contest rules, please visit: <https://medicine.dal.ca/departments/department-sites/psychiatry/education/medical-humanities/writing-competition.html>

Winning

Winning entries will be published in the Department of Psychiatry newsletter, *Headlines*, and on the **Dalhousie Department of Psychiatry website**.

HEADLINES **SUBMISSIONS**

Headlines provides a forum for the exchange of information, ideas, and items of general interest to the faculty, fellows, students, and staff of the Department of Psychiatry.

The next issue of **Headlines** will be distributed in **June 2025**.

Please send all submissions to **Penney.Miller@nshealth.ca**



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