

HEADLINES



WELCOMING THE NEW PGY-1 RESIDENTS



DALHOUSIE
UNIVERSITY

Department of Psychiatry

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ADVANCING EQUITABLE MENTAL HEALTH CARE IN NOVA SCOTIA: TRANSCULTURAL MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM CELEBRATES FOURTH ANNIVERSARY *page 23*

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HEAD LINES

Message from the Department Head



It's been a busy winter in the Department of Psychiatry as we continue to ramp up activities of the Centre for Global Mental Health, prepare to celebrate learners and welcome new ones, train for the implementation of OPOR, and engage in the next phase of our strategic plan process. Before I highlight some of our recent activities, I want to thank our faculty for their time, attention, and participation in preparing for the launch of OPOR.

On February 20, the Centre for Global Mental Health and the Global Psychological eHealth Foundation co-led a National Policy Dialogue on "Translating Innovation into Impact: Integrating Digital Mental Health into Canada's Care Systems." The dialogue convened leaders from federal, provincial, and territorial governments, regional health authorities, Indigenous partners, philanthropy, academia, youth organizations, and digital health innovators. Thank you to all the attendees and presenters who participated in this important conversation. We look forward to the next steps.

We celebrated the fourth anniversary of the Transcultural

Mental Health Program on March 6 with an event hosted by the Department of Psychiatry in collaboration with the Central Zone Mental Health and Addictions Program. Leaders in government, Nova Scotia Health, Dalhousie University, community partner organizations, and those with lived experience shared their perspectives on the program during the event. Our thanks to keynote speaker Sharon Davis-Murdoch, co-president of the Health Association of African Canadians, the Honourable Brian Comer, Minister of Addictions and Mental Health, and to all our partners who spoke at and attended the event. At the event, we were pleased to recognize Dr. **Mahmoud Awara** and **Dorothy Edem** with Special Recognition Awards for their work on the Transcultural Mental Health Program and Advisory Council.

The Centre for Global Mental Health is preparing for its inaugural conference "[Mental Health Responses in a Changing World 2026: Innovative Responses to Humanitarian Emergencies](#)," taking place online on Friday, July 10. I hope you will be able to attend and encourage you to share information about this event with anyone you know who may be interested.

The new course "[Building Cultural Competence for Mental Health Equity](#)" was co-created with the Black/African Nova Scotia Community for Department of Psychiatry faculty members and is taking place over two brief sessions this spring. Part 1 occurred during April 8 rounds and Part 2 is taking place in person on May 1. This course builds on the Faculty of Medicine's "Anti-Oppression Course" and is aligned with goals of our new strategic plan.

There are a few days left for licensed healthcare professionals to apply to the new [Master of Clinical Psychiatry and Global Mental Health](#) program. The deadline to apply is May 1 to join the first cohort in September 2026.

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. We look forward to welcoming the incoming PGY-1 class to the department.

In September, we will welcome a new cohort of MSc and PhD Psychiatry Research students. We're excited to welcome them, and as always, thank our faculty members for supervising the students' research projects.

We also congratulate the following learners on their recent achievements: **Daniel Basso** (MSc student) on being selected as a finalist in the Dalhousie 3 Minute Thesis Competition; **Ashley Francis** (PhD student) for securing a CIHR Post-Doctoral Fellowship; **Christina Simms** (MSc student) for securing a SSHRC Canada Graduate Research Scholarship – Masters'; **Julia Fraiha Pegado Nobrega** (PhD student) on being awarded the Dalhousie University Killam Predoctoral Scholarship; **Madison Conrad** (incoming MSc student) on receiving the Dalhousie 1-Year Master's Scholarship; Dr. **Elena Koning** (Post-Doctoral Fellow), winner of the 2026 Faculty of Medicine Excellence in Research Award for the Post-Doctoral Fellow category; **Lilith Nosko** (MSc student), who won Best Poster at the Brain Repair Centre's Annual Research Day; and, Dr. **Qëndresa Sahiti** (Associate Chief Resident, PGY-2) who received special recognition by the governments of Canada and Kosovo.

The following department members were successful with recent publications. Congratulations to Drs. **Erik Fraunberger** (PGY-3), **Linda Liebenberg**, **Selene Etches**, and **Pearl Adu-Nyako** (former International Fellow).

Congratulations also go to Dr. **Pearl Adu-Nyako** who completed a six-month international fellowship in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry in February 2026.

Moving to the next phase of our strategic plan process, department leaders convened on April 17 to engage in operational planning. Thank you to everyone who came out and gave their time, energy, and ideas to help us identify specific actions to achieve the goals of the 2026-2031 Strategic Plan.

We extend a warm welcome to the following new department members: Dr. **Babatunde (Tunde) Adeeko**, Dr. **Reza Rostami**, Dr. **Kyle Godden**, Dr. **Ayesha Nazir**, Dr. **Darcy O'Brien**, and staff member **Tara Gonzalez**. In welcoming these new department members, we also said farewell and best wishes to Drs. **David Russell** and **Liana Aires** who left the department, and to **Sandra Millar**, who retired from the department after two decades.

Department members continue to be recognized at departmental, local, and national levels. Congratulations to Dr. **Abraham Nunes**, winner of the QEII Foundation's People's Choice Award; Dr. **Sarah Fancy (for the Garron Centre)**, recipient of the 2026 Certificate of Special

Recognition from the Canadian Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (CACAP); Dr. **Alexa Bagnell**, recipient of the 2026 CACAP Paul D. Steinhauer Advocacy Award; Dr. **Selene Etches**, recipient of the Doctors Nova Scotia Dr. William Grigor Award; and to **Eleanor Kumahia**, **Supriya D'Penha**, **Adrienne McCarthy**, and **Deb Follett** for receiving the department's Extra Mile Award.

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

Save the Date

SUMMER CELEBRATION

Sunday, July 19, 2026

2 to 7 p.m.

St. Mary's Boat Club, Halifax, NS

Watch for details on event activities and how to register.

This event is for all members of the Department of Psychiatry.



DALHOUSIE
UNIVERSITY

Department of Psychiatry

Welcoming the new PGY-1 residents

By Drs. Louise Moodie, co-chief resident; Anthony Hinde, co-chief resident; and, Qëndresa Sahit, associate chief resident

Please welcome our newest PGY-1 cohort!



Samar Ali

The place I call home is: I'm so privileged to call many places home, but I feel most at home in Cape Breton.

I did my medical school training at: Dalhousie University

The area of psychiatry I am most excited to explore right now is: All of it, especially geriatric and transcultural psychiatry!

One thing I am excited about for my residency at Dalhousie Psychiatry: Getting to work with my amazing co-residents and continuing to learn from the staff who already had such an integral role in developing my interest in psychiatry during clerkship!

If I could ask for one piece of advice from a senior resident, I'd ask them: Where are the snacks hidden and what do you wish you had known or done differently during your PGY-1?

One thing about the Maritimes I love, or think I'll love: The people!!! (I should declare my bias as a Maritimer)

How do you unwind after a busy day at work? By catching up with friends and family, and attempting to stay active on my elliptical while watching something to make me laugh (either intentionally as a comedy or because it's so bad).



Cassandra Collins

The place I call home is: Newfoundland and Labrador

I did my medical school training at: Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador

The area of psychiatry I am most excited to explore right now is: Forensic Psychiatry

One thing I am excited about for my residency at Dalhousie Psychiatry: The close-knit culture that is fostered both within the residency program and the community of Halifax.

If I could ask for one piece of advice from a senior resident, I'd ask them: How do you maintain your own well-being while cultivating your skills as a psychiatrist?

One thing about the Maritimes I love, or think I'll love: I love living by the ocean!

Tell us about your favourite thing to do outside of medicine. Spending time with my family and friends.



Kaya Dooley

The place I call home is: St. John's, Newfoundland

I did my medical school training at: Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador

The area of psychiatry I am most excited to explore right now is: Child and adolescent!

One thing I am excited about for my residency at Dalhousie Psychiatry: Psychotherapy training :)

If I could ask for one piece of advice from a senior resident, I'd ask them: If you could go back to being a fourth-year med student again, what would you do differently before starting residency?

One thing about the Maritimes I love, or think I'll love: The warmth and kindness of the people.

Tell us about your favourite thing to do outside of medicine. Creative writing (short fiction - usually drama/romance/thrillers)!

How do you unwind after a busy day at work? Usually something creative... sewing, writing or painting. Also seeing friends and loved ones!

If I had to pick a research project tomorrow, the title of my project would be: 'It's Giving Trauma': Internet-Derived Psychopathology Language in Youth Self-Report



Renaj' Forbes

The place I call home is: Freeport, Grand Bahama Island, The Bahamas

I did my medical school training at: Dalhousie University

The area of psychiatry I am most excited to explore right now is: Neuropsychiatry and Transcultural/Social Psychiatry

One thing I am excited about for my residency at Dalhousie Psychiatry: Being part of a supportive community of creative, compassionate and emotionally intelligent individuals.

If I could ask for one piece of advice from a senior resident, I'd ask them: How to survi—I mean thrive in the two blocks of MTU in PGY1?

One thing about the Maritimes I love, or think I'll love: I love the salty sea air and the fact that wherever you are, you're never too far from the illustrious caw of the majestic sea gulls.

Tell us about your favourite thing to do outside of medicine. Backwoods camping in Keji. What I love about it is: #1, the break from civilization and #2 in the woods. Yes, you read that correctly.



Katelyn Malone

The place I call home is: Halifax, NS

I did my medical school training at: Dalhousie

The area of psychiatry I am most excited to explore right now is: All of it, but especially looking forward to getting more experience in inpatient/acute care.

One thing I am excited about for my residency at Dalhousie Psychiatry: To get to train with a great group of residents!

If I could ask for one piece of advice from a senior resident, I'd ask them: Advice on time management during busy call shifts (& favourite snacks on call)

One thing about the Maritimes I love, or think I'll love: Being near so many beautiful beaches

Tell us about your favourite thing to do outside of medicine. Probably reading. I'm always looking for new book recommendations!



Sigrid Nguimfack

The place I call home is: Edmundston, NB

I did my medical school training at: Dalhousie Medicine, Saint John (NB) Campus

The area of psychiatry I am most excited to explore right now is: I'm excited to learn more about the different types of Psychotherapy!

One thing I am excited about for my residency at Dalhousie Psychiatry: I'm very excited to meet my co-residents and get to know each other, learn from one another and motivate each other over the next five years!

If I could ask for one piece of advice from a senior resident, I'd ask them: I would ask a senior resident about the process they used to decide between subspecialties and general psychiatry. There are so many interesting parts of Psychiatry, so I'd be interested to learn from senior residents what drew them to specific subspecialties and how they decided which one to pursue!

One thing about the Maritimes I love, or think I'll love: I like that there's a good balance of city life and great areas of landscape to enjoy outdoor activities and gorgeous sights!

How do you unwind after a busy day at work? Going home to a hot chocolate or tea, with a snack and a good reality TV show or book!

If I had to pick a research project tomorrow, the title of my project would be:
Exploring the Effects of Cultural Traditions and Religious Beliefs on the Understanding and Approach to Mental Illness Presentations in Central African Populations



Faisal Quadri

The place I call home is: All over the place! I grew up in Calgary, and then my family moved to Abu Dhabi. I later moved to Hamilton for medical school and the rest of my family later moved to Kingston. I'm excited to now call Halifax home!

I did my medical school training at: McMaster (Hamilton Campus)

The area of psychiatry I am most excited to explore right now is: Lots! Currently mood disorders, child and adolescent, and functional neurological disorders.

One thing I am excited about for my residency at Dalhousie Psychiatry: Getting to know all of my amazing co-residents and the wonderful department!

If I could ask for one piece of advice from a senior resident, I'd ask them: How to thoughtfully manage time between clinical work, learning, and wellness.

One thing about the Maritimes I love, or think I'll love: Living by the ocean again and becoming part of the warm and welcoming community here!

Tell us about your favourite thing to do outside of medicine. Right now it's baking! I love experimenting with cake and cookie recipes.



Jasmine (pronounced jaz-meen) Sodhi

The place I call home is: Truro, Nova Scotia

I did my medical school training at: Dalhousie

The area of psychiatry I am most excited to explore right now is: I'm excited to do a little bit of everything and get a feel for all the different subspecialties.

One thing I am excited about for my residency at Dalhousie Psychiatry: I look forward to continuing to build my life in Halifax and meeting all my new co-residents (friends).

If I could ask for one piece of advice from a senior resident, I'd ask them: What was the hardest part about the transition from med student to resident and any tips to help with this?

One thing about the Maritimes I love, or think I'll love: I love the proximity to the ocean; it makes me feel like a piece of a puzzle in a bigger picture. I love the people, strangers that smile at you when you walk by them, and neighbours that become friends, and I love the seafood.

Tell us about your favourite thing to do outside of medicine. I like slow days with lots of loitering and walking around. Catching up with friends, at a cafe, or a dinner party, on someone's couch, or a long drive, talking about books and movies, and what's going on in the world and in our lives.



Alison Walsh

The place I call home is: St. John's, Newfoundland

I did my medical school training at: Memorial University of Newfoundland

The area of psychiatry I am most excited to explore right now is: I am very open-minded and excited to explore all areas of psychiatry, but I am most looking forward to spending time with children, adolescents, and youth, and developing skills in psychotherapy.

One thing I am excited about for my residency at Dalhousie Psychiatry: Meeting my co-residents!

If I could ask for one piece of advice from a senior resident, I'd ask them: For tips on how to manage the transition into residency.

One thing about the Maritimes I love, or think I'll love: The friendly people and proximity to the ocean.

Tell us about your favourite thing to do outside of medicine. Going out for food and drink, and any outdoor sport – hiking, running, and skiing especially!

Research Report

Save the **Date**



PSYCHIATRY RESEARCH DAY

Friday, Oct. 30, 2026

Atlantica Hotel Halifax

Theme: Child and Adolescent Research

Keynote speaker:

Dr. Jai Shah, MD, FRCPC
Associate Professor, Researcher
Douglas Hospital Research Centre, McGill University

Watch for registration and abstract submission details.

PUBLICATIONS

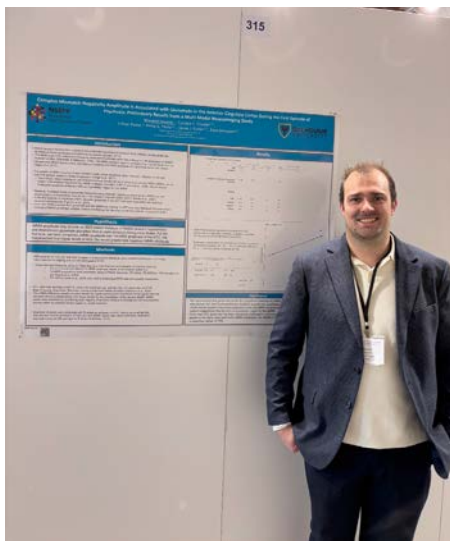
- **E. Fraunberger** and M. vonMaltzahn, "Chronic Insomnia and Excess Cannabis Ingestion in an Older Adult – A Clinical Report of Complex Geriatric Care," *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society* (2026): 1–4, <https://doi-org.ezproxy.library.dal.ca/10.1111/jgs.70389>
- **Liebenberg, L.**, Mercier, J., & Sanders, J. (2026). Relationship-based practice training as a key to improved outcomes: Promising Links. *Social Work Education*, 1-21, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02615479.2026.2642350>.

Student work showcased at Schizophrenia International Research Society Conference

Department members attended the Schizophrenia International Research Society (SIRS) conference in March in Florence, Italy. At the conference, **Max Seward** presented a poster (current MSc student in Psychiatry Research; co-supervised by Drs. **Kara Dempster** and **Derek Fisher**) and **Nicole Ponto** was selected to give an oral presentation (Drs. **Phil Tibbo** and **Candice Crocker** co-supervised her MSc in Medical Neuroscience). Max will be starting his PhD in Clinical Psychology at Dalhousie in September, and Nicole will be starting her PhD at Kings College, London, UK this year.



Nicole Ponto presents at SIRS.



Max Seward presents a poster at SIRS.



From left to right: Dr. Phil Tibbo, Max Seward, and Nicole Ponto.

MSc Student Lilith Nosko wins best poster at Brain Repair Centre Research Day

Lilith Nosko, MSc in Psychiatry Research student (supervisors: Drs. **Phil Tibbo** and Alissa Pencer), won Best Poster at the Brain Repair Centre's Annual Research Day on Feb. 27, 2026. Lilith's presentation was titled "Examining the impact of a brief engagement-focused intervention on substance use and self-stigma in early phase psychosis: a preliminary analysis." Congratulations!



Lilith Nosko, MSc in Psychiatry Research student, at the Brain Repair Centre's Annual Research Day.

Building Resilience through Inclusive Development and Gender-responsive Life Skills Education for Internally Displaced Adolescents in Nigeria (BRIDGE-IDAs), Stakeholders Advisory Group Meeting

Dr. **Ejemai Eboeime** attended the Stakeholders Advisory Group Meeting for the Building Resilience through Inclusive Development and Gender-responsive Life Skills Education for Internally Displaced Adolescents in Nigeria (BRIDGE-IDAs) project in Abuja, Nigeria in March 2026.

[Learn more about the project.](#)



Education Report

UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION NEWS

Undergraduate teaching recruitment for 2026/27

Our undergraduate teaching recruitment for the 2026/27 academic year has begun and will run until April 15, 2026. To explore available teaching

opportunities, please contact **Parisa Abdi-Sabouhi**, Undergraduate Coordinator, at **Psych.Undergrad@dal.ca**.

2026/27 core clerk schedule

Planning for the 2026/27 core clerkship (Med 3) schedule is in progress. Supervisors will receive

their schedules by the end of April to support advance planning for the next academic year.

Med 4 electives

Dalhousie Med 4 students can submit their elective requests through the AFMC portal beginning May 25, 2026. Our department

also welcomes visiting elective students from across Canada and internationally.

MPAS program

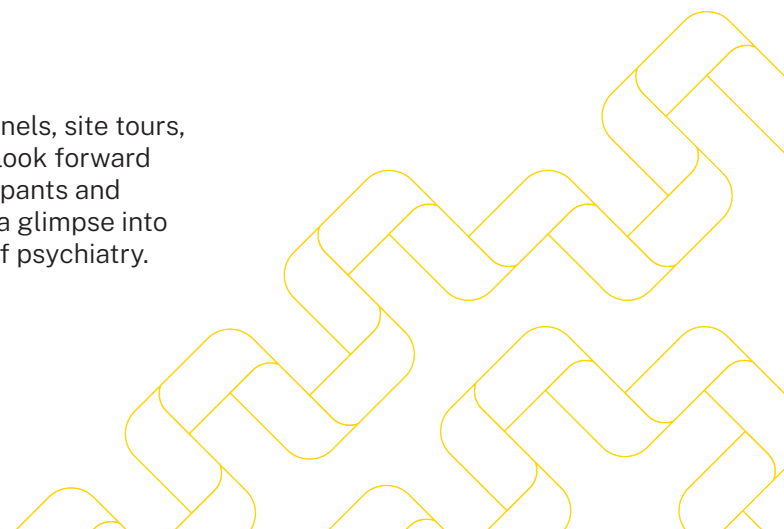
We are in the second year of accommodating the Master of Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS)

program. 24 MPAS students are scheduled across the Central Zone and distributed clinical sites in 2026.

Summer Internship in Psychiatry (SIIP)

We are delighted to welcome Med 1 students from both the NS and NB Dalhousie campuses to our Summer Internship in Psychiatry (SIIP) program. Scheduled from June 2 to June 5, 2026, this immersive initiative will feature small-group didactic

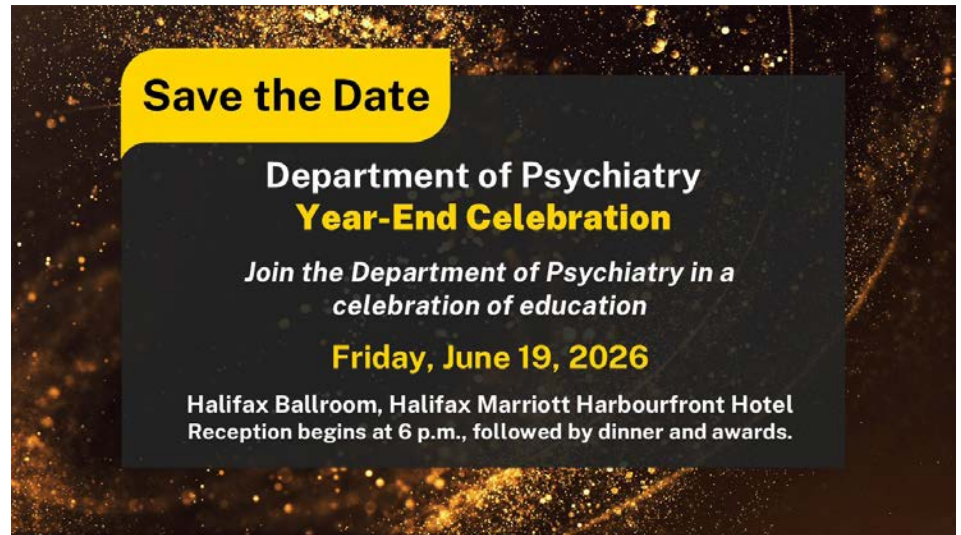
sessions, resident panels, site tours, and simulations. We look forward to hosting our participants and providing them with a glimpse into the rewarding field of psychiatry.



POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION NEWS

Save the date — Year-End Celebration

Our year-end celebration offers a time to celebrate our postgraduate learners, teachers, and staff. This year, our celebration will be held at the Marriott Harbourfront Halifax on **Friday, June 19, 2026**.



Resident research spotlight



Dr. **Erik Fraunberger** (PGY-3) presented a case study on *Functional Movement Disorder Diagnosed as Tardive Dyskinesia* at the American Neuropsychiatry Association (ANPA) Conference in Providence, Rhode Island, March 10–13, 2026.

Royal College exam

Congratulations to the PGY-4 residents on writing the Royal College exam on March 11, 2026. We wish them the best of luck on the

oral exams taking place in Ottawa at the Collège La Cité from June 10-12, 2026.

GRADUATE PROGRAM NEWS

MASTER OF CLINICAL PSYCHIATRY AND GLOBAL MENTAL HEALTH

Master of Clinical Psychiatry and Global Mental Health accepting applications for its first cohort

Dalhousie University has launched an exciting, one-of-a-kind, new graduate program for licensed healthcare professionals. The [Master of Clinical Psychiatry and Global Mental Health](#) is an online, part-time, two-year program designed to enhance skills in clinical psychiatry and improve patient care.

This program is specifically for licensed healthcare professionals, such as family doctors and nurse practitioners, looking to build their expertise within their current practice and communities.

If you are a healthcare professional looking to build your expertise, the **Master of Clinical Psychiatry and Global Mental Health** will

provide a graduate-level education in transcultural evidence-based diagnosis, treatment planning, and psychopharmacology for improved management of patients presenting with mental health issues.

By enhancing mental healthcare capacity and skills among eligible healthcare professionals globally, this program addresses gaps in specialized psychiatric care, particularly in underserved regions. You'll learn in a program that emphasizes cultural competence, evidence-based practice, and practical skills development.

[Explore the program in this video.](#)

Applications are open and the deadline to apply is May 1, 2026.

The program will start in September 2026.

To learn more and to apply, visit dal.ca/clinical-psychiatry-global

Note: *The Master of Clinical Psychiatry and Global Mental Health is designed for eligible healthcare professionals who already hold an active license to practice clinically in their jurisdiction and does not qualify graduates for professional licensing.*

If you have any questions, email Global.Psychiatry@dal.ca



From Cape Breton to Jamaica to Lagos.

Master of Clinical Psychiatry and Global Mental Health

Expand your expertise—and your community's mental health outcomes—with Dalhousie University's one-of-a-kind program.

Study online, deliver on-site.



Learn more at
dal.ca/clinical-psychiatry-global

GRADUATE PROGRAMS IN PSYCHIATRY RESEARCH

Welcome to new students!

The Graduate Program in Psychiatry Research is pleased to welcome a new cohort of graduate students who will be joining the program for the fall 2026/2027 academic year. These incoming students bring diverse academic backgrounds and research interests and will be supervised by a variety of faculty members across the department.

- **Adele Bernier (MSc)** – Supervised by *Dr. Phil Tibbo and Dr. Derek Fisher*
- **Nora Connolly (MSc)** – Supervised by *Dr. Tomas Hajek*
- **Danae Conrad (MSc)** – Supervised by *Dr. Patrick McGrath*
- **Madison Conrad (MSc)** – Supervised by *Dr. Lori Wozney and Dr. Sandra Meier*
- **Anjali Gosal (MSc)** – Supervised by *Dr. David Gardner and Dr. Andrea Murphy*
- **Aliya Qureshi (MSc)** – Supervised by *Dr. Kim Good*
- **Lauren Stirpe (MSc)** – Supervised by *Dr. Rudolf Uher*
- **Leann Timmer (MSc)** – Supervised by *Dr. Rudolf Uher*
- **Deniz Yildirim (MSc)** – Supervised by *Dr. Sandra Meier*
- **Pierre Olivier Couture (PhD)** – Supervised by *Dr. David Gardner*

The program looks forward to supporting these students as they begin their graduate training and as they move forward in contributing to psychiatric research and scholarship.

Student achievement highlights

The program congratulates **Daniel Basso**, who was selected as a finalist in the Dalhousie 3 Minute Thesis (3MT) competition. Daniel's presentation was based on his in-progress MSc thesis, "*Investigating the Substance Use Motives and Behaviours of Autistic Emerging Adults*" being co-supervised by Drs. **Sherry Stewart** and Jillian Filliter. His 3MT presentation, titled "Adapting to a world not meant for you: An exploration of autism, substance use, and young adulthood," showcased his research and communication skills before a broad audience.

The program is also very pleased to announce that **Ashley Francis** (a current student defending her PhD in Psychiatry Research this summer) was successful in securing a CIHR Post-Doctoral Fellowship to commence in the fall (post-doc supervisor: **Dr. Phil Tibbo**)!

The program also congratulates **Christina Simms** for her success in securing a SSHRC Canada Graduate Research Scholarship – Masters' (CGRS-M) to support her second year in the MSc in Psychiatry Research program (supervisor: **Dr. Sherry Stewart**).

Congratulations to **Julia Fraiha Pegado Nobrega** on being awarded the prestigious Dalhousie University Killam Predoctoral Scholarship, recognizing your exceptional academic achievement and research potential. This highly competitive award supports outstanding PhD candidates as they advance innovative scholarship and contribute meaningfully to their field.

Congratulations to **Madison Conrad** on receiving the Dalhousie 1-Year Master's Scholarship, awarded in recognition of outstanding

academic achievement and research potential. This award provides valuable support as they pursue their graduate studies and contribute to the department's scholarly community.

Congratulations to **Dr. Elena Koning**, winner of the 2026 Faculty of Medicine Excellence in Research Award for the Post-Doctoral Fellow category. Dr. Koning will present her research during the 2026 Graduate Student Research Day on June 4, 2026.

Congratulations Daniel, Ashley, Christina, Julia, Madison, and Elena on these outstanding achievements!

MEDICAL EDUCATION NEWS

Medical Education Research Roundtables

This monthly lunchtime seminar, from Continuing Professional Development and Medical Education in the Faculty of Medicine, is aimed at facilitating constructive dialogue within the local FoM community about the possibilities (and sometimes pitfalls) of pursuing medical education research. Each month they invite speakers within our Dalhousie community and beyond to delve into the logistical matters, unexpected dilemmas, and

issues worthy of attention that can arise when undertaking a research project.

When: second Tuesday of each month from 12-1 p.m. via MS Teams

Who can attend:

- Medical students, residents and/or graduate students with an interest in medical education research

- Faculty (MD/PhD) pursuing or collaborating on medical education research
- RIM Mentors and Directors
- Research staff seeking a supportive environment to engage in candid research conversations (e.g. research assistants, evaluation specialists)

[Learn more.](#)

INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

The International Fellows Program continues to demonstrate sustained growth and increasing strategic reach across a broad range of psychiatric subspecialties. As of May 2026, a total of 12 fellowships have been completed by 11 fellows, with six fellows currently in training and a further eight expected to join over the next three years. While all completed and current training has been based in Halifax, the program is expanding into New Brunswick with upcoming placements. The diversity of fellowship areas — including Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Forensic Psychiatry, Neuropsychiatry, Addiction Services, and Transcultural Psychiatry — reflects a strong alignment with evolving clinical priorities and workforce needs.

The program continues to attract strong international interest, with 37 applications received since May 2025, of which 25 have progressed to review, along with additional recent acceptances and anticipated applicants.

To complement its clinical training mandate, the program has strengthened its academic infrastructure by introducing a structured seminar series. These include a transdiagnostic clinical seminar series led by Dr. **Abraham (Rami) Rudnick** and a research-focused series led by Dr. **Linda Liebenberg**, both designed to enhance fellows' competencies in clinical reasoning, systems thinking, ethics, and applied research. Collectively, these developments reinforce the program's position as a comprehensive and academically robust training platform for international psychiatry fellows.



Congratulations to Dr. **Pearl Adu-Nyako** who completed a six-month international fellowship in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry in February 2026.

Division of **Child & Adolescent Psychiatry**

AWARDS/RECOGNITION



We welcomed Dr. **Kyle Godden** as a new faculty member on Feb. 9, 2026. Dr. Godden graduated from the Dalhousie Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Subspecialty Residency program in December 2025, and completed his general residency at Dalhousie and his medical school training at McMaster. Dr. Godden has made significant clinical academic contributions throughout his residency, including in neuroimmune inflammatory psychiatric illnesses and functional neurological disorders. We are very excited he has decided to join the IWK Department/Dalhousie Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and his clinical work will be on Garron inpatient unit.



We welcomed Dr. **Ayesha Nazir** as new faculty member in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry on March 23, 2026 and she will be working in outpatient at CMHA Halifax. Dr. Nazir completed her medical school in Pakistan and pursued postgraduate training in Ireland. Since 2020 she has served as a Consultant in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry working in both community and inpatient settings in the UK. She is passionate about advancing child psychiatry and aims to leverage her clinical, teaching, research and leadership experience to enhance patient care, clinical services, and education.

Congratulations to Dr. **Kate Stymiest** on being appointed as the new Inpatient Psychiatry Lead and Medical Director on Garron. She started in this role on Feb. 9, 2026 and has joined the CAP Executive and Mental Health and Addictions Leadership team as part of her leadership role.

Dr. **Sarah Fancy** is the new Psychiatry lead for Mood Disorder specific care clinic and providing general outpatient CMHA psychiatry care. She started in this role on March 1, 2026.

Thank you to Dr. **Alexandra Manning** for her clinical care as lead of IWK Bipolar Clinic over the past five years. Dr. Manning is the current Program Director of Psychiatry at Dalhousie and works in IWK Sackville CMHA and is also physician lead there.

CAP PRESENTATIONS

- Drs. **Alexa Bagnell, Sabina Abidi, Sarah Fancy, Kyle Godden** co-presented at the Department of Psychiatry Grand Rounds, “Acute Onset Neuroimmune Inflammatory Conditions in Psychiatry” Feb. 11, 2026.
- Dr. **Julia Gibson** presented “Advocacy in Child & Adolescent Psychiatry” for the CAP COPE National Curriculum Series on March 6, 2026.
- Dr. **Normand Carrey** and Myles Anton presented at Dalhousie Psychiatry Academic Rounds March 18, 2026, “From Young Werther’s Sorrows to Tumbler Ridge: Social Media Impacts on Youth Mental Health.”

CAP EDUCATION

Annual Gender Care Symposium

The annual Gender Care Symposium led by Dr. **Sue Zinck** was held from Feb. 3 to Feb. 6, 2026 on “Integrated Mental Health care for Transgender, non-binary, two-spirited and gender-diverse people across the lifespan.” It was attended by over 150 attendees and took place virtually over four, half days.

This symposium focused on building capacity for participants in supporting gender care. Focus was on terminology and details of psychosocial assessment for diagnosis of gender dysphoria and time course of gender variance. Participants learned of local resources for youth and families,

practice informed consent for hormone and surgical treatments, differences in social determinants of health, and incorporation of traditional Wabanaki medicine into primary care. Referral letters for hormone and surgical treatments, and the referral path to services for youth in Nova Scotia were also reviewed.

CMHA Team Away Day



Dartmouth and Sackville CMHA clinics gathered for their Team Away Day at the new Dartmouth Clinic on March 25, 2026. The day’s agenda included discussions of Measurement-Based Care, presentation about Anchor Youth Space, fun team activities, and more.

CAP Journal Club



Journal Club was held on March 30, 2026 with CAP subspecialty resident Dr. **Kara Yeung** leading discussion on the article “Use of Generative AI for Mental Health Advice Among US Adolescents and Young Adults.”

Dalhousie International Fellowship in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry



Dr. **Pearl Adu-Nyako** completed her six-month fellowship in Child & Adolescent Psychiatry on Feb. 27, 2026. Members of the division bid her farewell as she returned to Ghana.

CAP RESEARCH



We welcome **Nicholas Hennessey** as the new Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Integrated Research Assistant. He started in this role on March 16, 2026.

Mr. Hennessey has completed BA Honours in Psychology from University of New Brunswick and holds a Master's degree in Applied Social Psychology from University of Guelph. He has been working as Research Assistant (Casual) at Women's Anesthesia, IWK Health Centre and brings several years of applied research and evaluation experience supporting full research life cycle.

CAP PUBLICATIONS

- Piccolo O, Boudreau C, Dow T, Bati B, **Etches S**, Bezuhly M. "Intentional Hand Fractures are Associated with Future Psychiatric Conditions in Youth." *Plast Reconstr Surg*. 2025 Dec23.doi:10.1097/PRS.00000000000012759. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 41434748. Published on Dec. 23, 2025.
- **Adu-Nyako P.** "Understanding Autism Through a Socio-Cultural Lens: Insights from Ghana's Child & Adolescent Mental Health Clinic," article published in the newsletter of the International Association for Child & Adolescent Psychiatry and Allied Professions in March 2026. [IACAPAP March'26 Bulletin](#)

Section of Community Psychiatry

Research

The Community Psychiatry research portfolio continues to demonstrate substantive progress across a range of clinically and system-relevant initiatives. The Primary Care Project in Community Mental Health and Addictions (CMHA), led by Dr. **Greg MacMullin** and collaborators, is advancing steadily, with 269 patient encounters captured to date and recruitment ongoing toward the target of approximately 500 encounters. The Rehabilitation Project, led by Dr. **Mahmoud Awara** and Dr. **Josh Green**, has finalized its updated analytic framework and is currently awaiting access to

the required database, with formal timelines anticipated by the end of April. The Prazosin Shortage Case Series, which is actively progressing through patient consent and data collection following research ethics approval amendments.

Complementing these efforts, several projects are advancing toward completion within the academic domain. The BPD Clinic Research initiative has secured funding and is progressing through ethics approval and data preparation stages, with a focus on evaluating healthcare utilization

outcomes. The Department of Psychiatry Wellness Committee Events study is in its final stages, with data analysis completed and manuscript submission anticipated imminently. The Violence Risk Assessment Project remains on hold during OPOR training, but is expected to resume once operational capacity allows. Collectively, these initiatives reflect a coordinated and methodologically rigorous research program within Community Psychiatry, aligned with priorities of enhancing clinical care, optimizing resource utilization, and strengthening system-level insights.

Welcoming new faculty

The section is pleased to announce the successful recruitment of three new faculty members, reflecting ongoing efforts to strengthen clinical capacity and expand subspecialty expertise. We were delighted to welcome Dr. **Babatunde (Tunde) Adeeko**, who joined the team in February 2026 and is currently contributing across Bayers Road CMHT, Cole Harbour CMHT, and the Brotherhood Transcultural Clinic. We also look forward to the arrival of Dr. Carroll in May 2026, who will be working at Cole Harbour CMHT and the MOSH/North End Transcultural Clinic. Dr. Carroll has a particular clinical interest in the assessment and management of autism spectrum disorder (ASD), learning disorders (LD), and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Furthermore, Dr. Ogbeide-Ihama is expected to start in August 2026. She possesses a specific interest in the care of

elderly patients suffering from both functional and organic psychiatric disorders, thereby significantly augmenting the section's expertise in a highly specialized and essential area within community practice. We are also pleased to welcome back Dr. States, who will return from maternity leave in May 2026 and join the Dartmouth CMHT, as well as contribute to the Friendship Centre and Sisterhood Transcultural Clinics.

Collectively, these appointments constitute a substantial improvement to the section's clinical scope and its ability to address a wide range of evolving patient needs.

Section of Geriatric Psychiatry

Call for Referrals: Cognitive Behavioural Therapy Group Study for Older Adults

The Geriatric Psychiatry Program is conducting a study on a Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) group called “A Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) of CBT Group for Older Adults with Depression.” This CBT Group study will compare outcomes in older adults with depression who participate in the CBT group versus those who continue their usual care for depression. Eligible patients will be randomly assigned to participate in the 8-week CBT group or continue their treatment as usual, with all patients remaining under your care during the 3-month study period. Those in usual treatment will also be offered the group following the study period.

To support their recruitment efforts, they are looking for patients to be directly referred into the study. Eligible patients must be at least 65 years old, have an active depressive episode (determined by meeting

clinical cutoffs on a depression screener, such as ≥ 5 on the Patient Health Questionnaire-9), and no significant cognitive impairment (Mini Mental Status Exam ≥ 26).

If you have potentially eligible patients, you can refer directly into the study for assessment. Simply contact the co-investigators (**keri-leigh.cassidy@nshealth.ca**; **amy.gough@nshealth.ca**) or research assistant (**sam.hawkins@nshealth.ca**) for more information and the study referral form.

Note: Continue to use the Geriatric Psychiatry Program’s standard referral form for all other referrals on older adults unrelated to the RCT.

OPOR learning and practice opportunities for Wave Two

With Wave Two of the clinical information system (CIS) implementation quickly approaching on May 9, learning continues across Central Zone for providers, clinicians and staff, as well as for select provincial services within the **Mental Health and Addictions Program (MHAP)**. This includes:

- Correctional Health Services: All four CHS sites will begin using the CIS for documentation and ambulatory encounters
- Operational Stress Injury Clinic: These teams, operated out of Central Zone and Eastern Zone, will be using the CIS for documentation and scheduling
- MHA Intake Services: Intake staff located across the province will use the CIS to complete Intake Assessment Forms.
- Teams within Central Zone will use the CIS for intake, documentation and scheduling.
- During Wave Two, teams outside of Central Zone will use the CIS for intake
- Forensic Sexual Behaviour: Teams across the province will use the CIS for documentation
- Driving While Impaired/Alcohol Ignition Interlock Program: Teams across the province will use the CIS for documentation
- Clinical Virtual Care Team: Teams across the province will use the CIS for documentation

As we get closer to Go-Live, it is critically important that applicable providers, clinicians and employees

register for and complete their classroom learning. If you're part of Wave Two and haven't yet registered, visit the [OPOR Hub's Training Registration Portal*](#).

Remember: **CIS training = CIS access.** Training **must** be completed to receive access before Go-Live.

Virtual Practice Labs are also available daily from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. **until May 8, 2026**, offering self-paced workflow practice in a safe environment. [Register here*](#).

Family physicians and nurse practitioners are not included in CIS training and will continue to have view-only access through the [Provider Portal](#), with the exception of those who provide additional types of care within these facilities.

Provider Readiness Hubs are now open

OPOR Provider Readiness Hubs are now available across Central Zone, offering flexible, drop-in opportunities to help providers continue building confidence ahead of Go-Live.

These self-directed spaces allow providers to practice workflows, explore the CIS and connect with Provider Peer Mentors and the Provider Adoption Team. They're also an opportunity to complete personalization in the live domain, while reinforcing learning in a hands-on environment.

If you haven't visited yet, plan time to stop by a Readiness Hub — and consider attending with your team to practice together. [Learn more here!*](#)

***Access to content on the OPOR Hub requires active Nova Scotia Health or IWK Health network credentials.**

Global Mental Health

Advancing equitable mental health care in Nova Scotia: Transcultural Mental Health Program celebrates fourth anniversary

By Penney Miller, communications coordinator

Leaders in government, Nova Scotia Health, Dalhousie University, and community organizations gathered in early March to recognize the Transcultural Mental Health Program's fourth anniversary.

Launched in 2022, the program operates through the Nova Scotia Brotherhood and Sisterhood Initiatives, Newcomer Health clinic, the Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre, the Rapid Access and Stabilization Program, and community mental health and addictions at Bayers Road, Bedford/Sackville, Dartmouth, and Cole Harbour.

Shortly after becoming department head in 2021, Dr. **Vincent Agyapong** realized treatment gaps existed in Nova Scotia for African Nova Scotians, Indigenous People, Newcomers, and those experiencing homelessness.

"These communities were disproportionately affected by trauma, social inequities, systemic barriers, and cultural misunderstandings within healthcare systems," he recounted at the event. "Many were receiving primary care — but not equitable access to specialized psychiatric support in ways that were culturally responsive and trauma-informed."

"We knew something had to change."



Attendees at the Transcultural Mental Health Program Anniversary event on March 6, 2026.

From volunteerism to structured care

With no additional funding available for physician resources to establish a new program, and a long bureaucratic process ahead, Dr. Agyapong said he turned to faculty members to see who was willing to dedicate one day a month at a primary care location serving these communities. While he hoped for four, 10 psychiatrists stepped forward.

"That moment defined the soul of this program," he told attendees.

Nova Scotia Health's Mental Health and Addictions Program also stepped up, providing essential administrative coordination and scheduling support. Patients who

had previously fallen through the cracks were being seen, heard, and treated, said Dr. Agyapong.

Eventually, the team developed and submitted a request for physician resources. Recognizing the need, government responded favourably.

"Physician resources were secured — transforming what began as volunteerism into a sustainable, structured model of care," said Dr. Agyapong.

Since its inception, the program has provided mental health care to hundreds of people from these under-served populations.

The program "reminds us that we must continue to listen and to learn from communities, not only to help this program grow, but to inform

how we shape future services, partnerships and supports across the province,” said Dana Pulsifer, senior director of the Mental Health and Addictions Program.

A ‘better outlook’

Two years ago, Tanya Strange found herself in need of a women’s shelter. “I was feeling no hope,” she said as she shared her story with attendees.

During her two-month stay, the shelter provided regular meals and helped her access supportive housing for women. When Tanya scaled back medication she was taking for a mental illness, the shelter connected her to a mobile service offered by MOSH (Mobile Outreach Street Health) that visited the shelter weekly. From there, they connected her to a nurse practitioner, and then a psychiatrist who helped her find another medication and who she continues to see.

“I’m just overall having a better outlook on things,” she said. “I really feel like it’s doing a good job. And I couldn’t be more grateful for all these people.”

The value of cultural competence

During her video keynote address, Sharon Davis-Murdoch, co-president of the Health Association of African Canadians, spoke about her career in cultural competence. She led the development of the first cultural competence guidelines for the delivery of primary care in Canada, written in 2006.

“Cultural competence encompasses accountability that goes beyond being kind, sensitive, and humble, to ongoing, continuous, and measurable work to build trust and skills – individually, organizationally, and within systems – toward health equity,” she said.

One example she shared is the culturally-specific vaccination clinics that were set up during the COVID-19 pandemic.



A video of Sharon Davis-Murdoch’s, co-president of the Health Association of African Canadians, keynote presentation was played during the event.



From left to right: Dr. Linda Liebenberg, Dr. Vincent Agyapong, Jennifer Glennie, Deputy Minister, Office of Addictions and Mental Health., and the Honourable Brian Comer, Minister of Addictions of Mental Health.

In another video, Dr. Timothy Holland, family doctor and medical director at the Newcomer Health Clinic in Halifax, described the unique challenges experienced by Newcomers when accessing health services and how other professionals like social workers and case managers are key to bridging these gaps.

The Honourable Brian Comer, Minister of Addictions and Mental Health, acknowledged the role of the Rapid Access and Stabilization Program in providing access to care in rural parts of the province, and the rollout of integrated youth services across the province offering culturally competent care.

Partnerships with purpose

The anniversary event highlighted the strong institutional and community partnerships central to the Transcultural Mental Health Program's success.

"It's been so wonderful to work as a team with the Transcultural Psychiatry program on Etuaptmumk,

which means two-eyed seeing, approaches for community members to be heard and feel safe in their psychiatric care," said Shonna Brown, mental health nurse at the Wije'winen Health Centre and cultural co-lead of the Indigenous mental wellness team. "We have been able to work together with the Transcultural team to create a program built from community feedback that provides a safe space for connection, collaboration, culture, and community supports within the Indigenous community."

Similarly, bringing psychiatrists into their space has made mental health care more available and more accessible, said Natalie Johnson, team lead for the Nova Scotia Sisterhood.

"These partnerships remind us that health systems do not create equity on their own. Equity is built with communities, not for them," said Dr. David Anderson, dean of the Faculty of Medicine.



Dr. Agyapong and Minister Comer cut the anniversary cake.



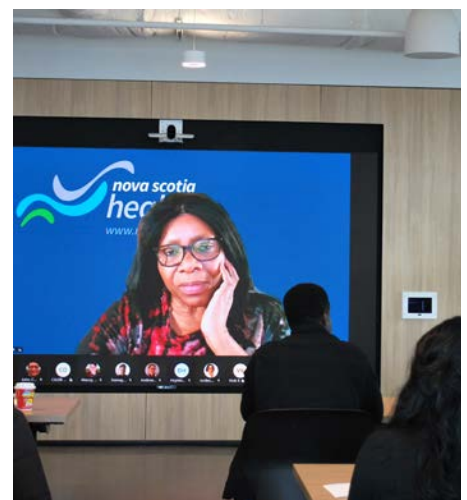
Dr. Mahmoud Awara and Dorothy Edem receive Special Recognition Awards

During the Transcultural Mental Health Program Anniversary event, Dr. **Mahmoud Awara** and **Dorothy Edem** were presented with Special Recognition Awards.

Congratulations to Dr. Awara who received the award for his leadership of the Transcultural Mental Health Program and to Dorothy Edem who received the award for her role on the Transcultural Mental Health Advisory Council.



Dr. Mahmoud Awara (left) and Deputy Minister Jennifer Glennie (right).



Dorothy Edem, co-director, Mental Health and Addictions Program, Nova Scotia Health Central Zone.

National Policy Dialogue on Translating Innovation into Impact: Scaling and Integrating Evidence-Based Supportive Text Messaging Programs into Canada's Care Systems

On Feb. 20, 2026, leaders from federal, provincial, and territorial governments, regional health authorities, Indigenous partners, philanthropy, academia, youth organizations, and digital health innovators convened for a National Policy Dialogue focused on integrating supportive text messaging into Canada's mental health care systems.

The dialogue was co-led by the Dalhousie Centre for Global Mental Health and the Global Psychological eHealth Foundation. The Mental Health Commission of Canada shared a presentation on the landscape of mental health in Canada and the digital mental health opportunity.

The event's central focus was the presentation of more than a decade of rigorous evidence supporting the use of supportive text messaging programs such as Text4Hope, Text4Support, and related adaptations. These programs deliver brief, automated, CBT-informed supportive messages that reduce symptoms of depression, anxiety, stress, PTSD, substance cravings, and suicidal ideation.

The dialogue was convened to examine whether this intervention is ready for national integration into Canada's care systems.

Participants shared operational lessons and their perspectives and identified cross-cutting themes. The dialogue concluded with a proposed Pan-Canadian scale-up model, strategic recommendations, and an implementation roadmap.

Thank you to all participants who contributed to this important national dialogue and to advancing the future of digital mental health in Canada.



From left to right: Dr. Belinda Agyapong, Professor Andrew Greenshaw, Dr. David Anderson, Dr. Patricia Langley-Pottie, Dr. Vincent Agyapong, and Mark Korthuis.

Special thanks to Dr. David Anderson, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Dalhousie University, Dr. Jennifer Bain, Associate Vice President of Research at Dalhousie University, Dr. Patricia Conrod, Scientific Director of the Canadian Institute for Health Research Institute of Neuroscience, Mental Health and Addiction for your presence and opening remarks; Mark Korthuis, Katherine Hay, Steven Clelland, Darren Lunt, Belinda Agyapong and Dave Gallson for your presentations and contributions to this national dialogue; and to Professor Andrew Greenshaw for travelling from Edmonton to Halifax to moderate the national conversation.

Key takeaways include:

- Supportive text messaging is one of the most rigorously evaluated digital mental health interventions globally.
- It is low-cost (< \$50 per patient in post-discharge programs), high-reach, and scalable without requiring smartphones or data plans.
- Randomized controlled trials demonstrate clinically meaningful symptom reductions and reduced hospital readmissions and length of stay.
- Economic analyses demonstrate mean cost savings of more than \$7,000 per patient within six and 12 months post-discharge.
- National coordination is feasible and aligned with federal priorities, including 988 crisis services, equity, and emergency preparedness.
- Sustainable funding and intergovernmental collaboration are essential for scale-up.

Mental Health Responses in a Changing World 2026:

Innovative Responses to Humanitarian Emergencies

Inaugural conference from the Centre for Global Mental Health.

Friday, July 10, 2026
8 a.m. - 4 p.m. (AST)
Hosted Online

LEARN MORE, SUBMIT AN ABSTRACT & REGISTER [HERE](#).



Serving and Engaging Society

NEW course: “Building Cultural Competence for Mental Health Equity” — Co-Created with the Black/ African NS Community

“**Building Cultural Competence for Mental Health Equity**” is an innovative course to fulfill the anti-oppression objectives of the Serving and Engaging Society stream. Co-developed and co-delivered with Black and African NS community partners, this exciting course offers a framework to promote mental health equity in clinical practice.

Course introduction

The course was introduced at the Department of Psychiatry’s Grand Rounds on Jan. 7, 2026 and is intended for all faculty. [View the course introduction.](#)

Format

The course is being offered in two brief sessions in spring 2026. All Department of Psychiatry faculty are encouraged to attend.

- **Part 1: Foundation Session on Wednesday, April 8, 2026** at Grand Rounds (8:30-9:30 a.m. - Recorded) [View the recording.](#)
- **Part 2: Experiential Session – Friday, May 1, 2026** (in person; not recorded)

[Learn more about the Building Cultural Competence for Mental Health Equity course.](#)

Key highlights:

- 75% of full-time AFP faculty completed Faculty of Medicine’s online Anti-Oppression course by December 2025
- 95% response rate to the Serving and Engaging Society needs assessment conducted prior to the development of the Building Cultural Competence for Mental Health Equity course
- 60% registered for the in-person Cultural Competence Course on May 1

This represents an impressive departmental response to anti-oppression and the Serving and Engaging Society mandate.

Serving and Engaging Society Fund

The “Serving and Engaging Society Fund” offers \$1,000 grants for academic initiatives that help to close gaps in serving equity-denied groups. Learn more and review the fund requirements below:

Serving and Engaging Society Fund



DALHOUSIE
UNIVERSITY

Department of Psychiatry

Funding is available for academic initiatives, in collaboration with community partners, in the areas of education, clinical care, or research to close gaps in serving and engaging equity-denied populations and to become a more trusted partner with community.

The Serving and Engaging Society Fund is available to all members of the Dalhousie Department of Psychiatry.

LEARN MORE & APPLY HERE.

Department News

FACULTY & STAFF CHANGES

Arrivals

- **Dr. Babatunde (Tunde) Adeeko** joined the department as an Assistant Professor on Feb. 26, 2026. Dr. Adeeko is working in Cole Harbour Community Mental Health & Addictions and Bayers Road Community Mental Health and Addictions and can be reached at **adeekoba@nshealth.ca**
- **Dr. Reza Rostami** joined the department as an Associate Professor on March 2, 2026 and is working in the Occupational Stress Injury Clinic. Dr. Rostami can be reached at **rostamr@nshealth.ca**
- **Dr. Ayesha Nazir** joined the department as an Assistant Professor effective March 23, 2026. Dr. Nazir is located at

the IWK at the outpatient clinic on Young Avenue and can be reached at **ayesha.nazir@iwk.nshealth.ca**

- **Dr. Darcy O'Brien** joined the department as an Assistant Professor effective April 1, 2026. Dr. O'Brien is located in the Abbie J. Lane Building. He can be reached at **obriendd@nshealth.ca**
- **Tara Gonzalez** joined the department's operations team as Finance Assistant, effective April 13, 2026. Tara can be reached at **gonzalt@nshealth.ca**

Welcome to you all!

Departures

- **Dr. David Russell** effective Feb. 25, 2026
- **Dr. Liana Aires** effective April 17, 2026

We wish you well!

Meet our Members: A warm welcome to Dr. Reza Rostami



Dr. Reza Rostami is a psychiatrist recently appointed at Dalhousie University. He completed his medical and psychiatric training at the University of Tehran, where he also served as a faculty member. Dr. Rostami's work has consistently combined clinical practice with academic research, with a strong emphasis on bridging neuroscience and psychiatry.

His primary area of interest is non-invasive brain stimulation, including techniques such as transcranial magnetic stimulation and transcranial electrical stimulation. He has focused on how these approaches can modulate neural circuits and provide effective, evidence-based treatments for conditions such as depression and other neuropsychiatric disorders.

At Dalhousie, Dr. Rostami looks forward to contributing to both clinical care and collaborative research, and to advancing the integration of innovative, brain-based therapies into everyday psychiatric practice.

Best wishes to Sandra Millar on her retirement and a warm welcome to Tara Gonzalez

After more than 20 years of dedicated service, we are proud to recognize **Sandra Millar** as she retires from her role as Finance Assistant. Throughout her time with us, Sandra has been a cornerstone of our financial operations, known for her accuracy, organization, and exceptional attention to detail. Working with a high level of independence, she consistently kept our books clean, balanced, and well-managed. Her professionalism, reliability, and strong work ethic have made a lasting impact on our team, and she will be greatly missed.

As we say goodbye to Sandra, we are pleased to welcome our new team member **Tara Gonzalez** who will be taking on her responsibilities. We are excited to have Tara join us and look forward to her contributions.

We thank Sandra for her many years of service and wish her all the best in her retirement, while also extending a warm welcome to our newest colleague.

Please note that all Accounts Payable inquiries should continue to be sent to **psychfin@dal.ca**. For other general finance questions, you can reach Tara at **gonzalt@nshealth.ca**

Retirement celebration for Sandra Millar

The Department of Psychiatry's Operations Team gathered for a retirement celebration dinner in honour of **Sandra Millar** on March

23, 2026. Sandra served as Finance Assistant in the department for over 20 years. Best wishes to Sandra for her retirement!



Sandra Millar.



Members of Dalhousie Psychiatry's Operations Team.

Department Head Dr. Vincent Agyapong connects with physicians, clinicians, and operational leaders

In April 2026, Dr. **Vincent Agyapong**, department head, spent a productive afternoon in Dartmouth connecting with physicians, clinicians, and operational leaders from the Dalhousie Department of Psychiatry and Nova Scotia Health.

Their conversations across community healthcare service locations centered on what matters most – improving access to care, strengthening collaborative care models, leveraging opportunities associated with Nova Scotia Health’s new clinical information system (One Person One Record) and continuing to enhance quality of care for the communities we serve.

Thank you for shared commitment and insights from everyone involved.



Department leaders engage in next phase of strategic planning process

Department leaders engaged in the next phase of the strategic planning process at a retreat held on April 17, 2026. Leaders moved through stations devoted to each strategic pillar to identify priorities for the department’s operational plan.

Thank you to everyone who participated and shared your time, insights, and ideas. A special thanks to Dr. **Sabina Abidi** for leading the retreat, our faculty facilitators: Drs. **Aaron Keshen, Hugh Maguire, Sherry Stewart, Kathleen Singh, Kim Good,** and **Josh Green**; the



station admin leads: **Supriya D’Penha, Aleya MacNeil, Minh Nguyen, Petra Corkum, Penney Miler,** and **Hong Xie**; and to **Eleanor Kumahia** and **Chelsea Mantin** for their support throughout the day.



Participants at the leadership retreat on April 17, 2026.



Dr. Agyapong also hosted a strategic planning meeting with the Chief Residents and Program Directors of the General Psychiatry Residency Program for the Department of Psychiatry.

The session was energizing and forward-focused, generating a wide range of progressive, practical, and actionable ideas. These insights will help guide our continued evolution as we strengthen and advance our residency program.



Dr. Agyapong, Chief Residents, and Program Directors for the General Psychiatry residency program held a strategic planning meeting.

AWARDS & HONOURS

Dr. Abraham Nunes wins QEII Foundation’s People’s Choice Award

Congratulations to Dr. **Abraham Nunes** winner of the QEII Foundation’s People’s Choice Award for a project analyzing outcomes of sublingual at-home ketamine treatments for depression. The funding is part of the QEII Foundation’s Innovation Den competition. While not awarded the full competition amount, the People’s Choice Award was voted upon by the donors themselves. Dr. Nunes notes that “what resonated the most with them is that while MAiD is being expanded to people with mental illness (including

treatment resistant depression) next year (March 17, 2027), we are trying to develop accessible alternatives, so that people can gain some hope that they will feel better, rather than pursuing MAiD.”

[Meet the winners and finalists.](#)

The Garron Centre named the 2026 recipient of the Certificate of Special Recognition from the Canadian Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

Congratulations to Dr. **Sarah Fancy (for the Garron Centre)**, recipient of the 2026 Certificate of Special Recognition from the Canadian Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (CACAP).

This national award recognizes individuals and organizations who are making meaningful, lasting contributions to child and adolescent mental health – particularly in work that reflects innovation, leadership, and

meaningful impact on improving the quality of mental health care and how it's delivered.

This award will be presented at the CACAP conference in St. John's in June.

Dr. Alexa Bagnell named the 2026 recipient of the 2026 Paul D. Steinhauer Advocacy Award from the Canadian Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

Congratulations to Dr. **Alexa Bagnell**, recipient of the 2026 Paul D. Steinhauer Advocacy Award from the Canadian Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry.

This national award honours a member who has demonstrated exceptional and sustained advocacy on behalf of children, adolescents, and their families. The recipient will have actively influenced systemic

change, policy, or public awareness at multiple levels of society.

This award will be presented at the CACAP conference in St. John's in June.

Dr. Selene Etches named the 2026 recipient of the 2026 Dr. William Grigor Award from Doctors Nova Scotia

Congratulations to Dr. **Selene Etches**, recipient of the 2026 Dr. William Grigor Award from Doctors Nova Scotia.

This award is given to a physician under the age of 50 who has made an outstanding contribution benefiting the health of Nova Scotians.

This award will be presented at the Doctors Nova Scotia's 2026 annual conference in June.

Dr. Qëndresa Sahiti receives special recognition by the governments of Canada and Kosovo

Congratulations to Dr. **Qëndresa Sahiti** (Associate Chief Resident, PGY-2) who received special recognition by the governments of Canada and Kosovo. Dr. Sahiti was invited to Parliament on March 25 where she was recognized in an event honouring the impact of 25 Kosovar refugees who have made a difference in Canada and reflect Canada's global leadership, influence, and the lasting impact of its humanitarian response in response to the war in Kosovo. The event was hosted by The Honourable Member of Parliament Kyle Seeback and the Artistè Foundation.



The 25 honourees and His Excellency Kosovar Ambassador to Canada Adriatik Kryeziu.



Dr. Qëndresa Sahiti with His Excellency Kosovar Ambassador to Canada Adriatik Kryeziu, along with the President and CEO of the Artistè Foundation, Arta Rexhepi.

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Congratulations to the Extra Mile Award recipients!

Congratulations to the following recipients of the department's Extra Mile Award!

The Department of Psychiatry's Extra Mile Award has been created to recognize exceptional contributions by department members who have truly gone "the extra mile" in service to the department by advancing its mission in the areas of education, research, clinical care, advocacy, wellness, and EDIA.

Recipient: Eleanor Kumahia

Nominated by: Dr. Keri-Leigh Cassidy

Eleanor is being nominated for her tireless commitment to those she works with, and for her exemplary efforts to fulfill our department's academic mandate. For example, in 2025, thanks to her departmental communications, over 75% of our faculty successfully completed FoM's Anti-Oppression Online Course. Eleanor is a consummate professional — consistently polished, capable and patient. She is also a deeply kind person, taking the time to know others in meaningful ways, and is a joy to work with.

Recipient: Supriya D'Penha

Nominated by: Dr. Pearl Adu-Nyako

Transition can be challenging, whether it was from one software to another, one application to another, an office to another, a clinic to another, a season to another, or even in the most uncertain circumstances. Your calm, cheerful, and welcoming smile, with a simple stepwise explanation, made every complication evaporate and seem non-existent. Indeed, you do deserve to be appreciated for every extra mile you go, not just being an administrator but putting a heart into your work.

Recipient: Adrienne McCarthy

Nominated by: Dr Pearl Adu-Nyako

As an International Fellow, knowing what resources are available, where to find them, and how to optimize the duration of my study to maximize exposure. locating venues, organizing schedules, and rescheduling 10 times in six months. Picking up calls at off working hours to clarify and confirm details. With welcoming smiles at every contact, to mention just a few of several moments. Truly, you deserve this award far and above its merit. You did go the extra mile and made a huge impact. Thank you.

Recipient: Deb Follett

Nominated by: Dr. Pippa Moss

For many years Deb has made an extraordinary effort to bridge the gaps between the rural and metro based child and adolescents psychiatrists. She has gone the extra mile in organizing our annual conference and is always there to solve any glitches, or even potential problems. And if she cannot fix things she knows who to contact. I could easily find half a dozen or so colleagues to back up this nomination if that was needed. (And we rural child psychiatrists are a rare bunch.) Child and Adolescent Psychiatry across Nova Scotia is the better for her presence.

NOMINATE SOMEONE FOR THE EXTRA MILE AWARD!

If you would like to nominate someone for the Department of Psychiatry's Extra Mile Award, submit your nomination to the Awards Committee [HERE](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Course: AI & Mental Health Care: Practical Opportunities for Clinical and Administrative Implementation**, May and July cohorts. [Learn more and register.](#)
- **Ontario Psychiatric Association Psychotherapy Day**, June 6, 2026, Toronto, ON [Learn more and register.](#)
- **2026 Pride STEM Canada / Fierté STIM Canada Conference**, June 10-13, 2026, Halifax, NS. [Learn more at register.](#)
- **Department of Psychiatry Year-End Celebration, June 19, 2026, Marriott Harbourfront Halifax.** Watch for registration details.
- **CADDRA (Canadian ADHD Resource Alliance) ADHD Intensive 2026**, June 26, 2026, Hybrid Event. [Learn more and register.](#)
- **Mental Health Responses in a Changing World 2026: Innovative Responses to Humanitarian Emergencies**, July 10, 2026, Online. [Learn more and register.](#)
- **Department of Psychiatry Summer Event**, July 19, 2026, St. Mary's Boat Club, Halifax, NS. Watch for registration details.

MEDIA

- [‘I’ve devoted my life to making a difference in people’s lives,’ Strongest Families Institute co-founder says](#), Canadian Nurse (with Dr. **Patricia Lingley-Pottie**)
- [QEII TIMES: Advancing equity in health care through research](#) (with Dr. **Phil Tibbo**)

Humanities Corner

Medical Humanities Annual Student Writing Competition

Do you enjoy writing?

Medical students and residents in Canada are invited to make a submission exploring the intersection of mental health and the humanities to the **Dalhousie Department of Psychiatry Annual Student Writing Competition.**

Submission deadline: May 31, 2026

LEARN MORE [HERE](#).



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 2026**.

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



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