

HEADLINES



Cedric Fauntleroy photo/Pexels

**NEW NATIONAL PROGRAM SUPPORTS
MENTAL HEALTH OF DOCTORS AND TRAINEES
WITH DAILY MESSAGES**



**DALHOUSIE
UNIVERSITY**

Department of Psychiatry

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FEATURES

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HEAD LINES

Message from the Department Head

Welcome to the first edition of *Headlines* in 2024.

Recently, the Department of Psychiatry launched a [new program](#) aimed at supporting the mental health of physicians, residents, and medical students in Canada. Wellness4MDs delivers daily supportive text messages in English or in French to subscribers for six months at no cost. Learn more about the program and how you can subscribe in this edition of *Headlines*.

We also feature Osob Regal, a research assistant with the Section of Geriatric Psychiatry. Osob is one of the research assistants hired as part of the Transformational Plan to have a research assistant for each section/division within the department.

Some internal research funding deadlines are on the horizon. The deadline for applications for the Summer Studentship program is fast approaching on Feb. 16, 2024, and the deadline for the spring intake of applications for the Department of Psychiatry Research Fund is upcoming on April 5, 2024.

Several department researchers have had success in obtaining departmental, local/provincial, and CIHR grants. Congratulations to Dr. **Aaron Keshen**, **Anastasia Harris**, Dr. **Sherry Stewart**, **Mikaela Ethier-Gagnon**, Dr. **George Robertson**, Dr. **Kim Good**, Dr. **Theveshen Padayachee**, Dr. **Kara Dempster**,



Dr. Vincent Agyapong

Dr. **Abraham Nunes**, Dr. **Jasmyn Cunningham**, Dr. **Julie Munich**, and Dr. **Ejemai Eboeime** on your recent funding success.

This spring, we will host our annual conference, W.O. McCormick Academic Day, in person. Academic Day will be held on Friday, April 26, 2024 at the Westin Nova Scotian Hotel. Please watch for registration details. I hope you will be able to join us.

We are preparing to launch the Global Mental Health Guest Lecture Series, a collaborative effort by the Department of Psychiatry, Faculty of Medicine at Dalhousie University, in partnership with IWK Health and the Nova Scotia Health Innovation Hub. This series aims to foster collaboration

and knowledge exchange, providing a platform for in-depth discussions on critical topics in global mental health. Learn more about the guest lecture series in this edition of the newsletter and watch for details about the first lecture.

Our annual student writing competition, open to medical students, residents, and fellows in Canada, is accepting submissions. The competition closes on May 1, 2024 and the winning entries will be announced in a future issue of *Headlines* and will be posted on the department's website.

The Reproductive Mental Health team welcomed an International Fellow, Dr. **Awateif Alsupiany**. We welcome Dr. Alsupiany to the department and hope she enjoys her time here.

We also welcome the following new faculty to the department: Drs. **Mark Paramlall**, **Lilly Lines**, **Adedamola Fasehun**, and **Erin Mazerolle**.

In welcoming these new department members, we say goodbye to one long-time employee — **Janet Bardon**, Physician Resource Manager, who retired on Jan. 31, 2024. Read more about Janet and her retirement in this edition of *Headlines*.

There have been some leadership changes within the department. Dr. **Leigh Meldrum** has been appointed as the Medical Humanities Coordinator; and we announced two new leadership positions — Dr. **Kim Good** is appointed as the Associate Coordinator of the Psychiatry Graduate Programs, and Dr. **Alexandra Manning** as Director of International Residency Elective Program.

I wish to congratulate several department members who have recently been recognized by various awards and honours: Dr. **Rudolf Uher** for ranking in Clarivate's annual list of highly-cited researchers; Drs. **Sherry Stewart**, **Christine Chambers**, **Jill Chorney**, and **Simon Sherry** for ranking among the country's most productive clinical psychology professors; Drs. **Andrea Murphy**, **David Gardner**, and **Malgorzata Rajda** for winning the 2023 Best Paper Award in Exploratory Research in Clinical and Social Pharmacy; **the DaRT team** for receiving Nova Scotia Health's Award of Excellence in Mental Health and Addictions Quality Improvement; Dr. **Suzanne Zinck** who was awarded the 2023 Social Justice

Ally Award by the Nova Scotia College of Social Workers; and, Drs. **JoAnn Davis**, **Anthony Pianosi**, and **Taylor Betsch** for receiving the department's Extra Mile Award.

Dr. Vincent Agyapong

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

New national program supports mental health of doctors and trainees with daily messages



Dr. Vincent Agyapong, head of psychiatry at Dal and chief of psychiatry for Nova Scotia Health's Central Zone, is Wellness4MDs' lead researcher.

A new national program spearheaded by Dalhousie's Department of Psychiatry will offer mental-health support to physicians, residents, and medical students across Canada.

Wellness4MDs delivers daily supportive text messages in English or French to subscribers for six months at no cost. The program aims to significantly reduce levels of stress, anxiety, burnout, and depression

commonly experienced by physicians, residents, and medical students.

"I've been involved in physician panel studies that suggest there are high levels of burnout in physicians, residents, and medical students," says Dr. **Vincent Agyapong**, head of psychiatry at Dal, chief of psychiatry for Nova Scotia Health's Central Zone, and the program's lead researcher.

"We also know doctors typically don't use traditional mental-health services until sometimes it's too late, which means many people suffer in isolation without really reaching out to seek the supports they need."

This could be due to stigma associated with mental health, or physicians may be too busy for self-care, which is unfortunate, he says.

Dr. Agyapong's Global Mental Health Research Group based at Dalhousie and the University of Alberta designed Wellness4MDs. The service's text messages are based on cognitive behavioural therapy principles and were developed by psychiatrists, mental health therapists, clinical psychologists, and mental health service users.

Wellness4MDs is funded by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada Foundation, the Global Psychological eHealth Foundation, Mental Health Foundation in Alberta, the Royal Bank of Canada Foundation with support from Dal's Department of Psychiatry, the Division of Community Psychiatry at the University of Alberta, and in partnership with Alberta Health Services.

Interested? *Sign up now by texting "WELLMD" for English access or "BIENMD" for French access to 1-855-947-4673. Subscribers can opt in to participate in the program evaluation by completing surveys when they begin the program and at designated follow-up times.*

A growing problem

With increasing levels of burnout, anxiety, and depression negatively impacting the healthcare workforce, the need to support physician mental health and well-being is great.

"Stress and burnout are the reality in healthcare today," says Dr. Natalie Yanchar, deputy department head, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Wellness and Professionalism, Department of Surgery, Calgary Zone, Alberta Health Services. "We need

innovative programs like this one to tackle these challenges to keep our healthcare workforce well."

"In these especially difficult times, it's a bright spot of the day to receive an uplifting message," says Dr. Sharron Spicer, associate chief medical officer, Physician Experience, Alberta Health Services.

Messages will also include links to mental health resources that could help improve their resilience and mental well-being, says Dr. Agyapong.

Another plus is how easily the program will fit within the busy lives of participants. The program is anonymous and doesn't require much effort from physicians, he says.

"Physicians across Canada work hard to keep Canadians healthy, and it is right that we have an intervention that helps support their psychological well-being," says Belinda Agyapong, president and CEO of the Global Psychological eHealth Foundation.

A proven model

Wellness4MDs builds on the success of the researchers' other text message-based mental health programs which have been shown to improve clinical symptoms and have a high user satisfaction.

It is modeled on the successful Text4Mood, Text4Hope, and Wellness4Teachers initiatives in Canada.

The program is powered by ResilienceNHope software, an online application that delivers

the suite of supportive text and e-mail messaging programs developed by Dr. Agyapong's research group and is operated by the Global Psychological eHealth Foundation.

Dr. Agyapong's group specializes in designing, implementing, and evaluating e-mental health programs that support global efforts at closing the mental health literacy and psychological treatment gaps for mental disorders.

"There's evidence from our other programs such as the Text4Hope program, the Text4PTSI program, and the MoreGoodDays program, that this is an intervention that actually works," says Dr. Agyapong.

Subscribers will be asked to complete voluntary surveys so researchers can measure the program's effectiveness. After six months, participants can resubscribe to continue receiving the text messages.

Reaching as many in need as possible

A key aspect of Wellness4MDs is that it's available in both of Canada's official languages.

It's important for all our colleagues to have access to an intervention we know works and is not just benefitting people in places where English is the predominant language, says Dr. Agyapong.

"Providing resources in both French and English supports the effort to maintain a strong, unified medical community," says Charlie Kelderhouse, program collaborator.

Although the program is not the first the research group has made available in multiple languages, it is the first delivered on a national scale.

“The vision is to reach as many physicians, residents, and medical students across the country as possible to offer support,” says Dr. Agyapong.

“Contributing to Wellness4MDs’ launch and success in support of the mental health and well-being of Canadian physicians, postgraduate medical trainees, and medical students is important to us and we look forward to the program’s growth in the short-and long-term,” says Craig Ceppetelli, executive director of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada’s Office of International Collaboration and Advancement and chief operating officer of Royal College Canada International.

“The mental health of our doctors, nurses, and allied health professionals are a priority,” says DeAnn Hunter, chair of the Mental Health Foundation, in Alberta’s Board of Trustees. “They are on the front lines every day, providing care and comfort to those in need, often at the expense of their own well-being. Wellness4MDs embodies our shared vision of a healthcare community that is resilient, supported, and mentally healthy.”

“We encourage all members of the medical community to participate in the Wellness4MDs program. It’s not just an investment in your personal mental health, but also a small step to foster a healthier,

more supportive professional environment. Together, we can make a significant difference, ensuring our healthcare providers receive the care they so generously give others.”

While requiring only a small investment of resources, the program’s impact could be massive. Not only does Wellness4MDs have potential to reach thousands of physicians, residents, and medical students across Canada, the program is

scalable and can be adapted to reach the health workforce globally, including nurses and other allied health professionals.

“It’s a feel-good effect that you can be able to use very minimal resources to achieve so much impact. It speaks to the power of innovation, the power of technology,” says Dr. Agyapong.

The graphic is a vertical rectangle with a dark blue background. At the top right, there is a white medical cross icon with two smaller crosses to its right, and a blue ribbon banner. The main title 'WELLNESS4MDS PROGRAM' is in large, bold, white and blue letters. Below the title, there are two questions in white text: 'Are you a physician, post-graduate medical trainee or medical student in Canada?' and 'Are you seeking support to deal with stress, burnout, anxiety or depression, build resilience and maintain or improve psychological wellness?'. The next line of text says 'Subscribe to Wellness4MDs to receive free daily cognitive behavioural therapy-based supportive text messages and mental health literacy information.' Below this, the word 'TEXT' is in large, bold, blue letters, followed by '"WELLMD" to 1-855-947-4673 to subscribe' in white. At the bottom left, there is a white box containing contact information: 'If you have any questions about the Wellness4MDs Program, contact vn602367@dal.ca'. Below this box, it says 'Wellness4MDs is sponsored by:' followed by logos for the University of Alberta, RBC Foundation, Mental Health Foundation, University of Alberta, Dalhousie University, and Global Psychological eHealth Foundation. On the right side of the graphic, there is a circular inset image showing a healthcare worker in blue scrubs and a white face mask, attending to a patient. A blue and white striped circular graphic is overlaid on the bottom left of the inset image.

WELLNESS4MDS PROGRAM

Are you a physician, post-graduate medical trainee or medical student in Canada?

Are you seeking support to deal with stress, burnout, anxiety or depression, build resilience and maintain or improve psychological wellness?

Subscribe to Wellness4MDs to receive free daily cognitive behavioural therapy-based supportive text messages and mental health literacy information.

TEXT

"WELLMD" to
1-855-947-4673
to subscribe

If you have any questions about the Wellness4MDs Program, contact vn602367@dal.ca

Wellness4MDs is sponsored by:



Research Report

DEPARTMENT FUNDING

UPCOMING DEADLINES

Psychiatry Summer Studentship Program

Deadline: February 16, 2024

The Psychiatry Summer Studentship Program is designed to provide a number of qualified undergraduate students with an opportunity to become involved in research in the Department of Psychiatry over a period in the summer. Although this program in effect provides summer employment for students, faculty supervisors are expected not to treat summer students in this program as technicians, but rather to involve them fully in discussion and the design of experiments. This program offers students an opportunity to learn new research techniques as they acquire hands on experience in running experiments and analyzing data.

To apply for the Psychiatry Summer Studentship Program please contact **Anila Balakrishnan** (Research Coordinator) at Psych.Research@dal.ca

Department of Psychiatry Research Fund (DPRF) – April 2024 intake

Deadline: April 5, 2024

To apply for the DPRF April 2024 intake, please contact **Anila Balakrishnan** (Research Coordinator) at Psych.Research@dal.ca

RECENTLY FUNDED GRANTS

Departmental:

DPRF Fall 2023 intake recipients:

- Dr. **Aaron Keshen** and **Anastasia Harris** (MSc. in Psychiatry Research second-year student): *The acceptability of brief integrated psychotherapy for comorbid eating disorder and posttraumatic stress disorder: A case series and qualitative analysis*
- Dr. **Sherry Stewart** and **Mikaela Ethier-Gagnon** (MSc. in Psychiatry Research first-year student): *Examining the pharmacological and non-pharmacological effects of cannabidiol (CBD) on stress-related responses in healthy men and women*
- Dr. **George Robertson**: *Nanoparticle drug delivery to treat psychiatric disorders by protecting and repairing the brain*
- Dr. **Kim Good**: *Research and scholarship in clinical psychiatry services: Barriers and facilitators*

Zonal seed funding grant:

- Dr. **Theveshen Padayachee** (Fredericton): *The Impact of Patient Education Interventions during hospitalization on Benzodiazepine deprescribing: A Quality Improvement Initiative*

The zonal seed funding grant is a one-time funding opportunity available to each zone for seed funding for mental health research/QI.

Local/Provincial:

- Dr. **Kara Dempster** (PI) “Comparing Functional Trajectories of Long Acting Injectable Paliperidone Palmitate Versus Aripiprazole Monohydrate in First Episode Psychosis” Nova Scotia Health Research Fund.
- Dr. **Abraham Nunes** (PI) “Actigraphic Biomarkers of Naturalistic Treatment Outcomes in Patients Receiving Intravenous Ketamine for Difficult-to-Treat Depression” Nova Scotia Health Research Fund, Category 2.
- Dr. **Jasmyn Cunningham**, PGY-2 (PI) “Sleep and circadian markers of the antidepressant response to ketamine in difficult-to-treat depression” Nova Scotia Health Research Fund, Category 4.
- Dr. **Julie Munich**, PGY-3 (PI) “Safety and efficacy of intramuscular ketamine for the rapid reduction of symptoms of depression” Nova Scotia Health Research Fund, Category 4.
- Dr. **Ejemai Eboreime**’s proposal “RESETTLE-IDPs: Life-Skills Education and Psychosocial Resilience Building for Displaced

Nigerians” submitted in response to Grand Challenges Canada (GCC)’s *Creating Hope in Conflict: A Humanitarian Grand Challenge* RFP, has been recommended for funding.

CIHR Grants:

- Drs. **Abraham Nunes**, **Barbara Pavlova**, and **Rudolf Uher** (Dal Co-PIs) “Scalable Biomarkers And Time-Series Microsignatures Of Relapse In Major Depressive Disorder” CIHR Grant (5-years)
- Drs. **Ejemai Eboime** and **Vincent Agyapong** “Rebuilding Emotional Stability and Strength Through Therapeutic and Life-Skills Education for Internally Displaced Persons in Nigeria (RESETTLE-IDPs): A Hybrid Type II effectiveness-implementation study” CIHR Project Grant Institute of Population and Public Health Priority Announcement.

Dr. Phil Tibbo part of team who developed the Lower-Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines for Psychosis

Dr. **Phil Tibbo** was part of a team of international health and addiction experts who developed the Lower-Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines for Psychosis.

The Lower-Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines for Psychosis (LRCUG-PSYCH) are evidence-based recommendations for reducing psychosis-related risks when using cannabis. The guidelines aim to empower individuals to understand the potential risks related to their cannabis use and to make

choices about their consumption to help reduce their individual risk of psychotic outcomes. The LRCUG-PSYCH were published in the [Journal of Dual Diagnosis](#) in 2023 and consist of 11 core public health oriented recommendations.

For more information and to access resources for clinicians, visit: <https://labo-jutras-aswad.ca/en/toolkit/>

Dalhousie Global Mental Health Guest Lecture Series

ABOUT

The Department of Psychiatry at Dalhousie University is launching a Global Mental Health Guest Lecture Series. Focusing on mental health inequities, the series will invite local, national, and international global mental health experts to present on topics of interest to psychiatrists, mental health clinicians, operational leads, policymakers, community mental health organizations, and the public.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Dalhousie Global Mental Health Guest Lecture Series is to:

- Provide a forum for knowledge dissemination, exchange, and advocacy for equity-deserving populations
- Foster continuing professional development
- Spark conversation, curiosity, and foster collaborations

TOPICS

Topics will focus on current research, and topical and contemporary issues related to global mental health.

OBJECTIVES

After attending the guest lecture series, participants will:

- Have a broader understanding of current research and contemporary issues in global mental health.
- Gain knowledge of the opportunities and challenges associated with initiatives aimed at addressing mental health inequities.
- Have a broader understanding of the historical, political, economic, social, clinical, and technological contexts in which global mental health exists.

AUDIENCE

- Psychiatrists
- Mental health clinicians
- Operational leads
- Policymakers
- Community mental health organizations
- Public

FORMAT

Hybrid events, hosted four times per year at the Nova Scotia Health Innovation Hub.

In partnership with:



Education Report

UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION NEWS

Clerkship Rotation Scheduling

In the next few weeks, you can expect to hear from **Parisa Abdi Sabouhi**, undergraduate coordinator, regarding clerkship rotation scheduling. The process to start planning the 2024/25 clerkship rotation schedule is underway.

Visitor Electives — Open to Final-Year Medical Students

We're thrilled to announce that the undergraduate coordinator is now receiving elective requests on a daily basis for the upcoming weeks. After a pause in accepting visitor electives, the Undergraduate (UG) program is now accepting visitor electives

again, both international and domestic. Excitingly, we have received visitor elective requests from esteemed institutions such as the University of Calgary, Queen's University, and the University of Queensland in Australia.

COUPE Awards — Recognizing Excellence

This January, we proudly celebrated the achievements of outstanding educators with two COUPE Awards:

1. Early Educator Award:

This accolade is designed to recognize a teacher or educator actively involved

in Undergraduate Medical Education. The awardee demonstrates enthusiasm, creativity, and innovation, inspiring learners in psychiatry.

2. Teacher Recognition Award:

Recognizing a non-academic track teacher actively involved in Undergraduate Medical Education, this award celebrates dedication, enthusiasm, creativity, and innovation in inspiring learners in psychiatry.

As we embark on the journey ahead, let's make 2024 a year of growth, collaboration, and excellence. Stay tuned for more updates, and here's to a successful and enriching academic year!

POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION NEWS

Patient Recruitment Help Needed

Each year, medical students and residents are given opportunities to develop and practice their interviewing skills to prepare and further educate them during their medical training. As we approach another busy oral exam season, we ask that all staff be aware of opportunities for their patients to take part. Patients often enjoy the experience and many of our regular patients consider it an integral part of their wellness.

How is the patient involved?

- A medical student or resident will conduct a psychiatric interview, either virtually or in-person
- One or two psychiatrists will observe the interview; medical trainees may also observe
- Participation in a session typically lasts one hour
- Most sessions are held at the Abbie J. Lane Building at the QEII with potential for other teaching sites in HRM

- Participants receive \$30 per session as an appreciation for their time and many choose to participate in more than one session at a time.

Interested patient?

If you have a patient who would be interested in joining our volunteer patient program, they can contact **Petra Corkum** at **902-473-7122**, or by email at **Petra.Corkum@nshealth.ca**, or **Parisa Abdi Sabouhi** at **902-473-5633**, or by email at **Parisa.AbdiSabouhi@nshealth.ca** who can answer any further questions the patient may have.

Resident Mid-Year Oral Exams

The PGY 2, 3, and 4s completed their mid-year oral exams in person in December. Thanks to the dedicated group of faculty who regularly take time out of their week to act as examiners.

Royal College Exam

Our fourth- and fifth-year residents are gearing up for the Royal college written exam scheduled for February 28, 2024. As they begin their final preparations, we would like to extend our best wishes for their success in this endeavour.

CaRMS

CaRMS has taken place virtually this year on January 15, 16, 25, and 26.

We are interviewing candidates for nine spots. Match day will be on Tuesday, March 19, 2024!

Thank you to all the faculty, residents, and staff who participated – CaRMS is the MOST important postgraduate event of the year.

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Sixth annual grand rounds, *You Should Read This!*

The sixth annual grand rounds, *You Should Read This!* took place on December 20, 2023, and was hosted by Drs. **Lara Hazelton**, **Jason Morrison**, **Nadine Nejati** (PGY-5), and **Madeline Ferracuti** (PGY-5).

Department of Psychiatry members were asked to submit their favourite articles, op-eds, commentaries, websites, and books (clinical, non-fiction, fiction) they have read in the last year. The publications did not have to be from 2023.

They welcomed recommendations that are psychiatry-based, but also those that are non-clinical but lifted their spirits (books/albums/shows, etc.), with the hopes of including a few heartwarming recommendations.

Sixth annual grand rounds, *You Should Read This!* reference list:

- Aviv, R. Strangers to Ourselves: Unsettled Minds and the Stories That Make Us. Farrar, Straus and Giroux; 2022. p. 288
- Behnaz Hosseini, S. Women and Suicide in Iran: Law, Marriage and Honour-Killing Routledge; 2021. p. 136
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- Sadek J. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder Misdiagnosis: Why Medical Evaluation Should Be a Part of ADHD Assessment. Brain Sciences [Internet]. 2023; 13(11): 1522
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SAVE THE DATE

W.O. McCORMICK ACADEMIC DAY ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Friday, April 26, 2024

8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. *times approximate

The Westin Nova Scotian Hotel (in person)

**This year's theme is Addictions and
Mental Health: An Update.**

Watch for registration details.

FELLOWSHIP AND SUBSPECIALTY TRAINING NEWS

CHILD AND ADOLESCENT PSYCHIATRY SUBSPECIALTY PROGRAM

CAP Subspecialty Program Updates

Congratulations to Dr. **Sophie Church** and Dr. **LeAnne Revell** who have been offered and accepted child and adolescent psychiatry subspecialty residency positions. Sophie and LeAnne will start their residency program on July 1, 2024.

Congratulations to Dr. **Emily Fraser** who graduated from the CAP subspecialty program on December 27, 2023. Dr. Fraser has accepted a position at BC Children's Hospital with a

clinical faculty position within the Department of Psychiatry at UBC. We wish Dr. Fraser all the best in her new career and West Coast Adventures!

New CAP Subspecialty Director

Effective November 2, 2023, Dr. **Celia Robichaud** has been appointed the program director of the Child and Adolescent Psychiatry residency program at Dalhousie University. Dr. Robichaud joined our faculty in April 2020 and has been actively involved in child and adolescent psychiatry education, including

membership on the CAP/COPE and Royal College C&A CBME committees. We are pleased to have Dr. Robichaud step into this leadership role.

We would like to thank Dr. **David Lovas** for his wonderful and steadfast leadership as the program director of the Child and Adolescent Psychiatry residency program for the past seven years. Through his leadership, the CAP residency program had its first successful accreditation in 2018 and successfully transitioned to CBME-based education in 2022.

GERIATRIC PSYCHIATRY SUBSPECIALTY PROGRAM

The Geriatric Psychiatry Program held a wellness event in the fall where faculty and residents went to Activate: An Active Gaming Experience. Everyone enjoyed themselves and are looking forward to curling for the next wellness event.



We had farewell dinner for Dr. **Aditya Nidumolu** at the end of December. Dr. Aditya Nidumolu will continue his training at the University of Toronto.



The Geriatric Psychiatry Program is pleased to announce that Dr. **Eileen Burns** and Dr. **Lauren Haslam** will commence their subspecialty training in July 2024.

The Geriatric Psychiatry Program has successfully concluded interviews for an international fellow who will hopefully be joining the program in the latter part of 2024.

Journal Club was held on January 11, 2024, with Drs. **Mackenzie Armstrong** and **Sameh Hassan** presenting.

Reproductive Mental Health team welcomes international fellow Dr. Awateif Alsupiany

In October 2023, the Reproductive Mental Health team welcomed Dr. **Awateif Alsupiany**, an international fellow from Saudi Arabia, for a one-year fellowship. Dr. Alsupiany completed her studies at King Abdulaziz University in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia in 2014, and successfully completed her psychiatry board examination in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia in 2018.

Dr. Alsupiany is working closely with Dr. **Nicole Herschenhaus** and Dr. **Tanya Tulipan**, as well as collaborating with the clinicians on the team.

“Reproductive Mental Health Services was pleased to welcome Dr. Awateif Alsupiany to our team in October,” says Dr. Tanya Tulipan, psychiatrist and physician co-lead, Reproductive Mental Health Service. “A keen and enthusiastic learner, Dr. Alsupiany quickly settled into the work and is a valued member of our team. Her patients

appreciate her thoughtful and capable care.”

Dr. Alsupiany shares the following about her experience as an international fellow:

“I would like to begin by expressing my most profound appreciation to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, its leaders, and especially King Salman and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, for creating an environment where women could thrive. Afterwards, I would like to express my appreciation to the Ministry of the National Guard, and more especially the Department of Psychiatry, chairman and head for their invaluable support.

I have always been interested in perinatal psychiatry because I aim to enhance the mental well-being of women and ensure that their childbirth and postpartum period are as seamless as feasible. I have come across

information regarding the Dalhousie Fellowship programs, which are highly regarded, particularly the program focused on reproductive mental health. Furthermore, I have a strong affinity for the city of Halifax. The place is serene, aesthetically pleasing, and caters to families.

Thus far I possess extensive expertise and continuously acquire new knowledge on a daily basis. I feel fortunate to be surrounded by a diligent and proficient crew. I am honoured to have the guidance of exceptional perinatal psychiatrist Dr. Tanya Tulipan and Dr. Nicole Herschenhaus, who possess remarkable expertise and have greatly contributed to my educational progress. I want to express my gratitude to Dr. **Mahmoud Awara**, the Director of the International Fellowships Program, for facilitating my presence here.”



Dr. Alsupiany with members of the Reproductive Mental Health team. From left to right: Katie van Patter, MN, RN, CNS, clinical nurse specialist; Dr. Alsupiany; Dr. Tanya Tulipan, MD, psychiatrist and physician co-lead; and, Sylvia Euale administrative assistant.



Dr. Alsupiany with members of the Reproductive Mental Health team. From left to right: Laura Mullally MSW RSW clinical social worker; Dr. Alsupiany; and, Dr. Nicole Herschenhaus, MD, psychiatrist.

Division of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry

FACULTY UPDATES



Congratulations to Dr. **Katie Radchuck** on the birth of her daughter, Victoria Sophie Gale, on December 3.

Dr. Radchuck began her maternity leave in December and will return in January 2025.

Awards

Dr. **Suzanne Zinck** was awarded the 2023 Social Justice Ally Award by the Nova Scotia College of Social Workers. Dr. Zinck was recognized as a long-time advocate for the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. Dr. Zinck is an active and passionate participant in interprofessional knowledge transfer and collaboration to promote safe and affirming support for gender dysphoric, gender non-binary and transgender children and youth, whether in health care settings, schools, or in the community.

Congratulations to Drs. **Jill Chorney**, **Sherry Stewart**, and **Christine Chambers** who were listed in the “Top 15% Women Professors from CPA-Accredited Clinical Psychology Programmes by Career Status.”

CAP PRESENTATIONS

Dr. **Alexa Bagnell** presented “Anxiety in Children” as a Webinar for Primary Care at the Dal Med Continuing Professional Development on November 2, 2023.

Dr. **Jill Chorney** was an Invited Speaker/Panelist, “Inclusive Child & Youth Mental Health for the Digital Age” Knowledge Exchange Workshop in Halifax on November 6, 2023.

Dr. **Alexa Bagnell** presented “PANDAS/PANS” at the OCD Lunch & Learn Series on November 7, 2023.

Dr. **Suzanne Zinck** presented at the 97th annual Dalhousie Fall Refresher Course on the topic of “The 5 aspects of care for 2SLGBTQIA+ persons” on November 17.

Dr. **Alexa Bagnell** and Dr. Laura Miller presented “Care of the agitated pediatric patient” at the NSH Quality and Patient Safety Rounds on November 29, 2023.

Dr. **Celia Robichaud** presented to pediatricians across the Maritimes on “Early Intervention for Disordered Eating for Community Pediatricians” as an installment of the Psychiatry for Community Pediatricians CME series she developed with Dr. Tara Chobotuk.

Dr. **Chelcie Soroka** presented to pediatricians across the Maritimes on “Pediatric Anxiety Disorders” as an installment of

the Psychiatry for Community Pediatricians CME series on January 11, 2024.

ADVOCACY

Drs. **Selene Etches**, **Jason Morrison**, **Shiloh Gossen**, **Terry Chisholm**, and **David Martell** sent a submission to the Special Joint Committee on Medical Assistance in Dying regarding Nova Scotia’s recommended model regarding the planned expansion of MAiD in March 2024.

On November 28, 2023, Dr. **Suzanne Zinck**, met and consulted with the Department of Education regarding supporting trans and gender diverse youth.

CAP EDUCATION

Nova Scotia CAP Retreat

A retreat of all Nova Scotia Child and Adolescent Psychiatrists was held on November 10. The hybrid retreat was well attended both in person and virtually. Presentations included:

- *MAiD and Mental Health Disorders* presented by Dr. **Selene Etches**
- *Academic Promotion* presented by Dr. **Lukas Propper**

CAP PUBLICATIONS

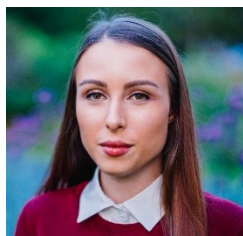
Halawa H, Armstrong M, **Fancy S, Abidi S**. Nov 2023, "Clozapine-induced myocarditis and subsequent rechallenge: a narrative literature review & case report. <https://www.cacap-acpea.org/wp-content/uploads/Clozapine-induced-halawa.pdf>

Campbell LA, Clark SE, **Chorney J**, Emberly D, **Carrey NJ, Bagnell A**, Blenus J, Daneff M, Campbell JC. Understanding the uptake of virtual care for first and return outpatient appointments in child and adolescent mental health services: a mixed-methods study BMJ Open 2023;13:e074803. doi: 10.1136/bmjopen-2023-074803

Hazelton L, da Luz Dias R, Eslinger M, Tibbo P, Sinha N, Njoku A, **Satyanarayana S**, Siddhartha S, Alexiadis-Brown P, **Rahman F, Maguire H, Gray G, Bosma M, Parker D**, Connolly O, **Raji A, Manning A, Bagnell A, Israel Opoku Agyapong V**. Exploring Current Practices, Needs, and Barriers for Expanding Distributed Medical Education and Scholarship in Psychiatry: Protocol for an Environmental Scan Using a Formal Information Search Approach and Explanatory Design JMIR Res Protoc 2023;12:e46835, URL: <https://www.researchprotocols.org/2023/1/e46835> DOI: 10.2196/46835

CAP RESEARCH

CAP Research Highlights



Dr. **Chelcie Soroka** is a co-applicant on a research project led by senior clinician scientist

Dr. Jennifer Couturier of McMaster University, titled "Implementing Canadian Practice Guidelines for Treating Children and Adolescents with Eating Disorders." The aim of said project is to examine what strategies can be used to enhance guideline implementation, as well as identifying relevant barriers and facilitators to said process; a concurrent mixed method research design will be employed. Each of the 8 co-applicants will be responsible for assembling a focus group from their respective province consisting of 3-4 clinicians, 2-3 program administrators and 3-4 persons with lived experience or caregivers of such individuals. Educational materials developed by the research team, based on the guidelines and insights gathered from the focus groups,

as well as pre and post surveys will be sent to participants as well as stakeholders belonging to key membership groups as to examine and capture any improvement in awareness, use, and impact of the guidelines prior to following the anticipated implementation strategy. The research team hopes to publish and present their findings by mid-to-late 2024.

Section of Geriatric Psychiatry

Section of Geriatric Psychiatry welcomes research assistant Osob Regal



Osob Regal is the research assistant for the Section of Geriatric Psychiatry.

In 2023, the Section of Geriatric Psychiatry welcomed **Osob Regal** as the section's research assistant.

Appointing research assistants for each of the Department of Psychiatry's clinical academic sections/division was part of the department's Transformational Plan. Research assistants support clinical faculty engaged in clinical translational research and quality improvement initiatives and will help the section/division research directors in their mandate.

Prior to applying for the role as research assistant with the Section of Geriatric Psychiatry, Osob lived in Toronto and worked as an operations associate.

"It was during this time that I realized my passion and interests were in psychiatry and psychological research," says Osob. "I worked as a research assistant in these fields previously and I decided to focus my efforts on shifting my career focus back to this field."

Osob's interest in psychology and psychiatry research came about during her undergraduate studies in psychology and neuroscience at the University of Toronto.

In her role as research assistant, she aims to enhance her skills and gain new experiences. She's interested in the variety of research projects, the different aspects of the research process, and seeing what topics everyone is passionate about so she can broaden her knowledge.

"I am hoping to gain a better understanding of all aspects of the research process from conducting literature searches to assisting with application preparation and submission," she says. "Through my supporting role, I want to ensure that I make a meaningful contribution to the geriatric psychiatry section."

Being able to provide support for new projects is a source of pride for Osob. By providing background knowledge, typically

in the form of literature searches, she is able to facilitate and provide momentum for projects, saving the researchers time, she says.

Osob is supporting a variety of projects at different stages, including literature reviews, data collection, and publications for faculty members and residents within the Section of Geriatric Psychiatry.

"The Section of Geriatric Psychiatry has found it very useful having both a director of research (Dr. **Gail Eskes**), and a research assistant (Osob Regal) — while these initiatives are still in their infancy, having guidance and assistance with implementation of new and existing projects has been greatly appreciated," says Dr. **Mark Bosma**, head of the Section of Geriatric Psychiatry. "Osob is a delight to work with, consistently bringing a positive attitude and strong work ethic to her collaborations with our section members."

"I am grateful to have been selected for this opportunity," says Osob. "I have had a wonderful time familiarizing myself with the geriatric psychiatry section as well as getting to know everyone. I enjoy being a part of this team and I am appreciative of the support everyone has provided me."

Dr. Amy Gough member of working group who developed the first ever Canadian Guidelines on the Assessment and Treatment of Anxiety in Older Adults

The Canadian Coalition for Seniors Mental Health is releasing the first ever Canadian Guidelines on the Assessment and Treatment of Anxiety in Older Adults. Dr. **Amy Gough** has been a working group member for the development of these guidelines.

Full links are available at:

<https://ccsmh.ca/>

Additional resources and tools to accompany the guidelines will be released soon on the CCSMH website.

Section of Community Psychiatry

Dr. **Skoretz** is joining Dartmouth CMHT as a locum staff psychiatrist for 10 months, commencing January 22, 2024.

Dr. **Michelle MacDonald** will be joining the Dartmouth CMHT as a substantive staff psychiatrist in February 2024.

Dr. **John Oguntade** has been appointed as an Addiction and Concurrent Disorders Psychiatrist and will be joining us in February 2024.

Dr. **Natasa Zatezalo** was appointed as a full-time psychiatrist at Cole Harbour CMHT, starting in July 2024.

Section of Forensic Psychiatry

Dr. Abdulmohsen (Mohsen) Alhumoud should be joining the department and the forensic section around mid-March. He will be coming for a tour and a meet and greet on February 9, 2024.

Dr. Harry Kennedy is arriving on January 22, 2024 to spend a week with the team at ECFH to continue the development of the Model of Care.

Section of Acute, Consultation, and Emergency Psychiatry

As a short stay mental health team, we get a lot of homeless patients. More recently, we have been noticing the growing number of patients that are homeless and the dwindling shelter vacancies.

The Short Stay Unit team then decided this Christmas 2023, not to do our traditional cookie swap, or give cards/gifts to each other and to donate instead to Shelter NS.

Our social worker Erin Dalton got a wish list from Shelter NS to start with. Our RN Susan Fraser made a lovely decorated big box to start our weekly collections.

We then divided the wish list into four categories for the four weeks prior to Christmas:

- Warm clothes and accessories
- Canned food and snacks
- Gift cards/small gifts
- Toiletries

Erin Dalton (social worker), with the help of our hospitalist Dr. **Taylor Betsch** delivered all the collected items to Shelter NS.

We would like to thank our charge nurse Randy Dinan for helping the team coordinate the collections. We would also like to thank everyone on our team for the motivation and energy they showed in making this a successful donation drive. We also want a shout out to

Mary Hewitt's mother, who is a retired nurse and has donated generously to this drive. She also donates warm accessories regularly to our unit.

What we hope to have achieved after this success is to continue to contribute throughout the year to this cause in a small way.



One Person **One Record**

One Person One Record (OPOR) is actively working on designing the OPOR-Clinical Information System (OPOR-CIS) for use across the province by both IWK Health and NSH. Drs. **Sabina Abidi** and **Abraham (Rami) Rudnick** are OPOR Physician Leads for the care area of Mental Health provincially, collaborating with the OPOR team, Oracle Health (the CIS vendor) and Subject Matter Experts.

Design Sessions have been taking place since September 2023, where Subject Matter Experts from different care areas come together to inform the design of the CIS. Psychiatrists and other mental health care providers from all the NSH Zones and IWK Health have been providing input during these sessions with Oracle Health. Some Design Sessions are specific to mental health and addictions (MHA), while others are integrated with other

areas (e.g., ambulatory care, emergency medicine, and more).

The Cerner Canadian Reference Model (CCRM) was initially intended to be an accelerator for design. Though considerable efforts were made by both NSH and IWK Health Mental Health Subject Matter Experts to address the CCRM, the approach to design the OPOR-CIS is pivoting — away from using CCRM largely as a starting point and focusing more on the distinct evidence-based needs of Nova Scotia and moving that into our future system. With this in mind, the team is developing a new strategy to leverage the substantial work that has already been executed across the province regarding standardization and equitable patient care, which means in some instances moving entirely away from CCRM content. This process may require some more time and effort to deliver, but is

not anticipated to change the scope of MHA for the province, or the expected Go-Live schedule for the OPOR-CIS.

For more information, please contact OPOR MHA Physician Leads, Dr. Sabina Abidi and Dr. Abraham (Rami) Rudnick, NSH MHA Manager Patryk Simon, and/or OPOR Physician/Provider Liaison Tracy Vigliarolo.

You can also find additional information and resources on the OPOR Website:

<https://opor.nshealth.ca>

<https://opor.nshealth.ca/learning-hub/>

<https://opor.nshealth.ca/timeline/implementation-schedule/>

Humanities Corner

Medical Humanities Writing Contest

Dalhousie Psychiatry's **Annual Humanities Writing Contest**, open to medical students and residents, will be held again this year. All submissions to be in by May 1, 2024. More details and specific contest rules can be found on page 23.

Medical Humanities



Student Writing Competition 2024

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, 2024**. Winners will be announced in September 2024.

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**.

Tel: 902.473.2470 | psych.education@dal.ca



Janet Bardon retires from the Department of Psychiatry after 16 years



Janet Bardon was recognized with the Department of Psychiatry's Dedicated Service Award at the department's holiday party on Dec. 8, 2023. From left to right: Dr. Vincent Agyapong, head, Department of Psychiatry; Janet Bardon, physician resource manager, Department of Psychiatry; and, Dr. Andrew Harris, senior medical director, Mental Health and Addictions Program, NS Health. Photo by Bruce Bottomley.

On Jan. 31, 2024, **Janet Bardon** retired from the Department of Psychiatry at Dalhousie University after 16 years. Many department members know Janet through her work in research and human resources.

Janet joined the department in 2007 as administrator, Research and Human Resources. Prior to joining the department, she owned a North American research firm where she developed and honed many skills that led her to the position at Dalhousie.

“Being a Nova Scotian, I’ve always had a soft spot for Dalhousie and was delighted to have the opportunity to continue the work I love at this university,” says Janet.

In 2016, she moved into the department’s newly-created physician resource manager role — a position she held until her retirement.

Janet is a Chartered Professional in Human Resources and is responsible for the management of department human resource processes, including recruitment

of faculty, Individual Practice Profile process for physician and non-physician faculty, and the physician annual performance measurement process.

She worked closely with the department head, the Human Resources Committee, and her direct team **Neha Singh**, human resources coordinator, and **Linda Ford**, administrative assistant.

For Janet, human resources was a passion that grew from her experience as a business owner.

“My interest and skills in human resources are things I developed over the 20 years of running my own business,” she says. “I love the responsibilities and outcomes of hiring and performance support.”

On Dec. 8, 2023, Janet received the Department of Psychiatry’s Dedicated Service Award, an award that recognizes departing department members who have served the department for at least 10 years. During the presentation, one of Janet’s lesser-known contributions to the department was mentioned — organizing the

department’s annual charity initiative, raising thousands of dollars, clothing, toys, and toiletries for organizations such as Bryony House, Feed Nova Scotia, Out of the Cold, and Metro Turning Point.

“Volunteer work has been a constant thread in my life, from being part of Big Sisters, to sitting on church and choir committees,” says Janet. “I grew up in small-town Nova Scotia and was taught at an early age that volunteering was a vital part of any community. I’m looking forward to doing more in my retirement.”

Among her career highlights Janet lists running her own business, her time at Dalhousie, and the projects she’s worked on and systems she’s established.

Janet will miss the special people she works with, as well as the horses visible from her office window.

As for what’s next, there are many activities she wants to explore.

“I have a very long list of things I want to learn and experience — from knitting to violin! Number one is more time with family and friends.”

Department **News**

Dr. Leigh Meldrum appointed medical humanities coordinator

The Department of Psychiatry was pleased to announce Dr. **Leigh Meldrum** has been appointed medical humanities coordinator for the Department of Psychiatry, Dalhousie University, for a five-year term effective Jan. 1, 2024.

The medical humanities coordinator promotes the medical humanities within the Department of Psychiatry and provides a liaison with the Medical Humanities at the Faculty of Medicine.

Dr. Leigh Meldrum joined the faculty as an assistant professor and the Nova Scotia Operational Stress Injury Clinic as a full-time psychiatrist on September

5, 2023. She is originally from Nova Scotia but was living and working abroad for over a decade prior to joining the faculty. Dr. Meldrum completed medical school at St. George’s University School of Medicine followed by specialty training in psychiatry at the University of Maryland/Sheppard Pratt Psychiatry Training program, where she served as the chief resident. She practiced psychiatry in the United States for several years before living and working as a psychiatrist in New Zealand more recently. Prior to attending medical school, Dr. Meldrum worked as a program coordinator for the Atlantic Film Festival in Halifax,

NS, and has been a member of two psychiatry book clubs. Dr. Meldrum can be reached at **Margaret.Meldrum@nshealth.ca**

In announcing Dr. Meldrum’s appointment, we would also like to thank Dr. **Abraham (Rami) Rudnick** for his leadership as medical humanities coordinator since 2019.

New leadership positions in the Department of Psychiatry

The department was pleased to announce the following two new leadership positions in the Department of Psychiatry:

Dr. **Kim Good** has been appointed the **associate coordinator of the Psychiatry Graduate Programs**, for a five-year term, effective Feb. 1, 2024.

The Psychiatry Graduate Program associate coordinator champions excellence and provides leadership in graduate education within the Department of Psychiatry. They assist the Graduate Program coordinator in managing the MSc. and PhD programs. In addition, they support the International Master's in Clinical Psychiatry program, providing consultation on the development and approval process and supporting the coordinator once the program is established.

Dr. Kim Good is a professor in the Department of Psychiatry and is the research director for the Section of Forensic Psychiatry. She earned her Master's and PhD in Neuroscience at the University of British Columbia, and holds a Master of Education in Curriculum Studies for Medical Interprofessionals from Acadia University. She can be reached at kim.good@dal.ca.

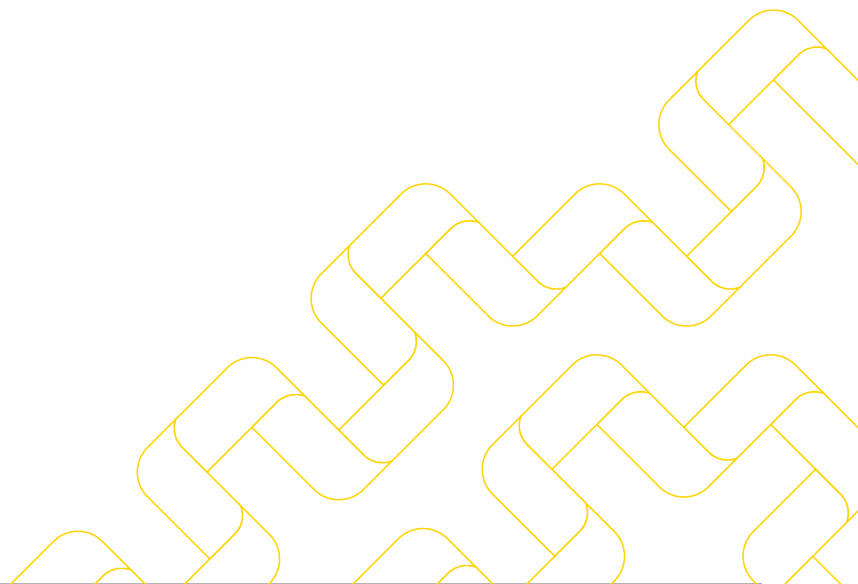
Dr. **Alexandra Manning** has been appointed the **director of International Residency Elective Program**, for a five-year term, effective Feb. 1, 2024.

The director of International Residency Elective Program oversees all aspects of international residency

training experiences and acts as the principal liaison between the department, the Psychiatry residency general and subspecialty programs, the Office of Postgraduate Medical Education (PGME), and international partner institutions.

Dr. Manning is an assistant professor in the Department of Psychiatry and a child and adolescent psychiatrist at IWK Health. She is the department's associate director of postgraduate education as well as the director of fellowships. Dr. Manning obtained her undergraduate degree at Mount Saint Vincent University and medical degree at Dalhousie University. She also completed both her general psychiatry and child and adolescent psychiatry residency training at Dalhousie University. She can be reached at alexandra.manning@iwk.nshealth.ca.

Congratulations!



Leadership PRN Podcast — Advocacy Through Leadership with Dr. Cinera States

In the following episode of the Leadership PRN podcast, Dr. **Lara Hazelton** speaks with Dr. **Cinera States** about advocacy through leadership and her work with

the transcultural psychiatry program.

[Listen to the episode.](#)

Leadership PRN is Dalhousie Faculty of Medicine's podcast for leaders whether formal or informal, established or emerging.

Psychiatrist gives back to community mental health initiatives

Dr. **Emmanuel Aquino** was featured in the following article published in Saltwire by the Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia:

[SENIOR LIVING: Psychiatrist gives back to community mental health initiatives](#)

In Memoriam: Dr. Alistair Munro

The Department of Psychiatry was deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Dr. Alistair Munro, former Professor and Head of the Department of Psychiatry, on Dec. 1, 2023. Dr. Munro was Head of the Department of Psychiatry from 1982–1994.

Dr. Munro was born in Glasgow, Scotland and received his medical degree from Glasgow University.

In the latter part of his career, Dr. Munro became an authority on Delusional Disorder, authoring a textbook on the subject, which is still widely quoted. He published

many other scholarly books and articles and was well known for his light-hearted pieces published in The Medical Post and other magazines.

Read his obituary [here](#).

Drs. Gardner & Murphy reach thousands of Canadians through Sleepwell



Sleepwell is the research and knowledge mobilization program developed by Drs. **David Gardner** and **Andrea Murphy** for reducing sedative use and increasing awareness of cognitive behavioural therapy for insomnia (CBTi). The fall of 2023 was an active period for Sleepwell. Dr. Gardner shared Sleepwell's research updates and resources at the Canadian Association on Gerontology (CAG) annual meeting (Toronto) and at the Family Medicine Forum in Montreal (November) in which 200 family doctors attended, "Treating chronic insomnia without medications in primary care." Also in November, joined by Katya Kruglova, Sleepwell research associate, Andrea and David actively participated in the Canadian Medication Appropriateness and Deprescribing Network (CADeN) national meeting (Montreal). Patient partner Georges Marcoux, from NB, also joined and talked about the impact of Sleepwell's tools, resources, and recommendations.

On November 27, Drs. Gardner and Murphy hosted an **online public webinar (How to get a good night's sleep without sleeping pills)**, with almost 350 attendees from across Canada joining in to learn about sleeping pills, what the first-line treatment (CBTi) for insomnia is,



Dr. Gardner at CAG annual meeting in Toronto.

and Sleepwell's resources. Over 90% of attendees indicated they intend to use and recommend Sleepwell.

There were also several enhancements made to the **Sleepwell website (mysleepwell.ca)** recently, which was visited by more than 25,000 Canadians during the fall.

Updates:

- Video stories from Faye (English, >500 views) and Georges (French, >150 views) sharing their sleeping pill discontinuation journey after years of use and how they got their sleep back;



Sleepwell patient partner Georges Marcoux at CADeN national meeting in Montreal.

- Posting of the public webinar (>500 views);
- A new resource, "10 Tips for Better Sleep," regarding the five components of CBTi;
- A revision to "CBTi vs. Sleeping Pills";
- New entries to the curated list of CBTi Research.

More updates are planned for **early 2024**, including: French translations, two public feedback sessions on Sleepwell, more CBTi resources for health care providers, and an update to Sleepwell Recommends.

On October 3, in acknowledgment of their work, Drs. Gardner and Murphy delivered the keynote address ("Transforming insomnia care") and were presented with the **Outstanding Advocate Award** at the "Let's Keep Talking"

event held by the Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia.

Drs. Murphy and Gardner (and coauthors, Dr. Justin Turner, Dr. **Malgorzata Rajda**, Kathleen Allen, and Kamilla Pinter) won the **2023 Best Paper Award in Exploratory Research in Clinical and Social Pharmacy** for their publication, “Effectiveness and cost analysis of methods used to recruit older adult sedative users

to a deprescribing randomized controlled trial during the COVID-19 pandemic” (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rcsop.2022.100214>). Another manuscript, “Prescriber acceptability of a direct-to-patient intervention for benzodiazepine receptor agonist deprescribing and behavioural management of insomnia in older adults,” was recently accepted for publication in the Canadian Journal on Aging.



Drs. Gardner and Murphy were the keynote speakers of the “Let’s Keep Talking” event in Halifax.

EPINS provincial gathering



On Friday, November 17, Early Psychosis Intervention Nova Scotia (EPINS) hosted its annual provincial in-person gathering at Brightwood Golf Club in Dartmouth. EPINS is the provincial early phase psychosis program led by clinical director, Dr. **Phil Tibbo**, and provincial coordinator, Brittany Chisholm. EPINS has developed a network of multi-disciplinary teams throughout the province serving youth and young adults experiencing psychosis and their caregivers. EPINS hosted the 2nd annual in-person event this fall and will host the 3rd annual virtual event in the spring. These events are opportunities for clinicians across the province to network, receive education and training, and discuss key areas for program planning. A priority identified at these events has been measurement-based care, resulting in the selection and implementation of five standardized outcome measurement tools to be used provincially. With the support of senior leadership, these events have proven to be valuable in enhancing services for psychosis provincially.

FACULTY CHANGES

Arrivals

- Dr. **Mark Paramlall**, a neuropsychiatrist, joined the department as an assistant professor effective Nov. 27, 2023. Dr. Paramlall is working

C/L and acute care and can be reached at mark.paramlall@nshealth.ca

- Dr. **Lilly Lines** joined the department as an assistant professor effective Dec. 1,

2023. Dr. Lines is working in Mental Health and Addictions in Truro. Dr. Lines be reached at lilly.lines@nshealth.ca

- Dr. **Adedamola Fasehun** joined the department as an

assistant professor effective Dec. 1, 2023. Dr. Fasehun is working in Mental Health and Addictions in Northern Zone. Dr. Fasehun can be reached at **Adedamola.Fasehun@nshealth.ca**.

- Dr. **Erin Mazerolle** joined as an adjunct effective Jan. 1, 2024. Dr. Mazerolle is located at St. Francis Xavier

University in Antigonish, NS. Dr. Mazerolle can be reached at **emazerol@stfx.ca**

Welcome to you all!

Departures

- **Janet Bardon** retired from the department effective Jan. 31, 2024.

We wish you well!

AWARDS & HONOURS

Department of Psychiatry researcher, Dr. Rudolf Uher, ranks among the world's most influential in esteemed global listing

Three exceptional Dalhousie researchers were included by world-leading data analytics company Clarivate in its annual list of Highly-Cited Researchers for 2023. Drs. Noni MacDonald,

Rudolf Uher, and Tony Walker were each selected for the authoritative list that includes influential researchers at universities, research institutes

and commercial organizations around the world.

Congratulations Dr. Uher!

[Read the Dal News story.](#)

Department members rank among the country's most productive clinical psychology professors

Canadian Psychology, the journal of the Canadian Psychological Association, recently published a paper naming four Dalhousie clinical psychology professors among the country's most productive. The study examined an "overview from the past decade of professors' average and annual publication counts, citation counts and h-indices."

They include Department of Psychology and Neuroscience faculty members Dr. **Sherry Stewart**, Dr. **Christine Chambers**, Dr. **Jill Chorney**, and Dr. **Simon Sherry** who all are

also cross appointed with the Department of Psychiatry.

Congratulations!

Citation: Krakauer, R. L., Drakes, D. H., Asmundson, A. J. N., & Carleton, R. N. (2023). Assessing the publication productivity of clinical psychology professors in Canadian psychological association-accredited Canadian psychology departments: A 10-year replication study. *Canadian Psychology / Psychologie canadienne*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1037/cap0000378>

DaRT program winner of the Award of Excellence in Mental Health and Addictions Quality Improvement

The DaRT program is the proud winner of the Award of Excellence in Mental Health and Addictions Quality Improvement for the 2024 Nova Scotia Health Quality Awards!

The program has been recognized for extending access to specialty group psychotherapy services for individuals with relationship trauma and complex stress disorders. The team was recognized for its “incredible work focused on enhancing service capacity and accessibility throughout the

province using a new treatment that is evidenced based and transformative.” Bravo Team!



The DaRT Team 2023. Front row left to right: Sandra Reyno, PhD; Megan Horner, MSW; and, Alice Embree. Back row left to right: Kim Morash, RN; Andrew Welch, OT; Dr. Jackie Kinley, MD; and, Brenan Tweedie, MSW. Missing from photo: Kate Sampson, RT and Neal Henderson program manager.

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 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.

Recipient: Dr. Taylor Betsch

Nominated by: Dr. Sanjana Sridharan

Dr. **Taylor Betsch** is the hospitalist on the 6th floor of the Abbie J. Lane Building. She always goes the extra mile for all the patients. Recently during the holiday period, she supported the team during

two codes, both during hours, but also after hours though she was not on call, to provide continuity and reassurance. Dr. Betsch always collaborates with her counterparts out of hours on call when needed. She is also present for all the team rounds and has a good holistic approach to management in the true bio psycho-social model sense. She is also a good teacher to all learners. Dr. Betsch is a good role model of her truly caring, competent, and scholarly personality to the multidisciplinary team and learners. I have repeatedly had feedback from interdisciplinary members of how she is approachable and not hierarchical whenever she is needed. She is truly deserving of the Extra Mile Award.

Recipient: Dr. JoAnn Davis

Nominated by: Dr. Sanjana Sridharan

Dr. **JoAnn Davis** is a locum psychiatrist covering vacation for the inpatient units. She has picked up coverage at short notice, more recently to cover a busy inpatient unit. Dr. Davis is very flexible and will work around the needs of the inpatient psychiatrists who sometimes cancel vacation at short notice. She goes the extra mile to accommodate everyone’s needs all year round. She is also very competent clinically.

Recipient: Dr. Anthony Pianosi

Nominated by: Dr. Sanjana Sridharan

Dr. **Anthony Pianosi** is the staff psychiatrist at the Day Hospital. He has been helping with coverage for a colleague on the inpatient unit for over a month and did his day job without complaining.

He also has volunteered several times, to cover PES and other services when there are absences at short notice. Dr. Pianosi has a personality of going the extra mile since he was a resident and continues as a

staff psychiatrist to demonstrate this quality. The beauty of Dr. Pianosi's personality is that he is always asking me how "he can provide better services to enhance the patient experience" with available resources. He has never complained about existing resources or shortcomings in the current funding for his service.

He is truly deserving of the Extra Mile Award.

Thank you Drs. Betsch, Davis, and Pianosi for going the "extra mile!"

Recognizing our administrative staff

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

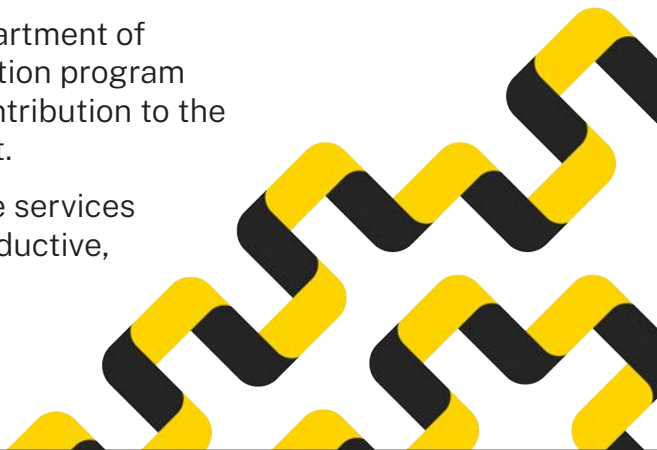
Let us know by filling out the form on the homepage of **dalpsychiatry.ca**.

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 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**



NEW! Dalhousie Department of Psychiatry's 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 via this link: <https://medicine.dal.ca/departments/department-sites/psychiatry/news-publications/extra-mile-award-nomination-form.html>



Dalhousie University Department of Psychiatry Extra Mile Award Terms of Reference

Purpose:

The Department of Psychiatry's Extra Mile Award has been created to recognize 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.

Examples may include taking on additional duties when colleagues are on leave or during position vacancies, or any other way you feel someone has stepped up or gone above and beyond the call of duty!

Eligibility:

All Dalhousie department faculty members, staff, and allied health professionals are eligible for this award.

Frequency: Up to quarterly.

Candidates for this award will be considered on a quarterly basis.

Criteria:

- Candidates can be an individual or team, including allied health professionals and non-department members.
- Candidates can only win once every two calendar years.
- Multiple awards may be given out each cycle (e.g., every three months).

Nomination:

Faculty, staff, learners, and stakeholders of the department may submit a nomination to the Awards Committee via this link: <https://medicine.dal.ca/departments/department-sites/psychiatry/news-publications/extra-mile-award-nomination-form.html>. The nomination should include a brief (less than 200 words) statement describing the nominee's exceptional contribution. This statement will also be used for communications and recognition purposes in the department's newsletter. The Awards Committee will review nominations and select the recipients. Multiple recipients may be selected at each iteration.

Recognition:

Recipients will be recognized in *Headlines*, the department's newsletter, and will be sent a certificate.

Holiday Party 2023

The Department of Psychiatry hosted its first holiday party since before the pandemic on Dec. 8, 2023, at the Atlantica Hotel.

Over 100 people attended the event, and it was wonderful to see so many people gather to celebrate the season.

As in past years, we required a donation to attend the holiday party and this year raised funds for the Brunswick Street Mission.

Dr. **Vincent Agyapong**, department head, welcomed everyone to the event, and Dr. **Cameron Taylor**, PGY-3 resident, was our MC for the evening.

Service milestone recognitions and Dedicated Service Award presentation

A new development was to recognize members of the department who have reached various service milestones — 10, 15, 20, 25 and 30 or more years of service. Since this was the first time the Dalhousie Department of Psychiatry recognized service milestones, it was done so retroactively. This meant, for example, that those who reached their 15-year milestone two years ago, were being recognized for their 15 years of service at the time of the event. Those in attendance at the holiday party were presented with a certificate. Those not in attendance were sent a certificate after the event.

During the event, we also recognized **Janet Bardon**, physician resource manager

(now retired), with a Dedicated Service Award. Dr. **Andrew Harris** presented Janet with the award. The Dedicated Service Award recognizes departing department members who have served the department at least 10 years. Janet retired from the department on January 31, 2024.

Gingerbread house decorating contest

Following the service milestones and award presentation, graduate students **Mikaela Ethier-Gagnon** and **Julia Fraiha** introduced the gingerbread house decorating contest. Each table was provided a gingerbread house kit and was given 30 minutes to decorate it. As contest judges, Mikaela and Julia chose their top three groups. The winning group was chosen based on applause and received a small prize.

Our special thanks to Dr. Cameron Taylor, Mikaela Ethier-Gagnon, and Julia Fraiha for volunteering for the event, and to Bruce Bottomley for the photos.



Photos by Bruce Bottomley.



10-year service milestone group with Drs. Vincent Agyapong and Lara Hazelton at the holiday party. Individuals in this group have 10 to 14 years of service. From left to right: Dr. Vincent Agyapong, Dr. Gerald Gray, Mandy Eslinger, Dr. Mutiat Sulyman, and Dr. Lara Hazelton.



15-year service milestone group with Drs. Vincent Agyapong and Alexa Bagnell. Individuals in this group have 15 to 19 years of service. From left to right: Dr. Vincent Agyapong, Dr. Zenovia Ursuliak, Dr. Suzanne Zinck, Dr. Sherry Stewart, Dr. Matthew Morgan, Jen Brown, Janet Bardon, Dr. Phil Tibbo, and Dr. Alexa Bagnell.



20-year service milestone group with Drs. Vincent Agyapong and Sanjana Sridharan. Individuals in this group have 20 to 24 years of service. From left to right: Dr. Vincent Agyapong, Dr. Risk Kronfli, Dr. Andrew Harris, Dr. Lara Hazelton, Dr. John Aspin, Dr. Alexa Bagnell, Linda Ford, Dr. Sanjana Sridharan, Sandra Millar, Dr. Katharine Black, and Dr. George Robertson.



25-year service milestone group with Drs. Vincent Agyapong, Alexa Bagnell, and Lara Hazelton. Individuals in this group have 25 to 29 years of service. From left to right: Drs. Vincent Agyapong, Alexa Bagnell, Normand Carrey, Heather Milliken, and Lara Hazelton.



30+ year service milestone group with Drs. Vincent Agyapong, Alexa Bagnell, and Lara Hazelton. Individuals in this group have 30 or more years of service. From left to right: Drs. Vincent Agyapong, Alexa Bagnell, Claire O'Donovan, Michael Flynn, Sreenivasa Bhaskara, Joanne Gusella, Nina Woulff, and Lara Hazelton.



Dr. Joseph Sadek was recognized for his 15-year service milestone. From left to right: Drs. Vincent Agyapong, Joseph Sadek, and Andrew Harris.



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 **April 2024**.

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



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Department of Psychiatry