

HEADLINES



35TH ANNUAL PSYCHIATRY RESEARCH DAY



DALHOUSIE
UNIVERSITY

Department of Psychiatry

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FEATURE

35TH ANNUAL PSYCHIATRY RESEARCH DAY *page 5*

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HEAD LINES

Message from the Department Head



The Department of Psychiatry has had another productive and rewarding fall as we continued our regular activities as well as prepare for our new Master of Clinical Psychiatry and Global Mental Health program and new strategic plan.

We hosted two signature research events in November: a public panel discussion on November 6 and our 35th annual Research Day on November 7. Both events were a great success and I extend my thanks to our keynote speaker, Dr. Joshua Rosenblat, as well as to all the panelists, presenters, and event organizers. I also congratulate our research day award winners: Gemma Varty (Best Presentation Award Undergraduate Student), Nicole Ponto (Best Presentation Award Graduate Student), and Dr. **Kyle Godden** (Best Presentation Award Psychiatry Resident). You can read more about these events in this edition of Headlines.

Department researchers and research teams presented their work at various conferences and our department presented several medical education projects at this year's Medical Education Research and Innovation Showcase.

Department members continue to be successful in securing grants and publishing papers. Congratulations to Dr. **Jill Chorney**, Dr. **George Robertson**, Dr. **Phil Tibbo**, Dr. **Kathleen Singh**, **Mandy Eslinger**, Dr. **Mark Bosma**, **Luc Rivet**, Dr. **Cheryl Murphy**, Dr. **Alexa Bagnell**, Dr. **Keri-Leigh Cassidy**, Dr. **Amy Gough**, Dr. **Gail Eskes**, Dr. **Sherry Stewart**, **Sam Hawkins**, and Dr. **Joseph Sadek**.

Earlier this fall we released our [2024/25 Annual Report](#), highlighting our accomplishments in education, research, clinical care, and social policy & advocacy. The report is available on our department's website.

Dr. **Niamh Campbell** (PGY-5) completed a one-month elective at the University of Ghana Medical School in October 2025. Dr. Campbell is the first resident to complete the elective under this new exchange program.

Our postgraduate education program is preparing for CaRMS in January 2026, and our undergraduate program is completing another block of Skilled Clinician.

Eight students graduated from the Psychiatry Research graduate programs (five MSc students and three PhD students). Congratulations to **Samuel Obeng Nkrumah**, **Tamar Gazit**, **Colby Price**, **Holly Carbyn**, **Steven Jackson**, **Katie Scott**, **Medard Adu**, and **Gloria Obuobi-Donkor**.

The Medical Humanities Program announced the winners of its annual writing competition. Congratulations to the 2025 resident winner, Dr. **Erik Fraunberger** (Dalhousie University, Department of Psychiatry), and to the 2025 medical student winner Raymond Tu (Schulich School of Medicine at Western University).

We were pleased to participate in a student engagement session this October as part of the PLANS (Promoting Leadership in Health for African Nova Scotians) Co-Op Program. Thanks to Dr. **Mutiat Sulyman** who facilitated this initiative and all department members who participated.

In October, we held a welcome reception for five new International Fellows from Saudi Arabia, Oman, and Ghana. These physicians are undertaking advanced training in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Neuropsychiatry, Forensic Psychiatry, Intellectual Disability Psychiatry, and Sleep Medicine at the Dalhousie University Department of Psychiatry.

We also welcomed **Aleya MacNeil** to the department's operations team as physician resource manager.

We say goodbye to department members Dr. **Kulli Poder**, who retired in October 2025, Dr. **Laura Downing**, Dr. **Emmanuel Babalola**, Dr. **Sreenivasa Bhaskara**, who is retiring in December 2025, Dr. **Igor Yakovenko**, and **Sandra Millar**, who is retiring in December 2025. Please join us in wishing them well on their retirements and new endeavours.

On November 12, we hosted our fall bi-annual full faculty meeting, and were pleased to recognize the following department members with awards: Drs. **Joseph Aicher** and **Mark Paramlall** received the 2025 Educator of the Year Award; Dr. **Anthony Pianosi** received the 2025 Dr. Larry Buffett Outstanding Teacher Award; Dr. **Julia Gibson** received the 2025 Distributed Site Outstanding Teacher Award; and Dr. **Sarah Fancy** received the 2025 Outstanding Clinician Award. Dedicated Service Awards were presented to Dr. **Kulli Poder**, Dr.

Sreenvisa Bhaskara, and **Sandra Millar**. Special Recognition awards were presented to Dr. **Sanjana Sridharan**, Dr. **Phil Tibbo**, **Linda Ford**, and **Penney Miller**.

Many department members continue to be recognized for their outstanding work. Congratulations to Dr. **Ejemai Eboreime**, who received the Discovery Awards Emerging Professional Award; **Bala Harri**, who received the Elizabeth and Donald Hillman Award at the 2025 Canadian Conference on Global Health; Dr. **Abraham (Rami) Rudnick**, who was recently appointed to Health Canada's Scientific Advisory Committee on Mental Health Disorders; and to

Dr. **David Gardner**, who received recognition for his work with Canada's Drug Agency.

Congratulations to you all.

Best wishes for a wonderful holiday season and a happy 2026.

Dr. Vincent Agyapong

Head, Department of Psychiatry,
Dalhousie University

Head, Department of Psychiatry,
Nova Scotia Health Central Zone

Social Policy & Advocacy Initiatives Fund

Funding is available for academic initiatives in the areas of education, clinical care, or research to close gaps in serving and engaging equity-deserving populations in our community.

The Social Policy & Advocacy Initiatives Fund is available to all members of the Dalhousie Department of Psychiatry including residents, fellows, AFP physicians, graduate students, research faculty, cross appointed and adjunct faculty, and administrative staff.

LEARN MORE & APPLY



DALHOUSIE
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Department of Psychiatry

35th Annual Psychiatry Research Day

The department's 35th Annual Research Day was held on Nov. 7, 2025 at the Atlantica Hotel Halifax. The event was again successful with 68 abstracts submitted and registration at capacity. The organizers thank all those who attended for coming out to support student research and continuing to make Research Day such a popular event.

Dr. **Vincent Agyapong**, Department Head, welcomed attendees, presenters, speakers, and distinguished guests. Opening remarks were provided by Kimberly Stewart, Associate Deputy Minister, Office of Addictions and Mental Health; Dr. Eileen Denovan-Wright, Associate Dean, Research, Faculty of Medicine, and by Dr. **Phil Tibbo**, the department's Research Director.

Our keynote speaker was Dr. Joshua Rosenblat, Associate Professor, Clinician-Investigator, Department of Psychiatry, University of Toronto. His presentation "Psychedelics for Mood Disorders: A Brave New World" opened the event. Dr. Rosenblat also participated in our public panel discussion and had a lunch meeting with graduate students in the department the day prior on November 6.

There were 11 oral presentations and 55 poster presentations. Dr. **Kim Good**, Director of Research, Section of Forensic Psychiatry, moderated the morning session and Dr. **Jill Chorney**, Director of Research, Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, moderated the afternoon session.

This year also included a presentation showcasing a specific research area in the department. Dr.



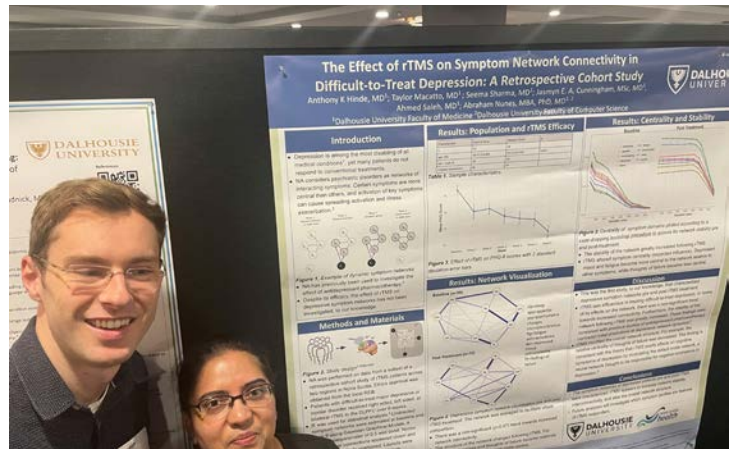
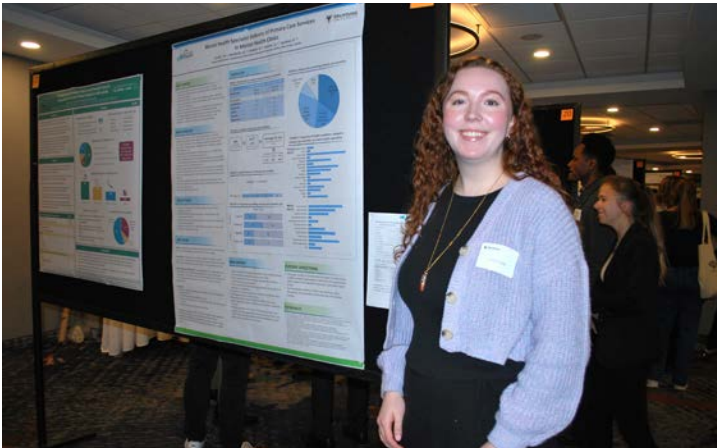
Left to right: Dr. Phil Tibbo (Director of Research, Department of Psychiatry, and event chair); Dr. Celia Robichaud (Director, Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Subspecialty Residency Program); Dr. Kyle Godden (Best Presentation Award Psychiatry Resident); Nicole Ponto (Best Presentation Award Graduate Student); Dr. Candice Crocker (Director of Research, Section of Acute, Consultation, and Emergency Psychiatry); Gemma Varty (Best Presentation Award Undergraduate Student); and, Dr. David Gardner (Director of Research, Section of Community Psychiatry).

Ejemai Eboime, Program Director, Master of Clinical Psychiatry and Global Mental Health, along with mentees Tegwende S., second-year medical student, and Damilola Onietan, PhD student, presented their research on Internally Displaced Persons in Nigeria. The RESSTLLE-IDPs project aimed to contextualize UNICEF Life Skills Education among IDPs in Nigeria and evaluate its effectiveness in terms of implementation, clinical outcomes, and social impact. The RESETTLE-IDPs project is supported by grants from Grand Challenges Canada [Creating Hope in Conflict: a Humanitarian Grand Challenge] and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research.

The day concluded with presentations of awards in three categories:

- Best Presentation Award Undergraduate Student: **Gemma Varty**
- Best Presentation Award Graduate Student: **Nicole Ponto**
- Best Presentation Award Psychiatry Resident: **Dr. Kyle Godden**

Congratulations to all the award recipients, and thank you to all the speakers, presenters, judges, and attendees!



Research Report

Public Panel Discussion – Psychedelics in Psychiatry: Innovation, Risks, and Realities

Each year, to coincide with the Department of Psychiatry Research Day, the department hosts a public discussion on an important topic for researchers and the local community. This year's panel discussion "Psychedelics in Psychiatry: Innovation, Risks, and Realities" was held at the Peggy Corkum Music Room on Nov. 6, 2025.

Dr. **Phil Tibbo**, Director of Research, welcomed attendees to the event. The discussion was moderated by Dr. **George Robertson**, Professor of Psychiatry and Pharmacology, and attendees heard from panelists:

- Dr. **Joshua Rosenblat** (our Research Day keynote speaker), Associate Professor, Clinician-Investigator, Department of Psychiatry, University of Toronto
- Dr. **Abraham Nunes**, Assistant Professor of Psychiatry & Computer Science, Dalhousie University; Psychiatrist, Nova Scotia Health Central Zone
- Dr. **Ahmed Saleh**, Assistant Professor, Department of Psychiatry, Dalhousie University; Head of Psychiatry, Nova Scotia Health Western Zone

The panelists took questions from an engaged audience. Thank you to the panelists for sharing their time and expertise, and to all for a great interactive and lively discussion.



Left to right: Drs. George Robertson, Joshua Rosenblat, Abraham Nunes, Ahmed Saleh, and Phil Tibbo.



GRANTS

Departmental

Spring 2025 DPRF recipients:

Dr. Jill Chorney

*Measurement to Meaning:
Implementing Measurement-Based
Care in Child & Adolescent Mental
Health*

Dr. George Robertson

*Identification of the Drug Targets
for Ibogaine*

Local/Provincial

Dr. **Phil Tibbo** (PI), *Collaborative
development of a fidelity tool for
EPI services in Nova Scotia with
clinicians, young adults and their
families, and African Nova Scotian
and Newcomer communities in rural
Nova Scotia, QEII Foundation Health
Equity Fund.*

[Learn more.](#)

Dr. Justine Dol appointed inaugural Accelerate Research Chair in Women+ Health

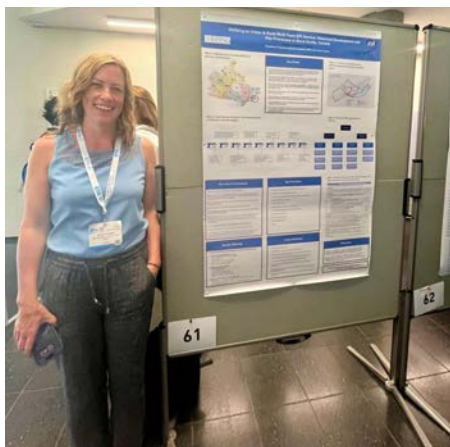
Dr. **Justine Dol** was appointed as the IWK Health's inaugural Accelerate Research Chair in Women+ Health, a new leadership role designed to provide dedicated time and resources to expand and advance IWK's research program in women's and gender-diverse health.

[Learn more.](#)

IEPA 2025 NSEPP research contributions

Members of the Nova Scotia Early Psychosis Program (NSEPP) research team presented at the International Early Intervention and Prevention in Mental Health Association (IEPA) International Conference on Early Intervention and Prevention in Mental Health in Berlin, Germany in September 2025.

Poster presentations



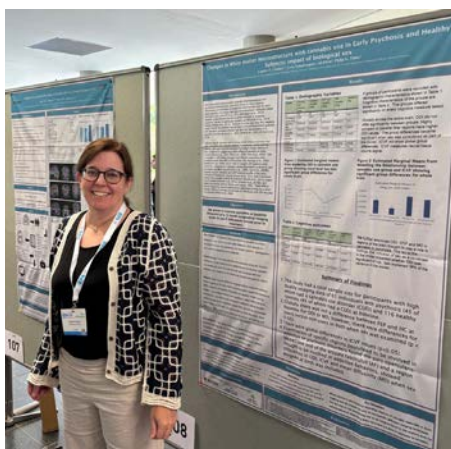
Brittany Chisholm, Provincial Coordinator, Early Psychosis Intervention Nova Scotia (EPINS).

Chisholm B, Whitehorn D, Tibbo P. (2025) Unifying an Urban and Rural multi-team EPI Service: Historical Development and Key Findings in Nova Scotia, Canada. 15th International Conference on Prevention and Early Intervention in Mental Health, International Early Intervention and Prevention in Mental Health Association (IEPA), Berlin, Germany, September 8-10, 2025. (Accepted poster). *Early Intervention in Psychiatry*, 19(1):9, June 2025.



Brannon Senger, Clinical Psychology PhD Student.

Senger B, Nosko L, Marriott A, Pencer A, Crocker C, Tibbo P. (2025) Enhancing engagement in early intervention services: adapting a brief psychotherapeutic intervention for young adults with early-phase psychosis. International Conference on Prevention and Early Intervention in Mental Health, International Early Intervention and Prevention in Mental Health Association (IEPA), Berlin, Germany, September 8-10, 2025. (Accepted poster). *Early Intervention in Psychiatry*, 19(1):35, June 2025.



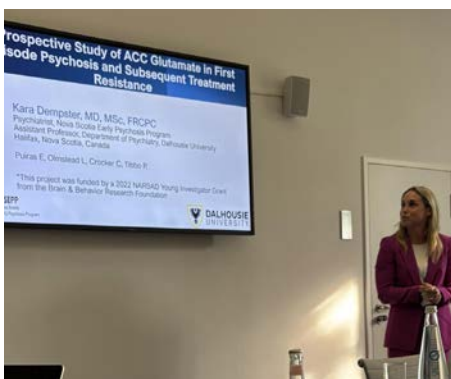
Dr. Candice Crocker.

Crocker CE, Ponto N, Tibbo PG. (2025) Examination of white matter changes in cannabis-using females with first episode psychosis. 15th International Conference on Prevention and Early Intervention in Mental Health, International Early Intervention and Prevention in Mental Health Association (IEPA), Berlin, Germany, September 8-10, 2025. (Accepted poster). *Early Intervention in Psychiatry*, 19(1):98

Crocker CE, Hastings T, Roy MA, Tibbo P. (2025) Real-world examination of the rates of long acting injectable attrition after discharge from an early psychosis program. 15th International Conference on Prevention and Early Intervention in Mental Health, International Early Intervention and Prevention in Mental Health Association (IEPA), Berlin, Germany, September 8-10, 2025. (Accepted poster). *Early Intervention in Psychiatry*, 19(1):98, June 2025

Crocker CE, Palaniyappan L, Khan A, Tibbo PG. (2025) Changes in white matter microstructure with cannabis use in early psychosis and healthy subjects: impact of biological sex. 15th International Conference on Prevention and Early Intervention in Mental Health, International Early Intervention and Prevention in Mental Health Association (IEPA), Berlin, Germany, September 8-10, 2025. (Accepted poster). *Early Intervention in Psychiatry*, 19(1):98, June 2025.

Oral presentations



Dr. Kara Dempster.

Dempster K, Puiras E, Olmstead L, Crocker C, Tibbo P. (2025) A prospective study of ACC glutamate in first episode psychosis and subsequent treatment resistance. 15th International Conference on Prevention and Early Intervention in Mental Health, International Early Intervention and Prevention in Mental Health Association (IEPA), Berlin, Germany, September 8-10, 2025. (Accepted paper). *Early Intervention in Psychiatry*, 19(1):118, June 2025.



Dr. Philip Tibbo.

McCay E, Crocker C, Tibbo P. (2025) Investigating transition-specific interventions in early psychosis intervention: development and outcomes. International Conference on Prevention and Early Intervention in Mental Health, International Early Intervention and Prevention in Mental Health Association (IEPA), Berlin, Germany, September 8-10, 2025. (Accepted symposium). *Early Intervention in Psychiatry*, 19(1):44, June 2025.

Sleepwell at the Atlantic Menopause Show: Bridging sleep health and menopause

At the first Atlantic Menopause Show in Halifax on October 17, 2025, the Sleepwell research and knowledge mobilization team proudly joined the tradeshow alongside a vibrant community of public members and clinicians navigating the complexities of menopause. The event was a powerful reminder of how deeply sleep health intersects with mental health and well-being in midlife women+. Attendees explored topics ranging from hormone therapy, lifestyle interventions, to workplace impacts. Dr. **Andrea Murphy**, Professor, Dalhousie University (Pharmacy, Psychiatry, Nursing), and Katya Kruglova, Research Coordinator for Sleepwell, provided Sleepwell resources to many of the 700 show attendees. The response to Sleepwell was overwhelming and conversations flowed freely. Women+ shared their stories, which underscored the need for integrated care.

Dr. Andrea Murphy was recently appointed to the board of the Canadian Menopause Society (<https://www.canadianmenopausesociety.org/>) and is eager to serve to improve knowledge and access to menopause care for women+ in midlife, and is leveraging Sleepwell resources as part of this mandate.



Dr. Andrea Murphy discusses Sleepwell resources with an attendee of the Atlantic Menopause Show on October 17, 2025.

Dal Psychiatry educational scholarship on display at MERIS

The Medical Education Research and Innovation Showcase (MERIS) in early November 2025 featured five papers by members of the Department of Psychiatry.

Hosted by the Faculty of Medicine, MERIS is an annual research showcase that presents innovation and scholarly work relevant to medical, interprofessional and health professions education. It offers a forum for faculty, residents and students to present their scholarly/professional working topics such as curriculum, teaching, learning, evaluation and faculty development in undergraduate, postgraduate and continuing education.

“This is particularly impressive since there were only 18 presentations in total at MERIS this year,” says Dr. **Lara Hazelton**, director of education, Department of Psychiatry. “In my view, our department’s excellence in scholarship of teaching and learning makes us one of the most significant contributors to education scholarship as outlined in the Faculty of Medicine’s strategic plan.”

Faculty members at distributed learning sites also collaborated on the projects – Drs. **Joe Aicher** and **Emily Maxan** from New Brunswick and Dr. **Adewale Raji** from Cape Breton.

“It is wonderful to see contributions from faculty across our distributed learning sites, underscoring the depth and reach of our collective efforts,” says Dr. **Vincent Agyapong**, Head of the Department of Psychiatry.

“Striving for excellence in education, research, and clinical innovation – and leading locally, nationally, and internationally – are central goals of our transformational plan. I am delighted to see our department’s strong presence within the Faculty of Medicine at this important event, which reflects the dedication and commitment of our faculty and staff to educational scholarship.”

Learn more about Dalhousie Psychiatry presentations at MERIS:

A Changing Landscape: Educational Needs of Canadian Child and Adolescent Psychiatrists

Robichaud, C., Stymiest, K., Ademola, F., Bazaid, K., Emmanuel, S., Isserlin, L., Khalid-khan, S., Malick, A., Mian, I., Ngo, M., Orlando, L., Sultan, M., Yee, C.

A previous Learning Needs Assessment survey completed by the Canadian Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (CACAP) Education Committee in 2019 identified pharmacotherapy and psychotherapy as areas of need for members, and cost of travel and lack of virtual options as a barrier. As the COVID-19 pandemic brought about a greater reliance of virtual delivery of continuing medical education, a new learning needs assessment survey was conducted with members of CACAP to understand how needs have changed in the post-pandemic era.

A clear shift to virtual CME was reported because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Equal proportions of participants preferred in person and live-virtual modalities. The

topics of most interest to the group were pharmacology, therapy, neurodevelopmental disorders and substance use. The most significant clinical dilemma was access to services. Results remain consistent with the previous needs assessment from 2019.

The continuing medical education needs of Canadian Child and Adolescent Psychiatrists continue to evolve. Virtual CME now plays a very significant role in how this is delivered but is not without challenges. Despite drastic shifts to virtual CME, the topics most needed in CAP CME and challenges in the practice of Canadian Child Psychiatry remain unchanged.

Building Capacity Through Simulation: A Novel Approach to Teaching Capacity Assessment Skills to Geriatric Psychiatry and Geriatric Medicine Residents

Kathleen Singh, Mandy Esliger, Mark Bosma, Maia von Maltzahn, Cindy Shearer, Luc Rivet, Cheryl Murphy

As observed training opportunities are limited, the Geriatric Psychiatry and Geriatric Medicine programs collaborated with simulated patient educators at Dalhousie's Centre for Collaborative Clinical Learning and Research to develop an innovative high-fidelity capacity assessment simulation to teach capacity assessment skills to Geriatric Psychiatry and Geriatric Medicine residents in 2024. The program evaluation involved residents completing pre-post

surveys, and participation in a focus group and a three-month follow-up individual interview. Results showed that the simulation provided a good opportunity to practice this skill, that working with peers and preceptors helped navigate uncertainty and anxiety, and the simulation resulted in increased confidence and a change in practice. The simulation was well-received with residents requesting it to be run annually with the opportunity in their second year to complete an

Entrustable Professional Activity (EPA). The simulation could be scaled for a wider audience or serve as a model for programs where residents have limited opportunities for assessment of competencies requiring demonstration of capacity assessment skills.

This project was funded by the Department of Psychiatry and has been published in Academic Psychiatry: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40596-025-02213-8>

Exploring Influences on the Reporting of Bias in Continuing Professional Development

Tanya MacLeod, Kimberley Good, Lara Hazelton, Owen Connolly, Mandy Esliger

Bias in continuing education can undermine learning and trust, yet little is known about factors influencing its detection and reporting. As part of a multi-phase project, the team has been exploring bias in our grand rounds for the past several years, involving review of rounds evaluation data, and interviews with Continuing Professional Development (CPD) planners, within the department and from Dalhousie's CPDME office, and our faculty members who attend rounds. Through this process, initial bias terms were identified, defined and then piloted on our grand rounds evaluation form. As reporting of bias remains low, the team wanted to better understand the behaviours involved in detecting and reporting bias. To do so, the Theoretical Domains Framework (TDF), which describes 14 domains reflecting internal and external determinants of behaviour, was applied to the data analysis. Bias was understood as a subjective, often unconscious influence on individual thinking and behaviour. Four TDF domains were most

relevant: knowledge/skills (bias literacy, critical appraisal), intentions (self-monitoring, intent to be a critical consumer), environmental context (feedback opportunities, psychological safety, conflicts of interest), and emotion. Some participants described strong affective responses — especially anger — as important motivators for reporting bias. Most factors influencing the reporting of bias are modifiable. Enhancing bias literacy, creating safe learning environments, and addressing conflicts of interest may strengthen reporting practices. This work continues as we move into Phase 3, which aims to detect and mitigate bias in CPD and residency teaching. This phase is a collaboration with pediatrics program directors.

This project was funded by the Department of Psychiatry, and a previous phase has been published in Academic Psychiatry: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40596-024-02033-2>

Tensions and contradictions: Understanding the forces that surround the creation of a rural psychiatry residency training site

Lara Hazelton, Adewale Raji, Owen Connolly, Mandy Esliger, Mark Bosma, Alexandra Manning, Peggy Alexiadis-Brown

This project involved collaboration with our postgraduate residency team, Sydney faculty members, and an evaluation specialist in the Faculty of Medicine who researches distributed medical education.

Distributed medical education (DME) has been recognized as a valuable approach to addressing physician shortages in rural areas. However, an approach to site development that focuses primarily on identifying and mitigating barriers may not capture the complexity underpinning the process. Prior to

the introduction of a month-long inpatient training experience for psychiatry residents in Cape Breton, our team carried out a focus group and key informant interviews to identify factors that could influence the implementation. A dialectical approach, which foregrounds dynamic processes and conflicting drivers, was used to analyze the data. The analysis identified five key tensions: 1) Individual needs versus systemic needs, 2) Enthusiasm versus hesitation, 3) Site integration versus site autonomy, 4) Uniqueness

versus universality of experience, and 5) Permanence vs transience of rotation. The development of a new DME site involves contradictory dynamic processes that may be understood by applying a dialectical lens. Recognizing these tensions may be useful for educators as they work toward successful implementation of new DME training experiences.

This project was funded by the Department of Psychiatry.

Developing and Implementing an Online Psychotherapy Journal Club

Hazelton, L., Maxan, E., Warmerdam, E., Dickinson, E., & Aicher, J.

The Department of Psychiatry has a strong connection between Halifax and Saint John sites, with residents from Halifax completing placements in Saint John for over 30 years. Nonetheless, opportunities for shared continuing professional development (CPD) have been limited. An online journal club would provide an opportunity for CPD in psychotherapy while also fostering collaboration and connection. To this end, Dalhousie Psychotherapy JC (PJC), was established in 2021. It is offered monthly using the Zoom platform, with presenters alternating between Saint John and Halifax.

We sought to describe the characteristics of the PJC and determine whether its sustainability was predicted by factors identified in the literature as supportive of journal club success.

Topics were analyzed thematically, with the following themes derived: 1.) 'the practice of psychotherapy',

'2.) theoretical perspectives', and 3.) 'broader social impact.' Of 13 effectiveness factors described in the literature, the program fulfilled 9, including consistent and dedicated administrative support (provided by Saint John).

PJC has been a successful collaboration, offering CPD to psychiatrists, learners and other clinicians in Halifax and Saint John. Next steps will involve further program evaluation to determine to what extent the original objectives are being met and how the program might be improved.

Education Report

UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION NEWS

Welcome to our new representatives!

We're pleased to welcome Dr. **Qendresa Sahiti** as the new Resident Representative and Ross Langley as the new Clerkship Representative.

Welcome to our new Neuroscience Head!

Dr. **Emily Maxan** has joined as the new Head of Neuroscience and a member of the Undergraduate Committee. We're excited to have her on board!

Med 2 Skilled Clinician block nearing completion

The Med 2 Skilled Clinician block wraps up in mid-November. A big thank you to our faculty, residents, and volunteers for their dedicated participation!

2025–26 Summer Internship in Psychiatry (SIIP) preparations underway

Planning for the 2025/26 SIIP is underway. Student registration will open in January 2026. This one-week program is open to Med 1 students from both the NS and NB campuses who are interested in exploring psychiatry.

Elective requests update

We continue to accept elective requests for both home and visiting students through the AFMC portal. There has been a significant increase in both applications and approvals.

MPAS student placement success

We successfully placed 24 MPAS students for 2026. Thank you to all the preceptors who generously supported the department in finding placements.

MEDICAL EDUCATION NEWS

Medical education publications:

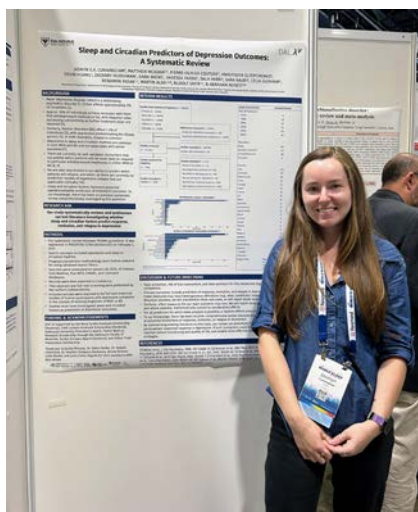
- **Singh, K., Esliger, M., Bosma, M., von Maltzahn, M., Shearer, C., Rivet, L., & Murphy, C.** (2025). Building Capacity Through Simulation: A Novel Approach to Teaching Capacity Assessment Skills to Geriatric Psychiatry and Geriatric Medicine Residents. *Academic Psychiatry*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40596-025-02213-8>

Have you published medical education scholarship?

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

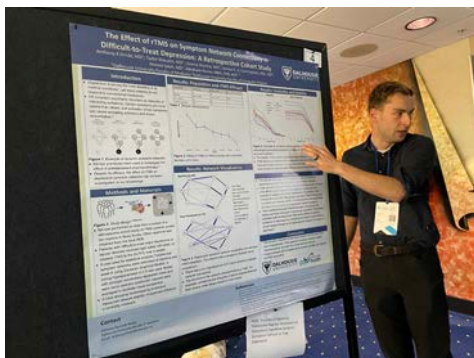
POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION NEWS

Resident research spotlight



Dr. Jasmyn Cunningham with poster presentation.

Dr. **Jasmyn Cunnningham** (PGY-4) presented her research project *Sleep and Circadian Predictors of Depression Outcomes: A Systemic Review* at the World Sleep Congress, in Singapore in September 2025.



Dr. Anthony Hinde with poster presentation.

Drs. **Anthony Hinde, Taylor Macatto, Seema Sharma, Jasmyn EA Cunningham, Ahmed Saleh, and Abraham Nunes** presented their poster on "Effect of rTMS on Symptom Network Connectivity in Difficult-to-Treat Depression: A Retrospective Cohort Study."

Resident accolades

Congratulations to Dr. **Erik Fraunberger** on winning the Department of Psychiatry at Dalhousie University's Medical Humanities Annual Writing Competition!

You can read his submission "*Rediscovering Existentialism in Predictive Processing: Enhancing Person-Centered Psychiatry*," on page 34.

Resident retreat

The resident retreat was held in October at White Point Beach Resort. We extend our gratitude to the department for generously funding the retreat through the Kilpatrick Fund.

We would like to extend a huge **THANK YOU** to all the staff who covered the call schedule during the retreat. Drs. **Olubenga Williams, Laura Downing, Charlie Kelderhouse** and **Chelcie Soroka**.

Upcoming events

Career evening

On the evening of December 5, the PGME office will be hosting a Career Evening at the Dalhousie Medical School, aimed at providing the medical students with information about a career in Psychiatry.

CaRMS

The education team is still in the planning stages of next year's virtual CaRMS. CaRMS interviews for all candidates, including local applicants, will take place over three weeks in January and February 2026. We will be sending out invites for psychiatrists and residents to volunteer to participate in interviews.

CaRMS 2026

- January 20, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
- January 26, 12:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.
- January 30, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
- February 3, 12:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

STACERs

Winter STACERs have been scheduled for December. If you are interested in participating as a STACER examiner, please reach out to **Petra Corkum** for more information.

Formative STACER Exams – PGY-2 & PGY-3

- December 1
- December 4
- December 5

Summative STACER Exam – PGY-4

- December 10



Residents attend the Canadian Psychiatric Association 75th Annual Conference in Vancouver, British Columbia in October. Pictured from left to right – Drs. **Dana Wiens, Dawn Veinot, Anthony Hinde, Louise Moodie, Jay Toulany, Olivia Pieroni, Mitchell Mammel, Emily Kervin** – Missing from photo: Drs. **Seema Sharma, Jared Allman, and Jasmyn Cunningham**.



Abbey MacLellan (PGY-2, Psychiatry) recently presented on Ableism in medicine at the International Conference on Residency Education. She is pictured here with her book: “*Am I and Ableist? Disability Awareness in Healthcare*” with her co-authors. Pictured from left to right – Drs. Abbey MacLellan, Zachary Ford, and Marihan Farid with a cover of their book.

Dr. Niamh Campbell returns from the inaugural global mental health elective

Dr. **Niamh Campbell** (PGY-5) completed a one-month elective at the University of Ghana Medical School, from October 1-October 31, 2025. Dr. Campbell attended a variety of experiences focusing on developing her clinical and leadership skills in the global context of working in low-and-middle income countries.



PSYCHIATRY GRADUATE PROGRAM NEWS

Successful defenses (spring/summer 2025) and convocations (fall 2025)

MSc in Psychiatry Research

- **Samuel Obeng Nkrumah**
(Supervisor: Dr. Agyapong)
Thesis: *Psychological health and wellness and the impact of six-week and threemonth supportive text messaging program (Wellness4MDs) among physicians and medical learners in Canada*
- **Tamar Gazit**
(Supervisors: Drs. McGrath/Stewart)
Thesis: *Telehealth-delivered written exposure therapy by paraprofessional coaches for teenagers with posttraumatic stress disorder: a case-series feasibility trial*
- **Colby Price**
(Supervisor: Dr. Keshen)
Thesis: *The effects of stimulant medication on loss of control eating in youth with attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder*
- **Holly Carbyn**
(Supervisor: Dr. Meier)
Thesis: *Evaluating the impact of an online coaching intervention for caregivers of children diagnosed with the 22q11.2 deletion syndrome*
- **Steven Jackson**
(Supervisor: Dr. Pavlova)
Thesis: *The relationship between physical activity and perseverative thinking*

PhD in Psychiatry Research

- **Katie Scott**
(Supervisors: Drs. Alda/Nunes)
Dissertation: *Dissecting bipolar disorder heterogeneity through familial aggregation, symptom dimensions, and genetic risk*
- **Kofi Medard Adu**
(Supervisor: Dr. Agyapong)
Dissertation: *Bridging gaps and optimizing outcomes in mental health access and utilization: evaluating Nova Scotia's rapid access and stabilization program*
- **Gloria Obuobi-Donkor**
(Supervisor: Dr. Agyapong)
Dissertation: *Bridging the psychological treatment gap through supportive text messaging: mental health outcomes and user engagement among diverse populations*

Congratulations!

PLANS Co-Op Program: Psychiatry student engagement event

In October 2025, Department of Psychiatry members participated in a student engagement session as part of the PLANS (Promoting Leadership in Health for African Nova Scotians) Co-Op Program. This initiative, facilitated by Dr. **Mutiat Sulyman**, Department of Psychiatry's EDIA Director, was an important opportunity for African Nova Scotian high school students to connect with faculty, explore medical career pathways, and see themselves represented in the field of psychiatry.

The session was part of the PLANS Co-op Program, where Grade 11 and 12 students spend 12 weeks each fall and winter semester at Dalhousie University, exploring various health professions through hands-on experiences and mentorship. This is Cohort 11, and it marks the largest group of African Nova Scotian youth PLANS has ever had — an exciting milestone for the program and the broader health community.

Highlights from the session included:

- **Welcome & Overview:** Dr. **Mutiat Sulyman** and Dr. **Laura Downing** opened the event with introductions to the Abbie J. Lane Building, the QEII Health Sciences Centre, and the pathways that led Dr. Downing from nursing to psychiatry.
- **Understanding Psychiatry:** Dr. **Ngozi Ezeanozie** provided an overview of the different branches of psychiatry, while Dr. **Pearl Adu-Nyako** gave a thoughtful presentation on child and adolescent psychiatry. Dr. **Anthony Pianosi** shared insights into undergraduate and medical school pathways, and his own pathway to psychiatry.
- **Keynote Presentation:** Dr. **Vincent Agyapong**, Head of the Department of Psychiatry, delivered an inspiring talk on representation, research, and leadership in psychiatry, highlighting the department's EDIA initiatives and the importance of diversity in health leadership.
- **Research & Future Pathways:** Dr. **Ejemai Eboeime**, **Bala Harri**, and Dr. **Medard Adu** introduced students to psychiatry research programs, including Text4Hope and global mental health projects, and encouraged early participation in research and mentorship opportunities.
- **Wrap-Up & Reflection:** Facilitated by Dr. **Sulyman** and Dr. **Agyapong**, students reflected on what stood out to them about mental health and representation before closing with a group photo.



Division of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry

AWARDS/RECOGNITION

Congratulations to Dr. **David Lovas** for receiving the Department of Psychiatry Dedicated Service Award.



Dr. David Lovas bid farewell to the Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry on August 29, 2025 after close to 13 years of service. A dinner party celebrating Dr. Lovas and his contributions to clinical care and teaching was held on September 18, 2025.



Dr. David Lovas joined the Dalhousie Department of Psychiatry in the Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry in 2012 after completing his adult and child and adolescent psychiatry residency at Harvard Medical School where he also completed a Psychosomatic Medicine/Psychosocial Oncology fellowship.

Dave was recognized for his passion and skill as an educator and leader early in his career at Dalhousie. From 2014 to 2023, he was Program Director of the Child and Adolescent Psychiatry residency. Under his

leadership, 10 child and adolescent psychiatry residents were trained with 100% exam success, and many still practice in Nova Scotia. His influence on the program was significant, leading the first successful accreditation in 2018 and achieving permanent government funding for two resident spots annually. Nationally, Dave has been a well-respected leader and was Chair of CAP COPE committee. He led the program through CBME transformation launched in 2022 and represented the department at the national Subspecialty

Committee in establishing the CBME standards and implementation path for child and adolescent psychiatry training in Canada.

Dr. Lovas has been an exceptional clinician and mentor since joining the IWK Health Centre and Dalhousie University Department of Psychiatry in 2012. He has worked in emergency psychiatry, consult liaison psychiatry and community mental health and addictions. Dr. Lovas led the emergency department as co-lead from 2012-2024 and was instrumental in achieving our current high-quality

care and collaboration, with improved processes provincially, for emergency child and adolescent psychiatric care. His strength in teamwork and clinical excellence helped to create lasting partnerships with emergency medicine and pediatrics.

Dave also has contributed to our department and division in neuroscience education for our residents and faculty, and training and research in innovative interventions in complex and challenging to treat psychiatric presentations such as treatment

resistant depression and somatization disorders. He has been recognized by receiving the Junior Faculty Award for Best Research Presentation at the Annual Dalhousie Psychiatry Research Day 2013, and the Department of Psychiatry Teacher of the Year Award in 2015. During the pandemic, he led mindfulness groups for staff and physicians at IWK to support wellness.

Dave's presence in our faculty as a clinician, educator, researcher and leader has been a steady, calm, and caring spirit from which we

have all have benefited. We have appreciated learning from his wise and balanced reflections. Thank you so much Dave for the countless lives you have made better, and the leadership impact you have had in our system. You have made a difference and we are wishing you well on the next part of your clinical and academic journey and excited to read your book once published!

Dr. **Jonathan Brake**, after serving at the Garron Centre, IWK for close to 13 years, and more than a decade as psychiatry inpatient lead, was welcomed at CMHA Outpatient clinic, Bedford/Sackville, on September 2, 2025. There was a celebration by the Garron team thanking Dr. Brake for his patient care, leadership and team work on August 28, 2025.



CAP CLINICAL HIGHLIGHTS

Integrated Youth Services (IYS) NS, now named Anchor Youth Space, launched two new sites – North End Halifax (lead agency YMCA) and Sydney, NS (lead agency New Dawn) in September 2025. Integrated Youth Services (IYS) is a local community organization partnership providing safe place for youth to get support for mental health issues, addictions, and other needs. An IYS site is a 'one-stop-shop' where services are tailored to youth needs and some IYS sites also offer virtual services. The goal of IYS is to connect youth and their caregivers with the right services, at the right time, close to home.



CAP PRESENTATIONS

- Dr. **Selene Etches** was the keynote speaker at the Canadian Academy of Addiction Psychiatry conference, Vancouver, BC and presented on "Advocacy in Child & Adolescent Addiction Psychiatry: realities, challenges, and opportunities" September 3, 2025.
- Dr. **Selene Etches** was the workshop facilitator at the Canadian Academy of Addiction Psychiatry conference, Vancouver, BC and presented on "Working with Youth who Use Substances" September 3, 2025.
- Dr. **Selene Etches** collaborated with Choi F, Ignaszewski M, Lew A, Saunders J, Nalliah S and Johnson R on a poster presented at the Canadian Academy of Addiction Psychiatry Annual Conference, Vancouver BC titled "Systematic review on the use of antidepressants in youth with comorbid alcohol use disorders." September 4-6, 2025.
- Dr. **Jill Chorney** collaborated with Snow, S and Hundert, A on a talk presented to Women's and Children's Healthcare Australasia's Series, Improving Value in Healthcare titled "Measurement to Meaning Part 1: Clinical Applications of Measurement Based Care" September 5, 2025.
- Dr. **Selene Etches** submitted a briefing to Nova Scotia government, "High Potency Cannabis-Usage, Risks, Recommendations" September 12, 2025.
- Dr. **Alexa Bagnell** presented at the Canadian Mental Health Association, Nova Scotia division's OCD Parent Group, on "OCD and PANS treatment" September 25, 2025.
- Dr. **Jill Chorney** collaborated with Snow S and Hundert, A on their presented talk to Women's and Children's Healthcare Australasia's Series, Improving Value in Healthcare titled "Measurement to Meaning Part 2: Leveraging Data for System Improvement at IWK Health" October 1, 2025.
- Dr. **Jill Chorney** presented at Focus Forward: Goal-Oriented Youth Mental Health Practices in Canada conference, White Point, NS on "Working with Goals: IWK Journey" October 18, 2025.

CAP EDUCATION

CAP residency program updates

CaRMS results are announced and we are very pleased to inform that Dr. **Lauren Miller**, PGY-4, has matched with our C&A Psychiatry Subspecialty Residency program; she will begin her training on July 1, 2026.

Dalhousie International Fellowship in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

Welcome to Dr. **Pearl Adu-Nyako**, who joins us from Ghana and is doing a six-month fellowship in Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, which began September 2, 2025.



Dr. Pearl Adu-Nyako.

CAP RESEARCH

CAP research highlights

Drs. **Chelcie Soroka** and **Katie Radchuck**, along with Dr. **Aaron Keshen**, will be the local leads on a national evaluation study, “National Implementation of Highly Efficient Evidence-Informed Treatment for Youth with Eating Disorders.” The study was developed by principal investigator Dr. Jennifer Couturier, with McMaster University as the lead site.

Guided Self-Help Family-Based Treatment (GSH-FBT) is a promising, more efficient alternative to longer-term Family-Based Treatment (FBT), the most widely used evidence-based treatment for children and adolescents with EDs, as well

as its virtual alternative (FBT-V). GSH-FBT is a virtual treatment, adapted using FBT principles, which involves a therapist “coach” and a video platform for parents who are empowered to take charge of their child’s recovery. Essential material is delivered by video or written material at ten virtual 20-minute sessions over the course of 6-months, standardizing treatment and ensuring key components are delivered.

The current study seeks to evaluate the implementation of GSH-FBT within nine study sites across Canada.

This is an exciting collaboration with potential for deep impact on mental health care delivery across Canada. The following is a list provinces (and their associated study sites): Alberta (Alberta Children’s Hospital); British Columbia (BC Children’s Hospital); Manitoba (Health Sciences Centre Winnipeg); New Brunswick (Community Mental Health Organization); Nova Scotia (IWK Health Centre); Ontario (Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario or CHEO); Prince Edward Island (Health PEI –Community Mental Health and Addictions); Quebec (Montreal Children’s Hospital); Saskatchewan (Saskatchewan Health Authority).

CAP PUBLICATIONS

Dr. **Alexa Bagnell** co-authored with Dr. David Goldbloom an op-ed article in The Hill Times titled “The quiet revolution to improve access to youth mental health care,” highlighting IYS in Canada and its impact and importance in youth mental health. Published on September 1, 2025.

Section of Community Psychiatry

NSOSIC team members attend the 2025 Canadian Institute for Military and Veteran Health Research conference

Team members from the Nova Scotia Operational Stress Injury Clinic (NSOSIC) proudly represented Nova Scotia Health at the 2025 Canadian Institute for Military and Veteran Health Research (CIMVHR) Conference, held this October in Ottawa. The event provided a valuable opportunity to engage with the latest research and innovations aimed at supporting Veterans, Canadian Armed Forces members, and Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) personnel. The conference offered insights into emerging practices and collaborative strategies that align closely with the clinic's mission to improve the mental health and well-being of those who serve and have served.

We are especially pleased to share that the 2026 CIMVHR Conference will be hosted in Halifax, Nova Scotia — a development that was met with enthusiasm by our team and others across Canada and beyond. Representing NSOSIC at the 2025 conference, from left to right in our group photo, were: **Patrick Daigle**, **Dr. Naomi Doucette**, **Dr. Margaret (Leigh) Meldrum**, **Dr. Sarah Putnam**, and **Dr. Abraham (Rami) Rudnick**. Our participation underscores Nova Scotia Health's ongoing commitment to collaboration, knowledge exchange, and leadership in the field of military, veteran and police health treatment and research.



NSOSIC members attend the 2025 CIMVHR conference.

Community Psychiatry education event

The Department of Psychiatry hosted a successful Community Psychiatry Education Half Day on October 18, 2025, at the Halifax Central Library. The morning began with **Dr. Laura Downing**'s overview of the Involuntary Psychiatric Treatment Act, covering essential forms, review boards, and processes to support practical application in community psychiatry. **Dr. Abraham Nunes** delivered a clinician's guide to advanced biological therapeutics for difficult-to-treat depression, highlighting innovative options

like neuromodulation and novel pharmacotherapies. The final session by **Dr. Erica Baker** focused on high-functioning autism in psychiatric clinics, offering insights into comorbidities, effective clinical interactions, and outpatient support strategies. Attendees found the sessions useful, practical, and easy to bring back to their own clinical work. Many comments highlighted how nice it was to gather in person again and reconnect with colleagues. A few suggestions came up for next year — such as covering

treatment-resistant psychosis and tough-to-treat anxiety/OCD. Big thanks to the speakers who made it a genuine success!

Section of Geriatric Psychiatry

Publications and presentations

- **Singh, K., Esliger, M., Bosma, M., von Maltzahn, M., Shearer, C., Rivet, L., & Murphy, C.** (2025). Building Capacity Through Simulation: A Novel Approach to Teaching Capacity Assessment Skills to Geriatric Psychiatry and Geriatric Medicine Residents. *Academic Psychiatry*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40596-025-02213-8>
- Dr. Singh also presented the poster at the Association for Academic Psychiatry (AAP) Annual Meeting in Milwaukee in September 2025 and the Canadian Academy for Geriatric Psychiatry (CAGP) Annual Scientific Meeting in Calgary in October 2025.
- Dr. Singh participated in a panel session at CAGP titled “Trainee Education Session: Exploring Career Pathways in Geriatric Psychiatry.”
- **Cassidy, K. L., Gough, A., Eskes, G. A., Stewart, S. H., Hawkins, S., & Rivet, L.** “Protocol for a Randomized Controlled Trial of the Efficacy of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for Older Adults (CBT-OA) with Depression Compared to Treatment As Usual.” Poster Presentation, Psychiatry Research Day, Nov. 7, 2025.



Dalhousie colleagues got together for dinner in Calgary.

Geriatric Psychiatry Subspecialty Residency Program

The Geriatric Psychiatry Subspecialty Residency program is thrilled to announce that we matched Dr. **Jay Toulany** and he will start subspecialty training in July 2026.

The program has welcomed Dr. **Lauren Haslam** back from her parental leave in August 2025, and sends best wishes to Dr. **Eileen Burns**, as she started her parental leave in September 2025.

FutureFlow: Virtual demos for One Person One Record



Your guide to key workflows and functionality

To help you prepare for the **One Person One Record Clinical Information System (OPOR-CIS)** training and implementation, the **OPOR Provider Adoption Team** has been offering *FutureFlow*, a series of virtual demonstrations tailored for healthcare providers. These sessions give you a preview of the system using realistic patient scenarios.

What You Can Expect:

- A provider-centric approach focusing on key workflows and functionality of the OPOR-CIS.
- Practical, scenario-based demonstrations to help familiarize you with the system before training.

Meeting Details:

- **Dates:** Weekly until Dec. 4, 2025
- **Times:** Tuesdays from 6:00 – 7:30 p.m. and Thursdays from 12:00 – 1:30 p.m.

*Demonstrations on **Inpatient/ Acute, Ambulatory and Mental Health & Addiction workflows** occurred in September and October. Critical Care, Anesthesiology and Radiology will be the focus of the November sessions.*

For access to recorded *FutureFlow* sessions and additional resources, visit the [Provider Corner](#) on the OPOR Hub.

Building Trust Through Transformation

The Nova Scotia Health Mental Health and Addictions Program reflects on a year of meaningful change, accessibility, and connection

Submitted by Remo Zaccagna, senior communications advisor, Mental Health and Addictions Program

It was a year of transformation at the Nova Scotia Health Mental Health and Addictions Program (MHAP), as several changes and enhancements were introduced aimed at improving accessibility to services for Nova Scotians across the province.

This work reflects a growing commitment to meet people where they are and to continue listening, learning, and evolving in how we deliver care.

Three of those enhancements, representing years of planning and work, occurred in the Central Intake service, with Recovery Support Centres (RSC) and Mental Health Day Hospitals.

“Thanks to the hard work and commitment from the entire staff, Nova Scotians can access a diverse array of mental health services without any wait, ensuring that help is always within reach,” said Dana Pulsifer, senior director at the MHAP.

In April, the MHAP, in collaboration with IWK Health, implemented several key updates to their intake process, including the introduction of an online booking system, allowing clients and families to schedule initial intake appointments at their convenience.

Since launch, the changes have encouraged clients to use self-referral options as the primary way to access intake, ensuring they can connect with services more quickly. People can self-refer by contacting Intake at 1-855-922-1122 or they can book online at prebooking.nshealth.ca.

Three years after opening its first RSC in Dartmouth, the MHAP reached another milestone in 2025, with the addition of three more RSCs in Truro, Amherst, and Springhill. This brings the total number of RSCs across the province to 12, reaching a full complement of sites that were planned when the model was first conceived several years ago.

These sites offer Nova Scotians living with substance use and gambling disorders a place to seek help in an outpatient setting, with people able to simply walk in without needing a referral.

They are staffed by a multi-disciplinary team of physicians, nurses, pharmacists, social workers and administrative personnel, who collaborate to learn more about the situation and support the needs of everyone who walks through the door. Each RSC reflects care that is not only clinically strong, but also grounded in compassion, openness, and partnership.

In late 2024, the fourth Mental Health Day Hospital opened in Truro, joining ones in Halifax, Sydney, and Kentville.

Day hospital staff provide structured, goal-oriented programs for individuals experiencing mental health concerns. Patients receive structured care throughout the day while returning home in the evening, thereby achieving an effective balance between comprehensive treatment and continued integration within their community.

And with a day hospital now open in each zone, usage has grown in 2025, equaling thousands of days



Dana Pulsifer.

of intensive treatment that would have previously required inpatient admission, becoming a flexible and effective alternative for inpatient mental health care.

“Our goal over the last five years, culminating in 2025, was to develop accessible and low barrier options for people seeking care. By expanding services across more locations and leveraging virtual technologies, we are delivering support more swiftly and seamlessly than ever before,” Pulsifer said.

Looking ahead, MHAP leaders recognize that transformation is not only about systems and structures, but also about trust, and building it through consistency, humility, and partnership.

By continuing to listen to the people we serve, the MHAP is laying the foundation for a new era of mental health and addictions care, one built on connection and hope.

“We have more work to do, which includes listening to those we serve, as we strive to evolve our services to meet the future needs of Nova Scotians and continue to develop low or no barrier access,” Pulsifer said.

Social Policy & Advocacy

Workshop for international students

Bala Harri, PhD student in Psychiatry Research, organized a workshop for international students, which took place on Nov. 13, 2025.

Every day, international students navigate challenges domestic peers rarely consider, decoding unspoken cultural rules, managing homesickness, wrestling with imposter syndrome in a second language, and handling academic pressure thousands of miles from your support system.

Speakers included department members Drs. **Mutiat Sulyman**, EDIA Director, and Dr. **Sanjana**

Sridharan, Head of the Section of Acute, Consultation and Emergency Psychiatry. The event also included a panel discussion from Dalhousie Wellness Centre, International Grad Students, Faith-Based Representative, and Student Accessibility Centre.

The event was presented in partnership with BIPOC Graduate Student Mentoring Academy, Black Student Advising Centre, and Graduate Student Association of the Department of Psychiatry, and was one of the recipients of the Social Policy & Advocacy Initiatives Fund.



Department News

Position Paper: Psychiatric Training During Clerkship: Specific Recommendations for Reform--Part 1, Teaching and Learning

Dr. **Joseph Sadek** authored the position paper "Psychiatric Training During Clerkship: Specific Recommendations for Reform — Part 1, Teaching and Learning," from the Canadian Psychiatric Association.

Read the position paper [here](#).

Welcome reception for International Fellows



In October 2025, we held a welcome reception for five new International Fellows from Saudi Arabia, Oman, and Ghana. These physicians are undertaking advanced training in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Neuropsychiatry, Forensic Psychiatry, Intellectual Disability Psychiatry, and Sleep Medicine at the Dalhousie University Department of Psychiatry.

These fellowship programs aim to strengthen human resource capacity in both low- and high-resource settings, with an ultimate goal of expanding access to psychiatric care for millions of people around the world.

Collaboration meetings in Ireland



On the sidelines of the Court of Examiners meeting for the Master's in Global Mental Health Program at the Centre for Global Health, Trinity College Dublin in Ireland, Dr. **Vincent Agyapong**, department head, had the pleasure of visiting Professor James V. Lucey — Inspector for Mental Health Services at the Irish Mental Health Commission and former Medical Director of St. Patrick's Mental Health Services. Their conversation focused on our shared commitment to advancing a human rights-based approach to mental healthcare access as an essential component of universal health coverage.



During this visit, Dr. Agyapong also met with the leadership of St. Patrick's Mental Health Services to discuss our longstanding and ongoing collaborations and explored further opportunities to strengthen Global Mental Health initiatives both within our respective contexts and globally.

Department members attend 2025 Med Gala and Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia RBC Holiday Gala

Faculty, staff, and guests attended the 2025 Dal Med Gala on Nov. 1, 2025 and the Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia RBC Holiday Black Tie Gala: Northern Lights & Ocean Nights on Nov. 22, 2025.



FACULTY & STAFF CHANGES

Arrivals

- **Aleya MacNeil** joined the department's operations team as physician resource manager in October 2025. Aleya can be reached at **aleya.macneil@nshealth.ca**

Welcome Aleya!

Departures

- Dr. **Kulli Poder** retired from the department effective Oct. 15, 2025
- Dr. **Laura Downing** resigned from the department effective Oct. 24, 2025
- Dr. **Emmanuel Babalola** is resigning from the department effective Dec. 26, 2025
- Dr. **Sreenivasa Baskara** is retiring from the department effective Dec. 31, 2025
- Dr. **Igor Yakovenko** is resigning from the department effective Dec. 31, 2025
- **Sandra Millar** is retiring from the department, effective Dec. 19, 2025.

We wish you well!

Staff changes

Petra Corkum has recently taken on the role of graduate education coordinator, effective Nov. 10, 2025. All inquiries for postgraduate education should be directed to **Psych.Postgrad@dal.ca**.

We are recruiting for the postgraduate education coordinator position and will share updates when available.

Congratulations Petra!

AWARDS & HONOURS

Dr. Ejemai Eboreime awarded Emerging Professional Award



Congratulations to Dr. **Ejemai Eboreime** who was awarded the Discovery Awards Emerging Professional Award.

This award recognizes an individual who is early in their career and demonstrates research excellence, knowledge sharing, and potential for ongoing growth and development.

Dr. Eboreime was announced as the winner and presented with the award at the Discovery Awards ceremony on November 20, 2025.

[Read more.](#)

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Dr. Vincent Agyapong awarded M. Andrew Padmos International Collaboration Award



Congratulations to Dr. **Vincent Agyapong**, recipient of the 2025 M. Andrew Padmos International Collaboration Award. Presented by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada, this award recognizes exceptional leadership in advancing postgraduate medical education and residency training outside Canada. Dr. Agyapong was presented with the award at a ceremony in Ottawa in October.

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Bala Harri, PhD in Psychiatry Research student, awarded the Elizabeth and Donald Hillman Award



Congratulations to **Bala Harri**, PhD in Psychiatry Research student, who received the Elizabeth and Donald Hillman Award at the 2025 Canadian Conference on Global Health (CCGH) held in Halifax, NS. This award is the highest recognition for student presentations at the CCGH.

At the conference, he also presented their lab's protocol titled: "In-person vs. Mobile App-Facilitated Life Skills Education to Improve the Mental Health of Internally Displaced Persons in Nigeria: Protocol for the RESETTLE-IDPs Cluster Randomized Hybrid Type 2 Effectiveness-Implementation Trial."

The CCGH brought together participants from 41 member countries.

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Dr. Vincent Agyapong awarded the Leadership Excellence Award for Canada from the eMental Health International Collaborative

Congratulations to Dr. **Vincent Agyapong** who was awarded the Leadership Excellence Award for Canada from the eMental Health International Collaborative (eMHIC) for the Global Psychological eHealth Foundation. As one of the highest honours in digital mental health, this award recognizes visionary leadership and steadfast commitment to advancing innovation in mental health, thereby improving timely access to mental health information, care, support, and treatment. This award is presented to only one recipient per country annually. As a recipient of this distinguished honour, Dr. Agyapong will also be inducted into eMHIC's Digital Mental Health Hall of Fame, joining a global community of pioneers who have shaped the evolution of digital mental health.

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Dr. Abraham (Rami) Rudnick appointed to Health Canada's Scientific Advisory Committee on Mental Health Disorders (SAC-MHD)

Congratulations to Dr. **Abraham (Rami) Rudnick** who was recently appointed for an initial six-month term to Health Canada's Scientific Advisory Committee on Mental Health Disorders (SAC-MHD). Dr. Rudnick's appointment reflects the committee's strong confidence in his expertise and the valuable insights he brings to this important work.

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Dr. David Gardner receives thanks for work on Canada Drug Agency Advisory Panel

Dr. **David Gardner** received a letter of appreciation from Suzanne McGurn, President and CEO of Canada's Drug Agency (CDA), for his work on the ad hoc Essential Prescription Drugs and Related Products Advisory Panel. Congratulations Dr. Gardner!

Congratulations to the recipients of Department of Psychiatry awards!

The department was excited to announce the recipients of the following departmental awards that were presented at our bi-annual meeting on Nov. 12.

2025 Educator of the Year Award

This award recognizes a faculty member of the Department of Psychiatry, Dalhousie University who demonstrates excellence in teaching of students and/or colleagues, mentorship of learners and peers in scholarly activity and/or demonstrates leadership and innovation in development of educational programming.

The 2025 Educator of the Year Award recipients are:

- Dr. **Joseph Aicher**
- Dr. **Mark Paramlall**

2025 Dr. Larry Buffett Outstanding Teacher Award

This award recognizes a faculty member in the Central Zone of Nova Scotia who has demonstrated outstanding performance in their role as a clinical supervisor to learners in the Department of Psychiatry.

The 2025 Dr. Larry Buffett Outstanding Teacher Award recipient is Dr. **Anthony Pianosi**.

2025 Distributed Site Outstanding Teacher Award

This award recognizes an exceptional faculty member at a distributed teaching site in Nova Scotia or New Brunswick (including Saint John, NB) who has demonstrated outstanding performance in their role as a clinical supervisor to learners in the Department of Psychiatry.

The 2025 Distributed Site Outstanding Teacher Award recipient is Dr. **Julia Gibson**.

2025 Outstanding Clinician Award

This award recognizes those members who have made outstanding contributions to the department's mandate of providing excellence in clinical care.

The 2025 Outstanding Clinician Award recipient is Dr. **Sarah Fancy**.



Dr. Mark Paramlall.



Dr. Sarah Fancy.



Dr. Anthony Pianosi.

Dedicated Service Award

The Dedicated Service Award recognizes departing department members who have served the department for at least 10 years. The Dedicated Service Award recipients are:

- Dr. Kulli Poder
- Dr. Sreenivasa Bhaskara
- Sandra Millar

Special Recognition Award

Special Recognition Awards were presented to:

For unwavering reliability and leadership

- Dr. Sanjana Sridharan
- Dr. Phil Tibbo

For unwavering reliability and professional service

- Linda Ford
- Penney Miller

Congratulations to all the award recipients!



Dr. Sreenivasa Bhaskara.



Sandra Millar.



Linda Ford.



Dr. Kulli Poder.



Dr. Sanjana Sridharan.



Penney Miller.

EXTRA MILE AWARD

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

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

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

Humanities Corner

Winners of the 2025 Humanities Writing Competition

The **Department of Psychiatry Medical Humanities Program** is delighted to announce the winners of the 2025 Writing Competition. Please join us in congratulating the following winners:

2025 Resident Winner:

Dr. Erik Fraunberger, Dalhousie University, Department of Psychiatry

Read the winning entry, “[Rediscovering Existentialism in Predictive Processing: Enhancing Person-Centered Psychiatry](#)”

2024 Medical Student Winner:

Raymond Tu, Schulich School of Medicine at Western University

Read the winning entry “[A Story that Spins and Lands Whole](#)”

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 **February 2026**.

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



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