

HEADLINES



YEAR-END CELEBRATION OF EDUCATION



IN THIS ISSUE

FEATURES

YEAR-END CELEBRATION OF EDUCATION *page 5*

DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH CONNECTS WITH INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY ABOUT CANNABIS USE AND YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT MENTAL HEALTH *page 6*

RESEARCH IN MEDICINE PROJECT FOCUSES ON PIONEERING PSYCHIATRIST DR. ELIZABETH KILPATRICK *page 9*

CELEBRATING OUR GRADUATING RESIDENTS! *page 12*

NEW COURSE, CO-DEVELOPED WITH COMMUNITY, BUILDS CULTURAL COMPETENCE AMONG CLINICIANS *page 28*

CONTENTS

- 3** Message from the Department Head
- 6** Research
- 9** Education
- 22** Division of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry
- 26** Trauma-Informed Youth Addictions Care Conference
- 27** Reducing restraint use through person-centred neurodevelopmental care
- 28** Serving and Engaging Society
- 30** Department News
- 30** Faculty Changes
- 33** Awards & Honours

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HEAD LINES

Message from the Department Head



Spring is always a special time in the department as we celebrate learners who are completing their programs, prepare to welcome new students, and recognize many award recipients for their achievements.

We also look forward to two exciting events happening this summer.

The Centre for Global Mental Health's first conference is taking place online on July 10. [Mental Health Responses in a Changing World 2026: Innovative Responses to Humanitarian Emergencies](#), will include a keynote presentation, panel discussion, and breakout sessions featuring researchers and community partners. Registration is open until July 8 and I hope you can join us.

Our annual [Summer Celebration](#) is taking place on July 19 at the St. Mary's Boat Club. This event is a great opportunity to connect with your colleagues and get to know some people outside of your regular professional circle. I hope you can join us for a BBQ and a fun-filled day of activities for all.

Program staff and directors are also preparing to welcome new learners into our programs. We will welcome a new cohort of psychiatry residents

in July, and in September, new cohorts of MSc and PhD students in Psychiatry Research, and the first-ever cohort for our new Master of Clinical Psychiatry and Global Mental Health.

In the spring, we hosted an annual continuing education conference, introduced a new course to department faculty members, continued learner engagement sessions, and held an annual celebration of education.

On April 24, we hosted our annual W.O. McCormick Academic Day Conference titled "Bridging the Silos: Comprehensive Care for Individuals with Persistent Psychotic Disorders." As every year, it was a successful event and I want to take this opportunity to thank the organizers, planning committee, speakers, and all who attended.

We delivered a new course to department faculty members over two sessions this spring. "[Building Cultural Competence for Mental Health Equity](#)" concluded with an experiential session held in person on May 1. The course is unique because it was co-developed with the Black and African Nova Scotian communities and provided meaningful opportunities for faculty members to listen to and engage with members of these communities. Our sincere thanks to the organizers, planning committee, community partners, and all faculty members who took time to learn more about this important subject.

This spring I continued my annual engagement sessions with residents. These sessions always provide valuable insights into the learner experience and are important check-ins.

The annual year-end celebration of education was held on June

19 where we recognized and celebrated learners who are completing their programs. We were also proud to recognize some faculty, residents, and graduate students during an annual awards presentation at the event. Congratulations to the following recipients of residents' choice and resident awards: Dr. **Deborah Parker** (Teacher of the Year Award); Chad Morash (Above and Beyond Award); Dr. **Mark Bosma** (PGY-5 Excellence Award); Dr. **Christie McClelland** (Junior Mentorship Award); Dr. **Michelle MacDonald** (Senior Mentorship Award); Dr. **Abigale MacLellan** (Junior Resident Professionalism Award); Dr. **Mitchell Mammel** (Senior Resident Professionalism Award); Dr. **Anthony Hinde** (Clerks' Choice Award); Dr. **Neha Khanna** (Horizon Health Network Saint John Zone PGY-1 Resident of the Year Award); Drs. **Mariska Silas** and **Dana Wiens** (Dr. Charles J. David Memorial Prize in Psychiatry); Dr. **Natasha Glover** (Dr. Herb Orlik Child & Adolescent Psychiatry Resident Award); Dr. **Anthony Hinde** (Geriatric Psychiatry Resident Award); Dr. **Lauren Miller** (Dr. Harris Lee Barton Scholarship); Drs. **Dana Wiens** and **Abigale MacLellan** (Dr. Robert and Stella Weil Fund in Psychiatry Prize); Drs. **Jasmyn Cunningham** and **Mitchell Mammel** (Dr. W.O. McCormick Award); and, Drs. **Louise Moodie** and **Anthony Hinde** (Alexander H. Leighton Resident of the Year Award).

During the year-end celebration, we also had the opportunity to recognize two graduate students with awards for outstanding achievement in their respective programs. Congratulations to: **Daniel Basso** (Dr. Benjamin Rusak Graduate Student Award (Masters)) and Dr. **Jasmyn Cunningham** (Dr. Patrick McGrath Graduate Student Award (Doctoral)).

We also wish good luck to the nine psychiatry research graduate students who are preparing to defend their thesis or dissertation this summer.

Congratulations to the following graduate students on their recent achievements: **Pierre-Olivier Couture** (honourable mention for Best Student Poster at the International Conference of Deprescribing); **Nora Connolly** (CIHR Canada Graduate Research Scholarship – Masters’ (CGRS-M)), **Lee-Ann Olmstead** (Dr. Patrick Madore Traineeship – Faculty of Medicine Graduate Studies Studentship Program), **Somto Henry** (trainee travel award from the Canadian Black Scholars Network); and, **Christina Simms** (cross-node placement award from the Canadian Research Initiative in Substance Matters (CRISM)).

Several International Fellows are completing their fellowship training this spring and summer. Congratulations to: Drs. **Mahera Al Suqri**, **Lama Alhomayin**, **Al-Khatib Al-Saadi**, and **Caleb Otu-Ansah**.

On the research side, department members are making important connections with the Indigenous community and we’re highlighting this work in this edition of Headlines, along with other notable research projects and achievements.

Department members continue to be successful in securing grants and publishing papers. Congratulations to Dr. **Phil Tibbo**, Dr. **Sherry Stewart**, Dr. **George Robertson**, Dr. **Ejemai Eboreime**, Dr. **Lara Hazelton**, Dr. **Adewale Raji**, **Mandy Eslinger**, Dr. **Mark Bosma**, Dr. **Alexandra Manning**, Dr. **Pippa Moss**, Dr. **Lori Wozney**, Dr. **Selene Etches**, Dr. **Sandra Meier**, Dr. **Alexa Bagnell**, and Dr. **Jill Chorney**.

As you’ll see in this Headlines edition, we are also highlighting an interesting Research in Medicine project focused on a pioneering psychiatrist – Dr. Elizabeth Kilpatrick.

We were pleased to welcome the following new faculty members to the department: Drs. **Champion Seun-Fadipe**, **John Carroll**, and **Archana Unnikrishnan**. We are also saying farewell to Drs. **Adekunle Bamidele**, **Reza Rostami**, **Gail Eskes**, and **Curt Peters**.

Our bi-annual meeting was held on May 5 where we presented departmental dedicated service, leadership, and mentorship awards. Congratulations to: Drs. **Mahmoud Awara** and **Kim Good** (2026 Dr. Aidan Stokes Mentorship Award); Dr. **Gail Eskes** (Dedicated Service Award); Dr. **Alexa Bagnell** (Leadership Award); and, Dr. **Keri-Leigh Cassidy** and **Parisa Abdi Sabouhi** (Special Recognition Award).

During the event, we also presented Dr. **Abdel Wahab Mershati** with a Dedicated Service Award posthumously. We were honoured to have Dr. Mershati’s family attend to accept the award.

The following faculty members were recognized with Faculty of Medicine awards at its Annual Faculty Meeting. Congratulations to: Drs. **Alexandra Manning** (Early Career

Educator Award); **Sarah Fancy** (Early Career Award of Excellence in Clinical Practice); **Cinera Cartwright** (Dr. Allan Cohen Memorial Award for Community Service); and, **Ejemai Eboreime** (Award for Excellence in Research Mentorship – Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion).

We also congratulate the Strongest Families Institute for obtaining certification for their app through the Mental Health Commission of Canada assessment framework; Dr. **Patricia Lingley-Pottie** for being named one of Atlantic Canada’s Top 50 CEOs; Dr. **Abraham (Rami) Rudnick** for receiving a certificate of appreciation from Autism Nova Scotia; Dr. **Shazia Hashmi** for receiving the department’s Extra Mile Award; Dr. **Pamela Arenella** for receiving a department Special Recognition Award; and, Dr. **Curt Peters** for receiving a department Dedicated Service Award.

Thanks to all who helped make it a great spring in the department. Enjoy the summer, everyone.

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

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Follow the **Centre for Global Mental Health** [HERE](#).

On the **Cover**

Year-End Celebration of Education

The annual Department of Psychiatry Year-End Celebration was held on June 19 at the Halifax Marriott Harbourfront Hotel. The event is a celebration of education and an opportunity to honour teachers and learners in the department.

Congratulations to the award recipients, graduating psychiatry residents, and graduate students defending their thesis or dissertation this summer!

Graduate student awards

- Dr. Benjamin Rusak Graduate Student Award (Masters): **Daniel Basso**
- Dr. Patrick McGrath Graduate Student Award (Doctoral): **Dr. Jasmyn Cunningham**

- Geriatric Psychiatry Resident Award: **Dr. Anthony Hinde**
- Dr. Harris Lee Barton Scholarship: **Dr. Lauren Miller**
- Dr. Robert and Stella Weil Fund in Psychiatry Prize: **Drs. Dana Wiens and Abigale MacLellan**

- Dr. W.O. McCormick Award: **Drs. Jasmyn Cunningham and Mitchell Mammel**
- Alexander H. Leighton Resident of the Year Award: **Drs. Louise Moodie and Anthony Hinde**

Resident choice awards

- Teacher of the Year Award: **Dr. Deborah Parker**
- Above and Beyond Award: **Chad Morash**
- PGY-5 Excellence Award: **Dr. Mark Bosma**
- Junior Mentorship Award: **Dr. Christie McClelland**
- Senior Mentorship Award: **Dr. Michelle MacDonald**
- Junior Resident Professionalism Award: **Dr. Abigale MacLellan**
- Senior Resident Professionalism Award: **Dr. Mitchell Mammel**



Residents at the year-end celebration on June 19, 2026. Photos by Zuya Production.

Resident awards

- Clerks' Choice Award: **Dr. Anthony Hinde**
- Horizon Health Network Saint John Zone PGY-1 Resident of the Year Award: **Dr. Neha Khanna**
- Dr. Charles J. David Memorial Prize in Psychiatry: **Drs. Mariska Silas and Dana Wiens**
- Dr. Herb Orlik Child & Adolescent Psychiatry Resident Award: **Dr. Natasha Glover**



Graduate students with program coordinators and the department head at the year-end celebration.

Director of Research connects with Indigenous community about cannabis use and youth and young adult mental health

Dr. **Phil Tibbo**, Director of Research for Psychiatry and Dr. Paul Janssen Chair in Psychotic Disorders, presented “Cannabis, Brain and Youth/Young Adult Mental Health” at the Eskasoni Health Centre’s Annual General Meeting on Friday, April 24, 2026.

He was invited by the Director of Eskasoni Health to speak at the AGM after speaking at a meeting of the Mi’kmaq Chiefs and their Councils in summer 2025 about cannabis and psychosis.

Being invited by the Eskasoni Mi’kmaq community was truly an honour, says Dr. Tibbo. The opportunity to speak to them about a significant cannabis health concern allowed direct knowledge translation and dissemination of the research that my team and I do, and others, in the cannabis sphere, he says.

“The community was very welcoming and very much engaged in discussing this topic. They are truly committed in ensuring the best health possible for their youth.”

In addition to Dr. Tibbo, the event hosted three other speakers. Among them was Senator Dr. Mary Jane McCallum, a Crew woman who in addition to her professional endeavours, shares her personal experience as a residential school survivor to raise awareness and understanding.

Dr. Tibbo is grateful for opportunities to discuss the work we do at Dalhousie and Nova Scotia Health and to share his research with the public and in communities.



Speakers at the Eskasoni Health Centre’s 2026 AGM included Dr. Phil Tibbo, Senator Dr. May Jane McCallum, Dr. Megan Thomas (pediatrician), and Sean Collins (EHS).

His message around cannabis use and youth and young adult mental health is important for all youth and young adults and the communities they live in. His take home messages focus on education for this age group to help them make decisions that are right for them. This includes:

- Minimizing daily or almost daily cannabis use;
- Try to delay using cannabis (as the effects are more significant the younger one starts); and,
- To minimize the potency of product being used.

“The cannabis product our youth are exposed to today is not the same product as 10-15 years ago, as we see the THC potency continue to increase,” he says.



Dr. Phil Tibbo presents “Cannabis, Brain and Youth/Young Adult Mental Health” at the Eskasoni Health Centre’s Annual General Meeting on Friday, April 24, 2026.

New research project draws on two-eyed seeing and storytelling to identify Mi'kmaw youth perspectives on cannabis use, motivations, and impacts on wellness

Department researchers were recently awarded a CIHR Catalyst (Partnering for Impact) grant for their project “*Mi'kmaw Storytelling on Cannabis Use Amongst Youth.*” Those involved include department members Dr. **Phil Tibbo** (principal applicant) and Dr. **Sherry Stewart**, along with other Dalhousie researchers, and engagement from Mi'kmaw organizations and communities in Nova Scotia.

The project responds directly to priorities raised by Mi'kmaq leadership, Health Directors, and Elders, and builds upon discussions initiated during the June 2025 Mi'kmaw Nationhood Conference between Mi'kmaw leadership, cannabis researchers (PT (NPA)) and the Canadian Research Initiative in Substance Matters (CRISM) – Atlantic. At this unique gathering it was identified the need for the strengthening of research partnerships, in a Two-Eyed Seeing and Indigenous Storywork approach, to identify current Mi'kmaw youth perspectives on cannabis use, motivations, and impacts on wellness.

Cannabis has been legalized in Canada for recreational use since 2018. The 2024 Canadian Cannabis Survey reported past 12-month recreational cannabis use were the highest in the 20–24-year-old age group followed by the 16–19-year-old age group and of those who use, 20% of 16–19-year-olds use on a daily or almost daily basis. Research has also indicated that rates of cannabis use are actually higher in Indigenous youth in Canada, compared to non-Indigenous youth. Cannabis use and its effects on youth mental wellness are urgent concerns across Mi'kmaw communities in Nova Scotia.

In collaboration with Advisory Councils of Mi'kmaw Leadership, Health Directors, and Elders, community-based youth engagement through Indigenous Storywork will occur in each of the 13 Mi'kmaw communities and the Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre (urban) in NS. Expected outcomes include strengthened community health systems, youth-informed prevention resources, and enhanced collaboration between Mi'kmaw communities and academic institutions. Findings will lay the foundation for future implementation projects and sustained wellness programming.

The project is unique in its strong partnerships with the Mi'kmaw community in Nova Scotia. One of the strengths outlined by the grant's application reviewers was the engagement with the Mi'kmaw community:

“A key strength of this proposal is its Mi'kmaw-researcher partnerships. It is significant that the proposal was “co-written with initial drafts written by Tajikeimik – Mi'kmaw Health and Wellness, to ensure direction, methodology and ownership of the project lies within the Mi'kmaw communities and their youth.” Furthermore, it appears exceptional that the research team is also supported by the full Mi'kmaw community in Nova Scotia, including respective Mi'kmaw health directors, health transformation leadership, Chiefs, and school board, as indicated by the many strong letters of support. In addition, it also appears very positive that communities and organizations engaged include the urban Halifax Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre as well as all 13 Mi'kmaw communities in Nova Scotia.”

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

Submit your abstract [HERE](#) by Noon on August 28.

Registration will open on September 1.

Research spotlight: Nose-to-Brain Delivery of IRX4204 to Promote Functional Recovery After an Ischemic Stroke

Funder: Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada

Project Title: Nose-to-Brain Delivery of IRX4204 to Promote Functional Recovery After an Ischemic Stroke

Primary Investigator: George S. Robertson, PhD

Co-applicants: Timothy Kennedy, PhD Montreal Neurological Institute, McGill University; Marianna Foldvari, PhD School of Pharmacy, University of Waterloo

Total Funding: \$373,000

Award Duration: July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2030

Project Summary: The most common type of stroke, ischemic stroke, is caused by a blood clot which blocks a major blood vessel in the brain. This rapidly kills many different types of brain cells that form a complex structure called the neurovascular unit. Like a choir singing in close harmony, these cells

must work together to rapidly adjust blood flow in response to increased brain activity. This suggests that to effectively reduce long-lasting disabilities after a stroke, it is crucial to repair the neurovascular unit. To achieve this goal, we have identified a new drug called IRX4204 that activates many genes which repair the neurovascular unit. However, IRX4204 does not readily enter the brain and may cause unwanted effects by acting on cells outside of the brain. To improve the safety and effectiveness of IRX4204, we will develop a nose-to-brain delivery system that selectively targets and releases IRX4204 in damaged brain tissues. A further advantage is the convenience of taking a drug in the form of a nasal spray. Our goals are to first identify an optimal nose-to-brain IRX4204 delivery system and then determine if it safely and effectively improves the recovery of mice after an experimental stroke by repairing the neurovascular unit.

PUBLICATIONS

- **Liebenberg, L.**, Simmonds, T., Johannesson, TL., **Eborieme, E.**, & Youth researchers from Spaces&Places for Youth Well-being (2026). A Participatory Action Research Qualitative Thematic Analysis of Young Men's Perspectives on Well-being and Flourishing. *Discover Public Health*. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12982-026-01739-y>

GRANTS

- Principal investigator: Dr. **Ejemai Eborieme** “*Culturally-Adapted Artificial Intelligence for Mental Health Support in Forcibly Displaced Communities.*” Co-principal investigator: Orji, Rita; Co-applicants: Okpani, Arnold; **Liebenberg, Linda**; Obi-Jeff, Chisom; Mbakogu, Ifeyinwa; **Agyapong, Vincent**; Idemili-Aronu, Ngozi; Government of Canada’s New Frontiers in Research Fund (NFRF).

Research in Medicine project focuses on pioneering psychiatrist Dr. Elizabeth Kilpatrick

Fiona Conway, a medical student at Dalhousie Medicine New Brunswick, completed a historical project “Dr. Elizabeth Kilpatrick: historical perspectives,” supervised by faculty member Dr. **Lara Hazelton**. The project looked at an archive the late Dr. Elizabeth Kilpatrick left to Dalhousie containing her research, academic records, some of her personal writings and mementos, and other documents.

Dr. Kilpatrick was the first woman to graduate from Dalhousie Medical School and was an interesting figure in Horneyan psychoanalysis. After graduation from Dalhousie, Dr. Kilpatrick trained in psychoanalysis and practiced in New York until she retired to Halifax in the 1960s. Dr. R. O. Jones, who established the Dalhousie Department of Psychiatry, persuaded Dr. Kilpatrick to provide psychotherapy training for the residents on a part-time basis in the Victoria General Hospital Outpatient Department. The Kilpatrick Fund was established after her death, and it continues to support psychiatry residents in our department.

As part of her project, Fiona wrote a short story reflecting on who the person who created this unique archive might have been and presented it at the Creating Space Health Humanities Conference in April 2026.

Fiona shared with us what inspired her to pursue this project and what she learned about Dr. Kilpatrick.

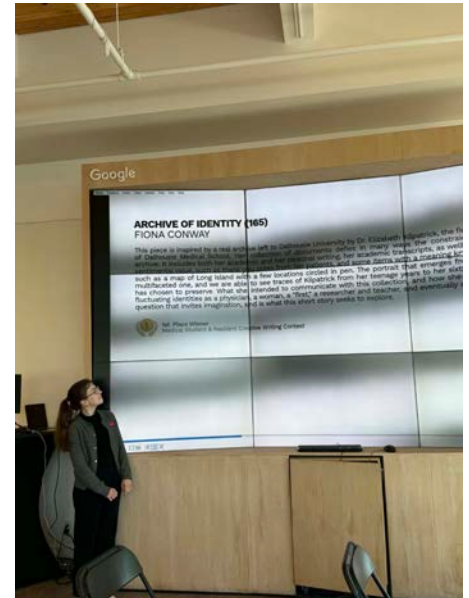
Dal Psychiatry: What inspired you to do your project on Dr. Kilpatrick?

Fiona Conway: In med 1 I had reached out to Dr. Hazelton asking

if she knew of any potential projects related to history, which is what I had studied prior to medicine. She suggested exploring the Dr. Kilpatrick archive, as it contains a lot of documents and hasn't been studied extensively, and, as the first woman to graduate from Dal Med, Dr. Kilpatrick was an interesting figure in the school's history. The more time I spent reading through the documents Dr. Kilpatrick gave to the university, the more I was struck by the unique nature of the archive: it contains notes from patients, her personal academic transcripts, correspondence with prominent psychoanalysts like Karen Horney, a long unpublished essay on Anna Freud, and other intriguing documents. There's a sense of a mind that emerges from this collection, and I started to wonder what Elizabeth Kilpatrick was like as a person.

DP: What inspired you to write a short story for the project instead of another format?

FC: Many of the questions I had about Dr. Kilpatrick weren't things I could address through traditional scientific or historic analysis, and I think that is often where creative writing can be a useful lens to explore the world around us. The archive contains several decades worth of Dr. Kilpatrick's life, and reference to a few different titles or identities she held. I became interested in what that might have felt like for her, whether she cared about the label of “first” as it pertained to her graduating medicine as a woman, how she felt about her students calling her “the good mother.” There's a Wendy Cope



Fiona Conway presented her short story about Dr. Kilpatrick at the Creating Space Health Humanities Conference in April 2026.

poem called “Names” that inspired the structure of the short story I wrote, which traces Dr. Kilpatrick's life through different names and identities she held.

DP: Why is it important to reflect on medical history and learn about early medical pioneers? What can this exercise teach us today?

FC: Much of medical education is an apprenticeship model — we learn by watching the ones who came before us. Everything from the physical structure of a clinic, to the format of a patient's history, to the maneuvers used in a physical exam is the legacy of a person from history. In order to understand why our field looks the way it does today it's important that we keep seeing medical figures from the past as *people* with all the complexity we know in ourselves and our patients. Late in her career, Dr. Kilpatrick had

a role in bringing psychoanalytic traditions to Dalhousie's Department of Psychiatry, an impact that still has some echoes today. Seeing her as a full person — someone who got a B in chemistry and kept thank you notes from her patients for decades — lets us appreciate her remarkable life's work without the sheen of hagiography.

DP: What did you learn about Dr. Kilpatrick that you found most interesting? What did you learn that was unexpected or that you found surprising?

FC: Something I found surprising is that Dr. Kilpatrick is originally from Sydney Mines, a tiny town in Cape Breton. I don't know what would inspire a girl from rural Nova Scotia to go to university in the 1910s, let alone to become the first woman at Dalhousie Medicine. It's a part of her own story she didn't leave many clues about and it's a question about her I keep coming back to. I wonder what her first impressions were of Halifax and New York, after growing up somewhere much quieter; and, I wonder what her family and friends from back home thought of the path her life took. I wonder how she would feel about there being a medical school campus on Cape Breton today, if that was an option for her education she had hoped for when she was younger. I'm also curious if that part of the town's history is known by the people there today — there's part of me that wants to edit the Wikipedia page for Sydney Mines to include Dr. Kilpatrick as a notable figure from the town's past!

DP: If you could choose one thing you learned about Dr. Kilpatrick that you would want others to know, what would it be?

FC: I would encourage anyone interested to read her paper "What is effective in the therapeutic process" which has been digitized at the Dalhousie Libraries. This is a short paper that explains

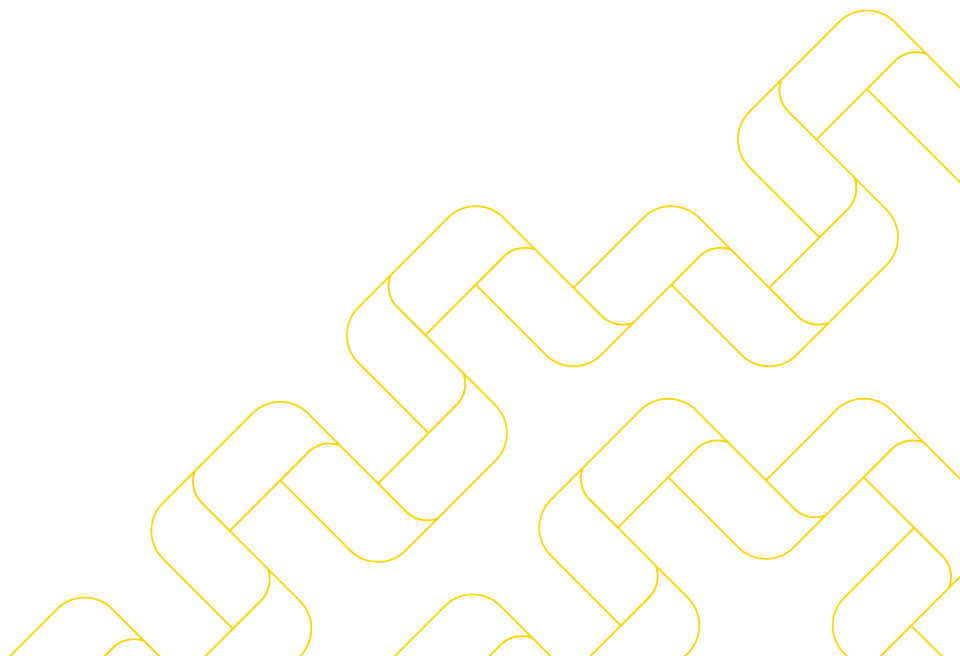
her philosophy as a clinician and some of the cases that were most impactful to her. While some of the situations she navigated are time-period specific, I think there is still a lot in her writing that could prompt reflection for a clinician today!

DP: What was your experience of presenting this work at the Creating Space Health Humanities Conference like?

FC: It was really fun! The theme of the conference was around identity and healthcare, and this project fit very well with that theme. People I spoke with about Dr. Kilpatrick often had stories about the "firsts" at their own institutions and in their own fields, or reflections about their own shifting identities throughout a career in medicine.

DP: Is there anything else you would like to add?

FC: I'd like to add a thank you to Dr. Hazelton for her help with this project and for pointing out this archive as an interesting space for study!



UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION NEWS

Join us as a tutor for 2026/2027 undergraduate sessions

We're on the lookout for enthusiastic tutors to join our team for the upcoming undergraduate teaching sessions. If you're interested in participating or haven't yet added

your preferences to your IPP, there's still time to sign up! Reach out to us at Psych.Undergrad@dal.ca to get involved.

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

From June 2-5, 2026, we were delighted to host six Med 1 students from both campuses of Dalhousie's Medical School for our annual Summer Internship in Psychiatry (SIIP). Throughout the week, these students had the invaluable opportunity to delve deeper

into the field of psychiatry. They engaged with psychiatrists from various specialties, interacted with psychiatry residents, and connected with allied health professionals. The program included interactive educational sessions, interview skills practice, clinical elective

placements, and social events with our residents. A special thank you goes out to the resident planning committee for their outstanding effort and dedication in organizing this enriching experience!

Med 2 Skilled Clinician process

We are preparing for the fall 2026 Skilled Clinician 2 (SC2) course. As in previous years, SC2 will run in three, four-week blocks, starting August 27 and ending November 12.

Thank you to all faculty who have already signed up for these three blocks. We still have opportunities available for faculty interested in teaching SC2 during the first block.

Finalizing core clerks master rotation schedule for 2026/27

We're excited to announce that the master rotation schedule for the 2026/27 academic year has now been finalized. With an increased number of Med 3 students projected for the upcoming year,

we're pleased to confirm that four active distributed sites — Amherst, Kentville, Truro, and Yarmouth — will continue to provide diverse and comprehensive educational opportunities.

Med 4 elective process

All Med 4 students from Dalhousie, other Canadian universities, and international institutions can apply for psychiatry electives through the AFMC portal. The portal opened on May 25 for Dalhousie students

to submit their elective requests for 2026/27. We thank all services and faculty who have supported the placement of these elective requests.

Celebrating our graduating residents!

We would like to congratulate our graduates and wish them the very best in their future practice.



Dr. Talia Bond

What was your favourite memory from your residency? Our royal college study group! Keeping each other on track studying, having fun, and seeing how much we learned and grew together.

What is one piece of advice you'd give to an incoming PGY-1? Always make time for your family, friends, and hobbies outside of residency no matter how busy things get! They are what will keep you energized and fill your cup even during difficult times.

Where will you be working after residency? I'm continuing on in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry subspecialty training here at Dalhousie University!

Who was a mentor of yours during residency? How did they help support your development as a psychiatrist? I have been so fortunate to have had so many

incredible mentors throughout my entire residency experience! While I can't name them all, Dr. Ali Manning, Dr. Donna Davis, Dr. Sarah Fancy, and Dr. Kate Stymiest were all especially helpful in supporting my transition to residency, exploring different career paths, and throughout my journey to Child Psychiatry!

What is your next big adventure? The residency adventure continues with Child Psychiatry training! (Also a trip to Costa Rica for some rain forest exploring and volcano hiking!)

When you look back at your residency training, what is the most important thing you learned? How important a good support system and lifestyle factors are for overall wellness!

Bonus question: What was your favourite part of residency? My favourite part of residency was all the friends, colleagues, and people along the way! From the lifelong friendships (and found family!) with my co-residents, to the incredible mentors, staff, faculty, and interdisciplinary team members I've had the incredible privilege to work with and learn from, I am so grateful.



Dr. Niamh Campbell

What was your favourite memory from your residency? One of our retreats, when my co-residents brought their instruments and serenaded us.

What is one piece of advice you'd give to an incoming PGY-1? Make an effort to maintain interests outside of work and be kind to yourself.

Where will you be working after residency? I am completing a one-year fellowship in Forensic Psychiatry at McMaster University and then plan to return to Nova Scotia.

Who was a mentor of yours during residency? How did they help support your development as a psychiatrist? Many people have impacted my development during residency, and I've taken different lessons from different mentors. What I found most helpful were those who supported me in developing my own style as a psychiatrist based on my personal strengths, for which I am very grateful.

What is your next big adventure? Moving to Hamilton!

When you look back at your residency training, what is the most important thing you learned? There are many different ways to be an effective psychiatrist. I learned the importance of balancing efforts to improve your weaknesses while also recognizing and building on your unique strengths.



Dr. Jill Forbes

What was your favourite memory from your residency? Attending the APA conference in San Francisco with my co-residents and driving down the beautiful California coast.

What is one piece of advice you'd give to an incoming PGY-1? Don't start residency at the same time as a global pandemic.

Where will you be working after residency? I plan to return to my favourite place — Prince Edward Island.

Who was a mentor of yours during residency? How did they help support your development as a psychiatrist? It's difficult to choose only one person, but working with Dr. Curt Peters at Simpson Landing was a great learning experience. His calm demeanour, patience, and collaborative attitude set a great example for me.

What is your next big adventure? I haven't thought that far ahead. Hopefully something involving a warm tropical location.

When you look back at your residency training, what is the most important thing you learned? How fortunate I am.



Dr. Lauren Haslam

What was your favourite memory from your residency? All the laughter with co-residents and co-workers!

What is one piece of advice you'd give to an incoming PGY-1? Make time for your personal relationships and work-life balance.

Where will you be working after residency? Hopefully in the Halifax area after finishing fellowship!

Who was a mentor of yours during residency? How did they help support your development as a psychiatrist? Dr. Meagan MacNeil — detail oriented and strong communicator! She supported my learning through providing detailed discussion around patient cases and treatment rationale.

What is your next big adventure? Visiting my friend's family near Gros Mourné!

When you look back at your residency training, what is the most important thing you learned? How to connect to and communicate with patients presenting with an array of interpersonal styles, particularly those presenting with high expressed emotion.

Bonus question: What are your plans for the summer? Looking forward to the warm weather and spending time in PEI during a rural geriatric psychiatry elective in August!



Dr. Julia LeBlanc

What was your favourite memory from your residency? Some of my favourite memories are weekends away with my cohort. We have laughed so much together throughout our five years of residency, and I will miss them a lot as we all go our separate ways!

What is one piece of advice you'd give to an incoming PGY-1? Don't be afraid to ask questions! The increase in clinical responsibility from med school to residency can be intimidating and imposter syndrome can make it feel as though asking questions might make you appear not knowledgeable enough, but you are here to learn and the more curious you are, the better psychiatrist you will become.

Where will you be working after residency? I will be starting my PGY-6 year of subspecialty training in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at Dalhousie.

Who was a mentor of yours during residency? How did they help support your development as a psychiatrist? I've had so many different mentors at different stages throughout my training. Some mentors that come to mind include Dr. Sarah Fancy, who taught me, through modelling and wise words, the skill of persevering in the face of non-response to treatment, and Dr. John Aspin & Amy Jones, who encouraged and supported me in becoming a stronger family therapist. Dr. Sabina Abidi has also been an important mentor this past year, always providing encouragement, support and the wisest advice.

What is your next big adventure? I will be going on maternity leave in September and embarking on the adventure of motherhood!

When you look back at your residency training, what is the most important thing you learned? To always remain open to feedback and new ways of approaching problems.



Dr. Mitchell Mammel

What is one piece of advice you'd give to an incoming PGY-1? Mix life and work, and do both well; read/study above your year, but make sure to enjoy things at the same time.

Where will you be working after residency? Part time at a regional ADHD clinic in Vancouver, providing virtual care for Nova Scotia, and locuming in rural hospitals in northern BC.

Who was a mentor of yours during residency? How did they help support your development as a psychiatrist? There have been a number, all in their own ways. Dr. Donna Davis, Dr. Nunes, Dr. Flynn, and Dr. Saleh have all taught me a variety of lessons about excellence in patient care, interest in ECT, interest in more broad neuromodulation (rTMS/Ketamine), and preparation for my transition to staffhood and independent practice.



Dr. Anastasia McCarvill

What was your favourite memory from your residency? Too hard to pick one moment! Getting to bond and work with so many great co-residents over the years is the highlight reel!

What is one piece of advice you'd give to an incoming PGY-1? Have relationships, activities, and goals outside of residency that bring you joy and meaning.

Where will you be working after residency? We haven't totally decided where we want to land, so I plan to do a little of this and that, and locum in different parts of Canada.

Who was a mentor of yours during residency? How did they help support your development as a psychiatrist? Dr. Shiloh Gossen — Shiloh is such a well-rounded physician, amazing teacher and friend. She thoughtfully cultivates relationships with colleagues, learners and patients. She truly leads by example.

What is your next big adventure? Taking my 1 and 3 year old to Vancouver this summer to run the Seawheeze half marathon :D

When you look back at your residency training, what is the most important thing you learned? The answer to almost everything is mindful acceptance.



Dr. Julie Munich

What was your favourite memory from your residency? It's hard to pick one! Many of my favourite memories are of spending time with my cohort, especially going on fun trips like to Lunenburg.

What is one piece of advice you'd give to an incoming PGY-1? You've got this! There are times where it is hard but I found it was outweighed by the good times, and it only gets better.

Where will you be working after residency? I hope to work rurally, especially Whitehorse if they'll have me!

What is your next big adventure? I'm doing my CAP Fellowship at UBC which has so far been a fantastic adventure. It is so exciting working in a new place and working with such an amazing population.



Dr. Cameron Taylor

What was your favourite memory from your residency? There are several favourite memories from the last five years, including several involving fun activities done with my fellow residents in our cohort. Having a weekend away at a cottage with the eight of us in our year and our significant others stands out, as well as pizza making (and eating) parties, and movie nights. From a more clinical perspective, the opportunity to go with my patients to a camp for a few days while working at Psycho-Social Rehab was quite special and memorable.

What is one piece of advice you'd give to an incoming PGY-1? I think it's important to be realistic with the challenges through the first year of residency and residency as a whole. Off-service rotations can be especially difficult. Call, even when on service, is always going to be challenging to some extent. Our day-to-day job often involves coming alongside people on their worst days. Studying for Royal College Exams is going to be stressful. Trying to figure out what your career is going to look like after residency is also going to be at least a bit nerve-wracking. Residency is not easy, but it is doable.

The other residents in your cohort, and in the other years, are probably also going through similar things, so don't be embarrassed about the hard times. Even when it's not easy, it is still worth it, and you're more than up to the challenge.

Where will you be working after residency? South Shore Regional Hospital Mental Health In-patients in Bridgewater.

Who was a mentor of yours during residency? How did they help support your development as a psychiatrist? A number of individuals have helped me develop as a psychiatrist. Every encounter I've had over the last five years, whether on a specific rotation, while on call, lectures, exams, committees, research, with staff psychiatrists, nurses, social workers, occupational therapists, recreation therapists, other learners, has been an opportunity to learn and develop in some way, whether I knew it or not at the time. For that, I am so very grateful to everyone I've worked with over the course of residency. Some individuals and groups stand out of course, generally due to the length of time spent working with them. These would include Dr. Peters and the whole of the team at Simpson Landing, Dr. Sridharan and the whole of the team on Short Stay, Dr. Parker, and of course the whole team down in PES — which is probably where I've spent the most clinical hours during residency when I tally up all those call shifts.

What is your next big adventure? Starting a career as a staff psychiatrist feels like a pretty big adventure at this point.



Dr. Alec Watts

What was your favourite memory from your residency? Probably the time our entire cohort ran full speed into the ocean at 10 p.m. during our annual resident retreat, then warmed up by the fire under the stars.

What is one piece of advice you'd give to an incoming PGY-1? You don't have to have it all figured out right away. Trust your intuition, lean into the process, and make time for self-care.

Where will you be working after residency? Next year, I'll be continuing subspecialty training in geriatric psychiatry. After that, it's anyone's guess!

Who was a mentor of yours during residency? How did they help support your development as a psychiatrist? Every staff member I worked with contributed to my development in some way. I'd like to give special recognition to Dr. Robichaud and the geriatric psychiatry team for their kindness and encouragement to practice psychiatry in a way that is both sustainable and authentic.

What is your next big adventure? Along with celebrating my niece's first birthday out west, I hope to visit Newfoundland to see Gros Morne and puffins!

When you look back at your residency training, what is the most important thing you learned? Sometimes, the only way out is through. The most difficult moments can also provide the best opportunities for growth and self-discovery.

Bonus question: Is pickleball a dangerous sport? Incredibly so. Don't say I didn't warn you!



Dr. Kara Yeung

What was your favourite memory from your residency? Study group for Royal College exams was a weekly favourite memory! Meeting in parks, backyards, and the beach (and of course a sticker chart) made it the best study experience!

What is one piece of advice you'd give to an incoming PGY-1? Find a community to do residency with. The friends and people you meet will make all the difference moving forward!

Where will you be working after residency? I'm continuing with my Child & Adolescent Psychiatry Subspecialty program here at Dalhousie for another year.

Who was a mentor of yours during residency? How did they help support your development as a psychiatrist? There are so many people who were important parts of my journey in supporting me — a big thank you to everybody. A special shout out to Dr. Manning, Dr. Robichaud, Dr. Cumming, Dr. Stymiest, and Dr. Davis!

What is your next big adventure? The adventure of child and adolescent psychiatry training!

When you look back at your residency training, what is the most important thing you learned? To make time and prioritize your hobbies and life outside of residency.

Bonus question: What's the best ice cream in HRM? The strawberry matcha ice cream in Eastern Passage!

Chief Resident appreciation

The residency program would like to extend our sincere thanks to our outgoing Chief Residents, Dr. **Anthony Hinde** and Dr. **Louise Moodie**. Their leadership, advocacy, and commitment to supporting their co-residents and the program have been deeply appreciated and have made a meaningful impact on our residency community.

We are very pleased to welcome our incoming Chief Resident, Dr. **Qëndresa Sahiti**, who previously served as Associate Chief Resident. We look forward to Dr. Sahiti's continued leadership and the thoughtful, collaborative approach she brings to the role. We are also excited to welcome Dr. **Alyson Zwicker** as our Associate Chief Resident and newest member of the team.

2026/27 Chief Residents



Dr. Qëndresa Sahiti

Dr. Qëndresa Sahiti — Chief Resident

"After serving as Associate Chief Resident alongside stellar Co-Chiefs Anthony and Louise, I'm excited to serve as Chief Resident for the 2026-2027 academic year. I have trained at Dalhousie since my undergraduate days, and I am passionate about making this the best place to work and learn. I want to continue to highlight the strengths and opportunities of our residency body, of which there are many! I look forward to supporting residents and leadership toward our shared goal of accreditation and working to address areas for improvement. One of my goals in the upcoming year is to prioritize resident wellness and foster resident engagement in departmental activities. I'm looking forward to a great year ahead!"



Dr. Alyson Zwicker

Dr. Alyson Zwicker — Associate Chief Resident

"I'm excited to be entering the role of Associate Chief Resident for the upcoming year! I grew up in the Department of Psychiatry at Dalhousie throughout my PhD, postdoctoral fellowship, and medical school and I know that this is an amazing place to learn. I hope to build upon Louise, Anthony, and Qëndresa's hard work and contribute to the strong sense of community among residents. In this role, I'm looking forward to working with the resident body and program leadership to move towards accreditation!"

Call for faculty mentors

The residency program is seeking faculty members interested in serving as mentors to our psychiatry residents. Mentorship plays a vital role in supporting residents' professional development, career exploration, scholarly pursuits, and overall wellbeing throughout training.

Whether you are an experienced mentor or interested in becoming involved for the first time, we would welcome your participation. Mentors can be matched with residents based on shared interests and career goals, or more broadly based on stage of training, with expectations designed to be flexible

and rewarding for both mentor and mentee.

If you are interested in becoming a resident mentor or would like more information, please contact Dr. **Michelle MacDonald** at **MichelleA.MacDonald@nshealth.ca**

GRADUATE PROGRAM NEWS

GRADUATE PROGRAMS IN PSYCHIATRY RESEARCH

The Graduate Program in Psychiatry Research is pleased to have nine students preparing to defend their theses and dissertations over the summer months.

- **Akua Agyare (MSc)** – Supervised by *Dr. Patrick McGrath*
- **Daniel Basso (MSc)** – Supervised by *Dr. Sherry Stewart and Dr. Jillian Filliter*
- **Pierre Olivier Couture (MSc)** – Supervised by *Dr. David Gardner*
- **Bronwyn Inness (MSc)** – Supervised by *Dr. Sandra Meier*
- **Lilith Nosko (MSc)** – Supervised by *Dr. Phil Tibbo and Dr. Alissa Pencer*

- **Maxwell Seward (MSc)** – Supervised by *Dr. Kara Dempster and Dr. Derek Fisher*
- **Nami Trappenberg (MSc)** – Supervised by *Dr. Aaron Keshen*
- **Andem Effiong (PhD)** – Supervised by *Dr. Ejemai Eboreime and Dr. Rita Orji*
- **Ashley Francis (PhD)** – Supervised by *Dr. Phil Tibbo and Dr. Derek Fisher*

The program looks forward to supporting these students as they prepare for their thesis/dissertation defenses and to celebrating their convocations in the fall.

Student achievement highlights

The program congratulates **Pierre-Olivier Couture**, who received an honourable mention for Best Student Poster at the International Conference of Deprescribing, in Montreal, Quebec. Pierre-Olivier's poster was based on his in-progress MSc thesis, "*To Stop or Not to Stop? Exploring Personality's Influence on BZRA Discontinuation in the SIMOA (Stopping Insomnia Medications in Older Adults) Study*" being supervised by Dr. **David Gardner**.

The program also congratulates **Nora Connolly** for her success in securing a CIHR Canada Graduate Research Scholarship – Masters' (CGRS-M) to support her first year in the MSc in Psychiatry Research program (supervisor: Dr. **Tomas Hajek**).

Congratulations to **Lee-Ann Olmstead** (supervisors: Dr. **Kara Dempster** and Dr. **Derek Fisher**) on being awarded the Dr. Patrick

Madore Traineeship – Faculty of Medicine Graduate Studies Studentship Program, recognizing her exceptional academic achievement and research potential.

Congratulations to **Somtoo Henry** (supervisor: Dr. **Ejemai Eboreime**) on being awarded a trainee travel award from the Canadian Black Scholars Network to attend BE-STEM 2026, in recognition of her exceptional abstract.

Congratulations to **Christina Simms** (supervisor: Dr. **Sherry Stewart**) on receiving a competitive cross-node placement award from the Canadian Research Initiative in Substance Matters (CRISM). She will be travelling to the University of Manitoba to work with CRISM colleagues with expertise in women's substance use and social media to conduct her MSc independent study on the 'Cannamoms' community on TikTok.

Well done, Pierre-Olivier, Nora, Lee-Ann, Somtoo, and Christina! These are outstanding achievements!

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEWS

2026 W.O. McCormick Academic Day



The conference chair and speakers for the 2026 W.O. McCormick Academic Day. Missing from photo: Dr. Rudolf Uher.

The 2026 W.O. McCormick Academic Day conference “Bridging the Silos: Comprehensive Care for Individuals with Persistent Psychotic Disorders” was held on April 24, 2026 at the Westin Nova Scotian Hotel.

Dr. **Vincent Agyapong**, department head, welcomed over 100 attendees to the event. Jennifer Glennie, deputy minister, Office of Addictions and Mental Health and **Dorothy Edem**, co-director of the Mental Health and Addictions Program (Central Zone), provided opening remarks. Dr. **Cheryl Murphy**, director of continuing professional development and conference chair, introduced the format and provided an overview of the day. The conference was educationally approved/co-sponsored by Dalhousie University Continuing Professional Development and Medical Education.

The day consisted of a full schedule of informative presentations related to the theme. Presentations were:

- Keynote presentation: Disordered/Disorganized Communication and Ways to

Address It, presented Dr. Lena Palaniyappan (McGill University and Douglas Research Centre)

- Early Identification of Risk and Primary Prevention Among Offspring of Parents with Severe Mental Illness, presented by Dr. **Rudolf Uher** (Dalhousie University)
- Keynote presentation: Housing is Health: Addressing Homelessness for People with Mental Disorders, from Policy to Practice, presented by Dr. Vicky Stergiopoulos (Centre for Addiction and Mental Health and University of Toronto)
- Long-Acting Injectables: Practical Use in Everyday Psychiatry, presented by Dr. **Kara Dempster** (Dalhousie University)
- Roundtable Discussion: Challenges and Opportunities in the Comprehensive Care of Individuals Living with Persistent Psychotic Disorders, presented Dr. **Jason Morrison** (Dalhousie University)

- Strengthening the Family System through Families Matter and Affected Ones, presented by Chris McWilliam (Nova Scotia Health)
- Implementing Equity and Diversity in Early Psychosis Care, presented by Krista Ellsworth (Early Psychosis Intervention Nova Scotia)

The day concluded with a panel featuring the day’s speakers to take questions from the audience.

A feedback survey was circulated to all event attendees. Thank you to everyone who attended the event, provided feedback, and thank you to our speakers!

R.O. Jones Memorial Lecture

On May 20, Prof. David Cotter, Professor of Molecular Psychiatry, RCSI, Dublin, presented the R.O. Jones Memorial Lecture. The topic was “Are there biomarkers for psychosis and what might it tell us about potential new treatments?”

Named in honour of the late Dr. Robert Orville Jones, who among his many achievements, founded the Dalhousie Department of Psychiatry in 1949 and was the charter president of the Canadian Psychiatric Association, the R.O. Jones Memorial Lecture is held annually in conjunction with the Atlantic Provinces Psychiatric Association annual conference.

MEDICAL EDUCATION NEWS

Medical education publications:

- **Hazelton, L., Raji, A.,** Connolly, O., **Esliger, M., Bosma, M., Manning, A.,** & Alexiadis-Brown, P. (2026). Tensions and contradictions: Understanding the forces that surround the

creation of a rural psychiatry post-graduate education training site. *Canadian Journal of Rural Medicine*, 31(2), 53. https://doi.org/10.4103/cjrm.cjrm_23_25

Have you published medical education scholarship?

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

Medical education projects presented at International Congress on Academic Medicine

Two medical education projects were presented at the annual International Congress on Academic Medicine (ICAM) held in Ottawa, Ontario in April:

- **Singh, K., Esliger, M., Bosma, M.,** von Maltzahn M., Shearer, C., Rivet, L., & **Murphy, C.** Building Capacity Through Simulation: A Novel Approach to Teaching Capacity Assessment Skills to Geriatric Psychiatry and Geriatric Medicine Residents.
- MacLeod, T., **Connolly, O., Esliger, M., Good, K., Hazelton, L.** Exploring Influences on the Reporting of Bias in Medical Education.

INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM NEWS

Congratulations to the following International Fellows who are completing fellowships:

- Dr. **Mahera Al Suqri**, completing a one-year fellowship in Neuropsychiatry and Psychiatry of Intellectual and Developmental Disability on June 30, 2026 (supervisors Drs. **Mutiati Sulyman** and **Mark Paramall**)
- Dr. **Lama Alhomayin**, completing a one-year fellowship in Sleep Medicine on June 30, 2026 (supervisors Dr. Debra Morrison and Dr. **Matthew McAdam**)
- Dr. **Al-Khatib Al-Saadi**, completing a one-year fellowship in Neuropsychiatry and Psychiatry of Intellectual and Developmental Disability on June 30, 2026 (supervisors Drs. **Mutiati Sulyman** and **Mark Paramall**)

- Dr. **Caleb Otu-Ansah**, completing a six-month fellowship in Early Psychosis Intervention on July 7, 2026 (supervisor Dr. **Jason Morrison**)



Drs. Vincent Agyapong (left) and Al-Khatib Al-Saadi (right).



Drs. Vincent Agyapong (left) and Caleb Otu-Ansah (right).

Division of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry

AWARDS/RECOGNITION

Ms. **Supriya D'Penha**, **Deb Follett**, **Adrienne McCarthy**, and **Eleanor Kumahia** have received the Extra Mile Award from Dalhousie Department of Psychiatry recognizing their contributions to the department's clinical and academic mission in supporting our faculty, learners and activities – April 21, 2026.

Dr. **Alexa Bagnell** received a Leadership Award from the Department of Psychiatry for her role as Head, Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry – May 5, 2026.

CAP PRESENTATIONS

- Dr. **Lori Wozney** Lunch and Learn presentation for Anchor Youth, Bridgewater “Measuring What Matters: Data, Research, and Evaluation in Integrated Youth Services” March 25, 2026.
- Dr. **Lori Wozney** Lunch and Learn presentation for Anchor Youth, North End “Measuring What Matters: Data, Research, and Evaluation in Integrated Youth Services” March 27, 2026.
- Drs. **Jill Chorney**, **Lori Wozney** and Jenny Baechler, co-presented at the Department of Psychiatry Grand Rounds, “UNITE: A Whole System Look at Youth Mental Health in Nova Scotia” April 1, 2026.
- Dr. **Chelcie Soroka** co-presented with Stephanie Snow and Mallory MacLeod at CHEO Dept. of Psychiatry Grand Rounds, “Making Measurement Matter: Measurement Based Care in Clinical Practice” April 9, 2026.
- Dr. **Lukas Propper** co-presented with Drs. Youssef J, Shea S, Smith I.M, MacWilliam S, MacLeod K, Foxall V, and Thomas M a poster presentation at 2026 Dalhousie Department of Pediatrics Trainee Research Day, The “CALM Study: A Randomized Placebo-Controlled Trial of Sertraline vs. Placebo in the Treatment of Anxiety in Children and Adolescents with Neurodevelopmental Disorders” April 14, 2026.
- Drs. **Talia Bond**, **Kara Yeung**, Child & Adolescent Psychiatry Subspecialty Residents, presented a poster at the Department of Pediatrics Child Health Research Day, at Pier 21, “The Perception of Wellness Amongst Psychiatry Residents – a Qualitative Study” April 14, 2026. Their research was supervised by Dr. **Alexandra Manning** and Dr. **Celia Robichaud**.
- Dr. **Alexa Bagnell** was the keynote speaker at CYMHSU Community of Practice 10th In-Person Gathering, Vancouver - British Columbia, “Anchor Youth Spaces Nova Scotia: Creating an Integrated Ecosystem of Care” April 17, 2026.
- Drs. **Jill Chorney**, **Lori Wozney** and Jenny Baechler, co-presented at the Integrated Service Delivery Annual Meeting, Dalhousie University, “UNITE: A Whole System Look at Youth Mental Health in Nova Scotia” April 21, 2026.
- Dr. **Lori Wozney** Lunch and Learn presentation for Anchor Youth, Sydney “Measuring What Matters: Data, Research, and Evaluation in Integrated Youth Services” April 29, 2026.
- Dr. **Sue Zinck** presented at Pride Health’s 2SLGBTQIA+ Affirming Health Conference “Controversies & Myths in Gender Care” April 30, 2026.

CAP GRANTS

- Dr. **Pippa Moss** received Department of Psychiatry Serving and Engaging Society Fund grant of \$1,000 for project "Examining Education, Monitoring, and Follow-up of Children and Adolescents in Rural Areas Prescribed with Second-generation Antipsychotics in Nova Scotia." March 12, 2026.
- Dr. **Lori Wozney** is the Co-applicant and received CIHR Catalyst grant of \$138,000 for "Partnering with youth to co-produce harm reduction guidelines for the use of AI chatbots to support mental and emotional health: A co-produced project." April 2026 to April 2027.
- Dr. **Selene Etches** is the collaborator and received CIHR Catalyst grant of \$150,000 for project "Hospital-Community Youth Substance Use Health Partnership" May 1, 2026 – April 30, 2027.

CAP EDUCATION

Nova Scotia Concurrent Disorders Conference

Dr. **Selene Etches** hosted the 4th Annual Nova Scotia Adolescent Concurrent Disorders Conference on "Trauma Informed Care & Training" in partnership with IWK Health Centre and Dalhousie University in Halifax on May 19 & 20, 2026.

Drs. Teresa Naseba Marsh led this two-day workshop with Elder Julie Ozawagosh which focused on trauma in context of addiction and self-care for those working with patients. The conference was well attended and included staff from Anchor Youth Space, the friendship Centre and Tajjeimik. Drs. David Marsh and Shireen Fabing also presented at this conference.



Nova Scotia CAP Academic Retreat

An academic retreat for all Nova Scotia child and adolescent psychiatrists was held on May 22, 2026.

The hybrid retreat was well attended both in-person and virtually.

Presentations included:

- Optimising OPOR in clinical work - Issues and questions, presented by Tantauls Panel; Brenda Hearn and Nisha Khanna
- Accreditation Bootcamp, presented by Dr. **Celia Robichaud**

CAP RESEARCH

Drs. **Lori Wozney**, **Jill Chorney**, **Sabina Abidi**, and colleagues are pleased to share a final update on their CIHR-funded Goal-Based Outcome Monitoring (GBO-M) Principles and Practices Project.

Launched in 2023, this multinational initiative brought together 16 partner institutions across research, healthcare, community, and government sectors. Through this multi-phase effort, the team has developed the first evidence-informed set of principles and practices to guide working with goals in youth focused community mental health and addictions services.

The project unfolded across three phases: (1) a combined literature and narrative review; (2) interviews and focus groups with youth, caregivers, and clinicians; and (3) an expert consensus process involving researchers and clinicians. Together, these phases resulted in the identification of eight core principles and practices:

- Practicing cultural safety and humility
- Maintaining flexibility over time
- Prioritizing youth voice
- Emphasizing collaboration and the role of support persons
- Using inclusive language
- Aligning timing with youth readiness
- Applying semi-structured approaches to goal setting and measurement
- Supporting ongoing review and adaptation

In practice, these principles offer adaptable guidance for integrating goal-based approaches into therapeutic relationships, helping to foster trust, shared decision-

making, and improved clinical and social outcomes. At a systems level, the principles promote culturally safe, context-responsive, and equity-focused service delivery. The work also has important policy implications, including informing future international guidelines for clinical training that centre youth voice, flexible models of care, and cultural safety as a standard. The focused literature review has been published and a manuscript highlighting youth and caregiver perspectives and review of clinical

literature have been submitted for publication. An infographic has been developed, and a final manuscript outlining the principles and practices with examples of clinical prompts is currently in progress. In addition, an abstract submitted to the 2026 International Association for Youth Mental Health (IAYMH) Conference in Dublin, Ireland is under review. Knowledge translation activities are ongoing, with additional materials to be released soon (stay tuned).

YOUR VOICE = BETTER BODY IMAGE SUPPORT

We created an app that helps people feel better about their bodies and **lowers risk for Eating Disorders**—now we want to make it even better.

AND TO DO THAT, WE NEED YOU

We're looking for people who can speak to body ideals and experiences in their communities, especially folks from BIPOC and LGBT communities. Your perspective will help us make the app more relatable and meaningful.

WHAT YOU'LL DO:

- Review app exercises + images (PDF).
- Share what feels right (and what doesn't).
- Join a session to help pick images + suggest new ideas.
- You'll be paid for your time.
- No experience needed- just your honest input.

HELP US BUILD something that actually reflects and supports your community.

INTERESTED? DM US OR EMAIL US AT BODYSCREEN@DAL.CA

CAP PUBLICATIONS

- Garcia-Argibay M, Wootton RE, Larsson H, Mattheisen M, Polimanti R, **Meier S**. Causal inference in psychiatric research: how to critically evaluate and interpret mendelian randomization studies. *Mol Psychiatry*. 2026 Jun;31(6):3533-3543. doi: 10.1038/s41380-026-03484-9. PMID: 41673464. Epublised on Feb. 11, 2026.
- Hagalwadi J, Sutherland D, Dolek S, Marin-Dragu S, **Bagnell A, Wozney L, Orji R, Meier S**. An app responding to behavior of people to promote mental wellbeing in anxious youth. *J Affect Disord*. 2026 Jul 1;404:121503. doi: 10.1016/j.jad.2026.121503. PMID: 41759674. Epublised on Feb. 25, 2026.
- Cormier M, Murray NE, Li S, Saad Hossne J, Marin-Dragu S, Muzamil M, **Bagnell A**, Sherry SB, Orji R, **Stewart SH, Meier S**. Screen Usage and Social Media Motives in Gender and Sexual Minority Adolescents. *Arch Sex Behav*. 2026 Feb;55(2):677-689. doi: 10.1007/s10508-025-03367-0. PMID: 41784920. Epublised on March 5, 2026.
- Bishop E, Settingington A, Marin-Dragu S, McArthur JL, Cormier M, Dolek S, **Stewart SH, Blais J, Rosen NO, Chorney J, Meier SM**. A Longitudinal Mediation Study of Sexting Motivations and Outcomes in Sexual Minority and Sexual Majority Emerging Adults. *Cyberpsychol Behav Soc Netw*. 2026 May;29(4):230-238. doi: 10.1177/21522715261432002. PMID: 41883038. Epublised on March 25, 2026.
- Somerville M, **Wozney L**, Gallant A.J. et al. "Usability testing of two co-designed discharge communication tools for use in pediatric emergency departments: findings from the EDUCATE study." *BMC Pediatr* (2026). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12887-026-06916-1> Published on April 23, 2026.

Help shape the future of women+ health in the Maritimes!



What health questions matter most to women+ in the Maritimes?

We're inviting people across Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island to take part in a research study focused on identifying the most important unanswered questions about women+ health. Women+ includes women and all people who experience health concerns traditionally associated with women's health across the lifespan.

You can participate if you are:

- 18 years of age or older
- Living in the Maritimes (Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island)
- A person with lived experience, caregiver, member of the public, healthcare provider, researcher, or policymaker with an interest in women+ health

What's involved?

A brief online survey asking about research priorities related to women+ health, plus a few demographic questions.

Your input will help guide future health research to better reflect the needs and experiences of women+ in the region.

To access more information about this research, and to complete the survey, click the following link: <https://www.maritimewomenshealth.com/>

English survey: <https://bit.ly/maritimewomenshealthsurvey>

French survey: <https://bit.ly/santedesfemmesmaritimes>

Trauma-Informed Youth Addictions Care Conference

Submitted by Dr. Selene Etches

IWK Mental Health & Addictions and the Dalhousie Department of Psychiatry recently partnered to host a two-day Youth Addictions Trauma-Informed Care workshop held at Dalhousie's Student Union Building, bringing together staff from IWK, Integrated Youth Services, and Tajikeyimik (Mi'kmaw Health and Wellness) for learning, reflection, and skill-building focused on trauma-informed practice and self-care. The workshop featured sessions led by Dr. Teresa Naseba Marsh and Elder Julie Ozawagosh, with guests Dr. David Marsh and Shireen Fabing.

A healing circle format with a two-eyed seeing approach was used to explore topics related to adolescent substance use disorders including complex trauma, PTSD,

intergenerational trauma, burnout, grief, and vicarious trauma, while also taking part in experiential activities such as trauma-sensitive yoga, mindfulness meditation, and beginner boxing exercises focused on stress reduction and self-regulation. The workshop also incorporated Indigenous teachings, smudging, prayer, and opportunities for group reflection and connection throughout the event. As a result of this event, relationships have also been strengthened with our colleagues in various provincial services with many now joining the Nova Scotia community of practice for youth concurrent disorders. Our sincere appreciation to IWK Mental Health and Addictions, Dalhousie Department of Psychiatry, and Tajikeyimik for their unwavering support of this impactful event.



Photos: Top left: Sacred bundle at the centre of the healing circle; Middle left: Teresa Naseba Marsh and Debi Follett singing "Summertime;" Bottom left: Trauma sensitive chair yoga session; Top right: Teresa and Elder Julie; Bottom right: Cynthia Jordan, Selene Etches, Teresa Naseba Marsh, Julie Ozawagosh.

Following the event, we asked attendees what they liked best. Here are the responses we received:

"The facilitators were incredible. This was the most spiritual event in my time at IWK. This was the most meaningful event."

"I loved the content and learning through stories, it gave a very different perspective for the work that I do."

"An incredibly moving and impactful learning experience. The Indigenous sharing circle format encouraged reflection, vulnerability, connection, and authentic learning."

"I felt safety and inclusion, beauty and wonder."

"The two-eyed seeing approach was a nice reminder of different world views regarding health and how these can be intertwined and used simultaneously in order to provide best care and ideal outcomes. This training has changed the way I share information with families and how I support them."

"More than a conference, the experience was a healing circle... through shared stories, reflection, laughter, and difficult conversations, we were reminded of both the privilege and weight of this work, and of the importance of caring not only for those we serve, but for ourselves and one another as helpers and healers."

"My soul feels healed."

"This experience far exceeded anything I could have imagined or expected. It's difficult to fully capture in words — it was truly transformational. The integration of evidence-based psychotherapy and clinical practice with somatic body work was exceptional. The experience resonated deeply, offering insights that were not only practical but also profoundly meaningful on a personal and professional level."

Reducing restraint use through person-centred neurodevelopmental care

By Lianne Nixon, Quality Lead, MHAP Central Zone

Over the past several years, the Adult Neurodevelopmental Stabilization Unit (ANSU) within the Mental Health and Addictions Program has achieved a significant reduction in the use of patient restraints, demonstrating the impact of a specialized, interdisciplinary approach to care for adults with neurodevelopmental conditions and complex behavioural needs. The unit has not required the use of a restraint chair for over five years.

Along with the dedicated Nurses and Allied Health staff, this success was supported by the addition of a Board-Certified Behaviour Analyst and a team of Therapeutic Assistants to the unit's daily operations, a recommendation from the unit's recent model of care review. Together, this multidisciplinary team has shifted the focus from reactive crisis management to proactive, individualized behavioural support. Functional behaviour assessments, positive behaviour support plans, environmental modifications, and staff coaching have enabled the team to better identify triggers, anticipate escalating behaviours, and to intervene early using non-coercive strategies.

The team's proactive approach has supported patients by providing consistent therapeutic engagement, structured activities, sensory regulation support, and relationship-based care. Their presence has increased opportunities for meaningful interaction and helped patients maintain regulation throughout the day, reducing the likelihood of behavioural crises that previously resulted in restraint use.



Leadership Safety Rounds.

Unit security has also played a strong role in proactive support with some personnel actively engaging with the patients to build rapport. Having rapport between security personnel and patients has reduced the need for a hands-on response to behavioural escalation.

ANSU's success reflects a broader commitment to trauma-informed and person-centred care. The unit's experience highlights the value of behavioural expertise and dedicated therapeutic support in managing complex neurodevelopmental presentations. By investing in these resources, ANSU has reduced restrictive interventions, enhanced patient dignity, and created a safer, more therapeutic environment for patients and staff alike.

New course, co-developed with community, builds cultural competence among clinicians

A new course offered in spring 2026 to Department of Psychiatry faculty members aims to build skills in cultural competence. Co-developed with the Black and African Nova Scotian communities, the "[Building Cultural Competence for Mental Health Equity](#)" course provided clinicians unique opportunities to listen to and engage with community members, understand their mental health needs, and practice the Cultural Formulation Interview.

Dr. **Keri-Leigh Cassidy**, the department's director of Social Policy and Advocacy, and Dr. **Vincent Agyapong**, department head, formed a diverse scientific planning committee who developed the content and format.

The topic, objectives, and format were the result of a true collaborative effort between academics, content experts, and people with lived experience, says Dr. Cassidy.

In early January, Drs. Cassidy, Agyapong, and Gaynor Watson-Creed, associate dean of Serving and Engaging in the Faculty of Medicine, introduced the course during Grand Rounds.

Delivered in two parts, the course took place online on April 8 during Grand Rounds and as an experiential session for faculty only in person on May 1.

Faculty attending the experiential session were asked to attend or view part one and read four articles.

Robert Wright, a social worker and sociologist, facilitated the

experiential session. An expert panel discussion featured:

- Sharon Davis-Murdoch, CM, co-president of the Health Association of African Canadians
- Dr. Ron Milne, family physician and medical director at the Brotherhood Clinic
- Dr. **Cinera Cartwright**, a psychiatrist at the Sisterhood Clinic and Transcultural Mental Health Program and the first female African Nova Scotian to graduate from the Dalhousie Psychiatry residency program

All were members of the scientific planning committee and represent the Black and African Nova Scotian communities.

"Being able to share with so many professionals who I know and some I don't was very confirming and validating for me and to do so with my community beside me all sharing in their mental health experiences was powerful! It was healing!" wrote one community partner in a feedback survey.

During a facilitated discussion, faculty heard directly from community members as they shared their experiences accessing mental health care.

"I felt comfortable enough with the planning team and their respect for me and my community that I was willing to have other, more vulnerable members of my community come to make a contribution," wrote another community partner.

Scientific Planning Committee

Robert Wright (African NS representative) – Facilitator

Sharon Davis-Murdoch (Black NS representative) – Community Contributor

Dr. Ron Milne (African Nova Scotia primary care physician) – Community Contributor

Dr. Vincent Agyapong (Department of Psychiatry) – Department Head

Dr. Keri-Leigh Cassidy (Department of Psychiatry) – Director of Social Policy and Advocacy

Dr. Gaynor Watson-Creed (Faculty of Medicine) – Office of Community Engagement

Drs. Kim Good and Cinera Cartwright (Department of Psychiatry) – Quality Contributors

Mandy Esliger (Department of Psychiatry) – CME Expert

Eleanor Kumahia (Department of Psychiatry) – Administrative Support

The course is the first major initiative from the [Serving and Engaging Society pillar](#) of the Department of Psychiatry's 2026-2031 Strategic Plan. It's aligned with the five guiding principles that inform departmental equity work and supports the pillar's goal of closing gaps in serving equity-denied groups and becoming a more trusted partner to community.

To our knowledge, this is the first Continuing Medical Education accredited course in the department co-created with the Black and African Nova Scotian

communities—a precedent in which Dr. Cassidy says she was proud to have a part.

“The partnership with the Black/African Nova Scotian community was the most unique part of this process—I was especially moved by the stories shared by community members about their experiences of the mental health and forensic systems.”

Early feedback from community partners signals progress. Dr. Cassidy hopes to continue this collaboration to reformat the course

content to an online version so it's more widely available in the department and university.

Next year, the plan is to develop a course with community partners focused on the urban Indigenous community.

For faculty who wish to continue learning in the meantime, a compendium of equity learning resources is available on the [department's website](#).

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

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](#).

 **DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY**
Department of Psychiatry

FACULTY CHANGES

Arrivals

- Dr. **Champion Seun-Fadipe** joined the department as an assistant professor effective May 1, 2026. Dr. Seun-Fadipe is located at the East Coast Forensic Hospital in Dartmouth and can be reached at seunfac@nshealth.ca
- Dr. **John Carroll** joined the department as an assistant professor effective May 26, 2026. Dr. Carroll is located at the Cole Harbour Mental Health Community Clinic in Dartmouth. He can be reached at carrolja@nshealth.ca

- Dr. **Archana Unnikrishnan** joined the department effective May 27, 2026. Dr. Unnikrishnan can be reached in the RASP Clinic in the Abbie J. Lane Building. She can be reached at Archana.Unnikrishnan@nshealth.ca

Welcome to you all!

Departures

- Dr. **Adekunle Bamidele** resigned from the department May 15, 2026
- Dr. **Reza Rostami** resigned from the department May 30, 2026
- Dr. **Gail Eskes** is retiring effective June 30, 2026
- Dr. **Curt Peters** is resigning effective June 30, 2026

We wish you well!

International Fellows welcome reception

In late May, Department Head Dr. **Vincent Agyapong** attended a welcome reception for five International Fellows from Saudi Arabia, Oman, the United Arab Emirates, and Ghana. These physicians are undertaking advanced training in Neuropsychiatry, Forensic Psychiatry, Early Psychosis Intervention, Operational Stress Injury Psychiatry, and Sleep Medicine through the Dalhousie University Department of Psychiatry.

These fellowship programs play an important role in strengthening mental health human resource capacity in both low- and high-resource settings, with the shared goal of expanding access to psychiatric care for millions of people worldwide.

While training at Dalhousie University, the fellows also contribute to clinical care at Nova Scotia Health and IWK Health. Their presence enriches not only the quality of care provided, but also the diversity, collaboration, and global perspective that make these institutions exceptional places to work, learn, and teach.

A sincere thank you to Dr. **Mahmoud Awara**, Program Director for the International Fellowship Program, for his steadfast leadership, and to the many preceptors whose mentorship and commitment make these training opportunities possible.



Department Head engages with psychiatry residents

In early June, Dr. **Vincent Agyapong**, department head, kicked off the annual small-group check-ins with postgraduate trainees in the Dalhousie University Department of Psychiatry.

These gatherings provide valuable opportunities for Dr. Agyapong to hear directly about learners' experiences and to gather feedback and ideas as we continue working toward our goal of fostering full learner engagement and wellbeing.



Dr. Agyapong and second-year psychiatry residents.



Dr. Agyapong and fifth-year psychiatry residents.

Dr. Mutiat Sulyman participates in Health Professional Exploration Day in North Preston

On Friday, April 24, Dr. **Mutiat Sulyman**, department director of EDIA, participated in an event part of the PLANS (Promoting Leadership in Health for African Nova Scotians) ecosystem through

the Health Professional Exploration Day in North Preston. During the event PLANS engaged with African Nova Scotian youth in learning more about pathways into healthcare with black healthcare representatives.

MEDIA

IWK psychiatrists warn of the dangers of young people consuming high-potency cannabis:

- [Why is the IWK sounding the alarm about cannabis-induced psychosis in youth?](#) CBC Information Morning – NS, May 27, 2026 (with Dr. **Sabina Abidi**)
- [More on the dangers of young people consuming high potency cannabis](#) CBC Information Morning – NS, May 29, 2026 (with Dr. **Kyle Godden**)
- ['It sneaks up on you': One youth's journey with high-potency cannabis use](#) IWK Health News and Stories, April 27, 2026 (with Drs. **Kyle Godden**, **Sabina Abidi**, and **Phil Tibbo** [NS Health])

- [N.S. seeing an increase in teens with long-lasting psychosis due to high-potency cannabis](#) CBC Nova Scotia, May 31, 2026 (with Drs. **Kyle Godden** and **Sabina Abidi**)

QEII Foundation

- [QEII Foundation Health Equity Fund recipients](#) QEII Foundation Facebook page, Global News, May 8, 2026 (with Dr. **Phil Tibbo**)
- [QEII Foundation Innovation Den Awards](#) QEII Times, May 29, 2026 (with Dr. **Abraham Nunes**)

Nova Scotia Health News

- Dr. **Abraham (Rami) Rudnick** was featured as an Ethics Champion in the May 5, 2026 edition of Nova Scotia Health News.



QEII Foundation Health Equity Fund recipients Drs. **Phil Tibbo** (second from left) and Amanda Vinson (right) participate in a Global News interview.

UPCOMING EVENTS



Mental Health Responses in a Changing World 2026:

Innovative Responses to Humanitarian Emergencies

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

Hosted Online

Keynote Speaker: Prof. Pamela Collins
Chair, Department of Mental Health,
Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of
Public Health

**LEARN MORE & REGISTER [HERE](#)
by July 8.**



SUMMER CELEBRATION

Sunday, July 19, 2026 | 2 to 7 p.m.
St. Mary's Boat Club, Halifax, NS

✈ KAYAKING | 🔍 SCAVENGER HUNT | 🎱 LAWN GAMES
🎨 ARTS & CRAFTS | 🍴 BBQ | 🏠 PLAYGROUND

Join us for the summer celebration at St. Mary's Boat Club!

**LEARN MORE & REGISTER [HERE](#)
by 11:59 p.m. on July 12.**

- Open to everyone in the Department of Psychiatry (residents, grad students, faculty and admin staff)
- Bring a friend, partner and/or children
- St. Mary's Boat Club overlooks Northwest Arm – inside space, outside deck, access to canoes, kayaks, tennis courts, and Conrose Park green space
- Accessible for people with limited mobility



IN MEMORIAM

Dr. Lili Kopala

Submitted by Dr. Kim Good



Lillian (Lili) C. Kopala, MD, FRCPC died peacefully at home in Powell River, British Columbia, Canada, on May 7, 2026 (age 79).

Dr. Kopala was well known to our department. In 1995, she was recruited to Dalhousie by Dr. Stan Kutcher, the new Department Head at the time. She brought with her ambition, ideas, and a new research direction. She became the Director of Research and significantly changed how the research mandate of our department was carried out.

In 1996, Dr. Kopala developed the Nova Scotia Early Psychosis Program (NSEPP), one of the first of five programs in Canada to cater to the needs of individuals who were in the early phases of

a psychotic disorder. Under her direction, the NSEPP participated in many groundbreaking clinical trials aimed to better understand how to optimally treat young people with psychosis. Her work has been recognized throughout the world.

Dr. Kopala worked tirelessly to obtain funding in order to develop an endowed Research Chair position for the department. The Dr. Paul Janssen Chair in Psychotic Disorders is the product of her work, and this Chair has been continuously held since its inception by Dr. Phil Tibbo.

She mentored a great number of trainees throughout her time at Dalhousie, many of whom have gone on to devote their careers to treating young people with psychotic disorders, and some who have gone on to be nationally and internationally renowned researchers.

Those who knew her would undoubtedly agree that she was brilliant, discerning, strong-willed, deeply curious, and unmistakably original. She valued excellence, challenged convention, and expected much of herself and those around her.

She returned to the West Coast after her spouse developed a life-threatening illness. Treatment was only available in Vancouver, and as such, she returned to BC after only seven years at Dalhousie. However, in the short time that she was with our department, she was a significant force in driving excellence in clinical care, in teaching, and in research.

We will continue to 'Box on' in her honour. She will be deeply missed.

AWARDS & HONOURS

Strongest Families App obtains certification through Mental Health Commission of Canada App assessment framework

The Strongest Families Institute undertook the Mental Health Commission of Canada's digital mental health app assessment, delivered in partnership with ORCHA, recognizing the importance of external validation and continuous improvement.

The assessment evaluated the organization's digital platform across a comprehensive framework, including:

- Privacy, data governance, and safety
- Clinical evidence and effectiveness
- Accessibility, inclusivity, and usability, with a strong emphasis on lived and living experience

The Strongest Families Institute App was one of the first to obtain certification through completion of

this comprehensive App assessment framework, indicating that their App/Proprietary IRIS software is safe, secure, evidence-based, and culturally responsive.

[Read the case study.](#)

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Dr. Patricia Lingley-Pottie, CEO of Strongest Families Institute, named one of Atlantic Canada's Top 50 CEOs by Atlantic Business Magazine

Congratulations to Dr. **Patricia Lingley-Pottie**, CEO of Strongest Families Institute, who was named one of Atlantic Canada's Top 50

CEOs by Atlantic Business Magazine for the fourth time.

[Read more.](#)

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Dr. Abraham (Rami) Rudnick receives certificate of appreciation for volunteerism from Autism Nova Scotia

Congratulations to Dr. **Abraham (Rami) Rudnick** who received a certificate of appreciation presented by Autism Nova Scotia in recognition of his outstanding

volunteerism and steadfast commitment to supporting Autistic individuals and the community.

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Department members honoured with Faculty of Medicine Awards

The following Department of Psychiatry members were recognized with Faculty of Medicine awards presented at the annual faculty meeting on June 2, 2026. Congratulations!

- The Faculty of Medicine Early Career Educator Award: Dr. **Alexandra Manning**
- The Faculty of Medicine Early Career Award of Excellence in Clinical Practice: Dr. **Sarah Fancy**
- The Dr. Allan Cohen Memorial Award for Community Service: Dr. **Cinera Cartwright**
- The Faculty of Medicine Award for Excellence in Research Mentorship – Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion: Dr. **Ejemai Eboime**

[Read more.](#)

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Dr. Pamela Arenella receives Special Recognition Award

Congratulations to Dr. **Pamela Arenella** who was presented with a department Special Recognition Award in June 2026. Dr. Arenella was recognized for valued contributions to global mental health education and Transcultural Psychiatry.



Left to right: Drs. Vincent Agyapong, Pamela Arenella, Keri-Leigh Cassidy, and Sanjana Sridharan.

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Dr. Curt Peters receives Dedicated Service Award

Congratulations to Dr. **Curt Peters** who received a department Dedicated Service Award in June 2026. The Dedicated Service Award recognizes department members

who have left or are leaving and have served the department for at least 10 years.

Department members honoured at bi-annual meeting



Award recipients at the department's bi-annual meeting on May 5, 2026. From left to right: Drs. Gail Eskes, Keri-Leigh Cassidy, Mahmoud Awara, Kim Good, and Alexa Bagnell.

Congratulations to the following recipients of departmental awards that were presented at our bi-annual meeting on May 5, 2026.

2026 Dr. Aidan Stokes Mentorship Award

This annual award recognizes and honours a faculty member who has demonstrated exceptional mentorship and leadership in their work with the department. The award is named in honour of Dr. Aidan Stokes who dedicated his career to fostering a culture of strong leadership and mentorship within the Dalhousie Department of Psychiatry.

The 2026 Dr. Aidan Stokes Mentorship Award recipients are:

- Dr. **Mahmoud Awara**
- Dr. **Kim Good**

Dedicated Service Award

The Dedicated Service Award recognizes department members

who have left or are leaving and have served the department for at least 10 years.

The Dedicated Service Award recipients are:

- Dr. **Gail Eskes**
- Dr. **Abdel Wahab Mershati** (posthumous)

Leadership Award

The Leadership Award was established to recognize department members who have served in a leadership role with the department for at least five years and are leaving their roles.

The Leadership Award was presented to:

- Dr. **Alexa Bagnell** for the role of Head, Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

Special Recognition Award

Special Recognition Awards were presented to:

- Dr. **Keri-Leigh Cassidy** for unwavering commitment and leadership
- **Parisa Abdi Sabouhi** for unwavering reliability and professional service



Parisa Abdi Sabouhi (center) receives Special Recognition Award. From left to right: Dr. Vincent Agyapong, Parisa Abdi Sabouhi, and Dr. Katharine Black.



Dr. Mershati's son (center) accepts the Dedicated Service Award on his late father's behalf.

Dr. Shazia Hashmi receives Extra Mile Award

Congratulations to Dr. **Shazia Hashmi** for receiving the department's Extra Mile Award!

The Department of Psychiatry's Extra Mile Award recognizes 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: Dr. Shazia Hashmi

Nominated by: Dr. Mahmoud Awara

Over the past year, Dr. Hashmi has demonstrated exceptional commitment and initiative at the operational level within the Dartmouth Community Mental Health Team. She has been instrumental in establishing a highly effective co-leadership model, fostering a collaborative and inclusive approach alongside the team manager, psychiatrists, and multidisciplinary colleagues. This model has significantly strengthened team cohesion and operational efficiency.

Dr. Hashmi has played a pivotal role in addressing service demands through the successful allocation of over 200 previously unassigned psychiatric cases. Her leadership in developing a fair, transparent, and sustainable system for caseload distribution has enhanced both clinician engagement and patient care delivery. In parallel, her application of Quality Improvement methodologies has contributed to meaningful reductions in wait times and improved patient flow within the service.

Her commitment to system integration is equally notable. Dr. Hashmi has worked closely with hospital discharge coordinators, triage teams, and psychiatry leadership to streamline liaison processes, ensuring safer and more seamless transitions of care for patients. Furthermore, her active collaboration with section and department leadership has supported ongoing efforts in recruitment and retention, addressing critical workforce needs within the service.

In addition to her operational excellence, Dr. Hashmi has made substantial contributions to the academic mission of the department. She serves as a dedicated and highly regarded preceptor for clerks, physician associates, and residents within the CMHT setting. She has been actively involved in designing and implementing educational plans in collaboration with the multidisciplinary team, ensuring a structured and supportive learning environment.

Her academic engagement extends to undergraduate teaching, where she regularly contributes to lectures, and to postgraduate education through her work with trainees requiring additional support, including the implementation of Individualized Education and Learning Plans (IELPs). Dr. Hashmi is also an active participant in residency selection through her involvement in CaRMS interviews and serves as a member of both the CaRMS Committee and the Valuing People Committee, reflecting her commitment to equity, professionalism, and learner development.

Dr. Hashmi consistently goes above and beyond in all aspects of her role. Her CAL leadership, dedication, and collaborative spirit embody the very essence of the Extra Mile Award. She is an inspiring colleague and a role model whose contributions have had a meaningful and lasting impact on patient care, team functioning, and education within the department.

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](#).

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 **September 2026**.

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



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