

Spring 2021 Department of Psychiatry Newsletter Calgary Zone



Message from the Department Head

Dr. Valerie Taylor

understand that this year has felt like Groundhog Day, with things constantly repeating.

People have used the emotional and days and I feel it is glimmers of hope rollout to staff and of instilling a sense of successful CaRMS involved) and moves forward for SHC and for our new to feel optimistic significant increases know that many of burnt out. We are



Dr. Valerie Taylor

physical state of things these apt. There are finally some however. The vaccine patients has had an impact hope. We have also had a match (shout out to all planning and construction PICU beds at the PLC and child center. There is much about. We continue to see in volumes however and I you are feeling stressed and

trying to respond to this with the creation of a Wellness Program in the Department and I hope you continue to reach out with suggestions. We will get through this together.

Best, Valerie



Department of Psychiatry Updates

Sebastian K Littmann Day

The 34th Annual Sebastian K.
Littmann Research Day was held on
March 5, 2021, by Zoom of course.

The event had > 120 registrants and featured keynote presentations by Dr. Julia Kirkham (University of Calgary) and Dr. Nolan Williams of Stanford University, as well as 21 research abstracts presented in 3 parallel sessions.

Congratulations and thank you to all of the presenters and attendees, and to the award winners:

- ➤ Best Presentation by a Graduate Student: Maya Sohn. The Death-Implicit Association Test and suicide attempts: a systematic review and meta-analysis of discriminative and prospective utility
- Best Presentation by a Medical Student: Lucy Miao. Plasma βamyloid in mild behavioural impairment – neuropsychiatric symptoms on the Alzheimer's continuum

- ➤ Best Presentation by a Resident **Dr.**Joey Prisnie. Utilization of moderate-duration summary podcasts compared to long-duration podcasts for psychiatry education by Canadian pre-clerkship medical students.
- Best Presentation by an Undergraduate Student Andrea Soumbasis and Jordyn Flanagan.
 The Association Between The Covid-19 Pandemic with Eating Behaviours and Physical Activity: A Systematic Review

The abstract are the process of being submitted to the University of Calgary's PRISM archive. They will be indexed in Google Scholar so that they can be cited in future research work, and to allow confirmation of the presentations on the participants' CVs.

Undergraduate Medical Education (UME) Program

Dr. Tim Ayas, Clerkship Director

It has been a tumultuous year to say the least. That being said, we have still maintained an excellent psychiatric clerkship experience thanks to all our hardworking administrators, teachers, site chiefs, and preceptors. We're in a busy time period now of overlap as the Class of 2021 is just completing shortly and the class of 2022 have recently started clerkship.

I want to give you a number of updates from the Clerkship Committee. As you may remember, multiple rotations including Psychiatry, Family Medicine, Obstetrics/Gynecology, and Emergency/Anesthesia were shortened for the pandemic year. Due to provisions for a potentially shortened year due to the ongoing pandemic, clerkship rotations will still be shortened for the 2021-22 Class. Hence, we will continue to be a four week rotation consisting of three weeks Adult psychiatry and one week of Child/Adolescent Psychiatry. This has led to a number of changes to our rotation including a reduction in academic hours and recalibration of call parameters.

The status of visiting electives is still being decided upon national consensus by all the medical schools, potentially this may start once again by Fall depending on the pandemic statistics.

The psychiatry residents Drs. Paige Durling, Harleen Hehar, Rohit Ghate, and Howie Wu will be taking over the roles of UME Reps. Thank you to all our residents who participate in the weekly teaching as well. As always, you are highly commended by the students you teach.

We have shifted our participation to a new Alcoholics Anonymous group that is much more proactive and enthusiastic about teaching our clerks for our monthly session. The first meeting in mid-March was an incredible experience for our learners.

There have been some questions regarding the ability of mandatory and elective clerks to participate in electroconvulsive therapy with their preceptors. To reiterate, due to the potential of the aerosolized nature of the procedure and the inconsistency of N95 testing, we still cannot permit attendance for the clerks. In lieu, they have a learning module consisting of a video and reading available on their clerkship network Osler.

The brand-new Junior Clerkship two week rotation from January 25th to February 7th, 2021 was described as a success by both preceptors and clerks. The clerks really appreciated clinical exposure in the absence of pre-clerkship shadowing and clinical core opportunities due to the pandemic. This will likely be repeated next year.

Once again, I want to thank all of you for your time and dedication to undergraduate medical education, it is greatly appreciated by all of us, and most importantly by your future colleagues.

Dr. Philip Stokes, Chair - Course VII

Preclerkship education is having an unusually long quiet spell. Last year our course was brought forward by four months and put online at the end of the summer. It appeared to go well enough despite all the Covid-induced changes, thanks to all those who made their usual lectures into podcasts at short notice.

However, our students were disappointed not to receive clinical correlation on the wards as usual.

This year we expect to return to our December slot, and will be pleased to deliver lectures and small groups in person once again. Dr. Nancy Brager, Director of Undergraduate Medical Education

e are pleased by the ongoing interest in psychiatry by our students as evidenced by the number of students applying for electives. The preclerkship electives are now called Career Exploration electives. Visiting electives were interrupted nationally but may possibly resume in the fall.

While the impact of COVID is evident throughout our program, what has not changed is the dedication and support of our faculty, residents and administrators to continue delivering excellent education. Thank you to all and thank you to the students who strive so hard to learn!!

Subspecialty Programs

Geriatric Psychiatry Update

Darrin Leung MD FRCPC Geriatric Psychiatry Subspecialty Program Director

Psychiatry Subspecialty Training here at the University of Calgary has been underway since July 2020 with our first subspecialty resident Dr Ehsan Dorri joining us from Edmonton. His first year has been spent getting settled in to Calgary and rotating through a mixture of inpatient, consultation liaison and outreach rotations. He has been a great addition to our program. His adaptability and strong work ethic have already proven to be an asset to our subspecialty.

For our first full cycle of applications we were lucky to have had several very qualified residents form across the country interested in pursuing training here. We have been fortunate to have Dr. Harry Zhou from the general U of C Psychiatry Residency Program joining our growing subspecialty training group. Coinciding with his anticipated start of July 2021 is the Royal College mandated roll out of competency based medical education for geriatric psychiatry.

At present we have confirmed funding for one subspecialty training position, but given the anticipated need for more geriatric psychiatry sub-specialists in the coming years we will be seeking funding for a second position starting in July 2022. For those interested in pursuing a career in geriatric psychiatry we would be happy to accommodate electives.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Dr. Thomas Raedler/Anne Enders

he multi-disciplinary departmental CPD committee oversees all CPD-activities through our department. We meet on the second Monday of each month for one hour. We are always looking for new members for our committee. Please let us know if you are interested in joining our team.

The Spring 2021 Grand Rounds semester commenced on January 12, 2021. The Spring 2021 Grand Rounds semester covers a wide array of topics and will end on June 29, 2021. The CPD committee will start scheduling Grand Rounds for the Fall 2021 semester after our May meeting. Please forward suggestions for topics or speakers for Grand Rounds by the end of April. Grand Rounds will continue to be available via Zoom at

https://ucalgary.zoom.us/j/91288206268 until further notice.

Dr. Thomas Raedler (chair), Dr. Cindy Beck, Dr. David Crockford and Dr. Waqar Waheed are currently organizing the

Psychiatry Online Literature Review Course (POLRC) 2021. POLRC covers 12 journal articles with a focus on 'Highlights of 2020'. The POLRC offers participants the option of obtaining up 38 MOC Section 1 and 3 MOC Section 3 CME-credits from the convenience of home. Previously the Office of CME&PD of the Cumming School of Medicine was facilitating this program. Due to restructuring, the Office of CME&PD is no longer able to assist with this program. We are currently anticipating a start date in September 2021 and will notify you once this program is fully set up.

Please notify Anne Enders at margaret.enders@ucalgary.ca if you are not receiving our weekly email updates. For physicians, please let Anne Enders know if you are not receiving the weekly online surveys (your CME-credits will be based on the completion of this online survey).

Thank you again for your ongoing support of our CPD-activities.

Mathison Centre Updates

Dr. Paul Arnold/Josephine Adda

Mathison Centre team helps students manage anxiety and emotions during COVID-19

Day Fund from the UCalgary Vice President Research office, Dr Gina Dimitropoulos leads a Mathison Centre



research team to help students stay on top of their mental health during the pandemic.

Together with colleague
Mathison Centre members Drs.
Scott Patten and
Paul Arnold as

well as collaborators from the UCalgary Student Wellness Centre, the team is rolling out the Unified Protocol; a cognitive behavioural therapy program that allows facilitators to work with groups of youth (age 16-25) experiencing a range of emotions and provide them with a toolkit that lasts beyond the sessions so they can continue to regulate themselves and learn to ease their stresses.

The protocol moves away from diseasespecific or diagnosis-specific treatment to use a technique that targets the unifying features of mental illnesses. *More...* Mathison Centre and O'Brien Institute for Public Health support education on Cannabis

The Mathison Centre in collaboration with the O'Brien Institute for Public Health teamed up with research lead Dr. Jacqueline Smith of the Faculty of Nursing and Mathison Centre member to host a town hall with over 130 participants - researchers, educators and mental health practitioners

from across education reduction cannabis Speakers at hall members of Mathison the O'Brien Matthew Hill, and Monty Ghosh.

Canada on and harm around use. the town included the Centre and Institute; Drs Rebecca Saah

Dr. Smith is passionate about education and harm reduction as an essential need following legalization of cannabis for recreational use in Canada. With funding from Health Canada, her research team embarked on the Cannabis Café: Education and Harm Reduction Initiative which among other deliverables culminated in the development of a facilitator's guide. The guide is widely used across Canada and endorsed by the Mathison Centre and the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction.

Significant number of young Canadians experience adolescent dating violence

Canada's first study to capture nationally representative data on adolescent dating violence (ADV) led by Mathison Centre

member Dr.
Deinera ExnerCortens reveals
that more than one
in three Canadian
youth experience
adolescent dating
violence with rates



of ADV highest among marginalized youth. The study conducted alongside post doctoral fellow Dr. Elizabeth Baker and Dr. Wendy Craig, professor in Queens University was recently published in the Journal of Adolescent Health. More...

Maternal mental health challenges rise in COVID-19 pandemic

Researchers have revealed that symptoms of anxiety and depression in mothers nearly doubled in 2020 during the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic. This is based on

findings



from a project in the All Our Families Study that has been following nearly 3000

mothers and their children for the last 12 years. Data collected in May and July of 2020 noted a very difficult time for families with stressors including loss of employment,

non availability of childcare options, and home schooling by parents often juggling working from home with child care. Results of the study have been published in an article by lead author Nicole Racine and the team in the Lancet Psychiatry Nicole is a post doctoral fellow supervised by Mathison Centre researcher Sheri Madigan. Read more...

Discovering Biomarkers: the case for mental health

Mathison member Dr. Signe Bray and colleagues are pursuing <u>studies</u> to uncover biomarkers that could help identify, treat and potentially prevent the onset of symptoms in



children at risk of developing mental illness. The effort has recently received a funding boost of \$3m from the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) to advance the technological capabilities for the project. The team which includes colleague Mathison members Dr. Frank MacMaster and Catherine Lebel and others are working in collaboration with imaging specialists in adult imaging to examine brain development and associated changes during the lifespan. Biomarkers when identified could also become targets for precision treatments and other interventions.



Mind Matters

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Department of Psychiatry Research Projects

pandemic. Within one year from the initial reports about COVID-19, Health Canada has approved several safe and effective vaccines to bring this devastating viral infection under control. Around the world, numerous pharmaceutical companies are conducting clinical trials to find a cure for the pandemic. All compounds have to go through a rigorous process, called clinical trials. All new compounds undergo Phase 1, Phase 2 and Phase 3 clinical trials:

In Phase 1, a compound is used for the first time in humans (usually healthy volunteers).

In Phase 2, a compound is used for the first time in a specific disease.

Phase 3 studies are large clinical trials (usually several thousand participants) which may lead to approval of this compound by the regulatory authorities.

Phase 4 studies are conducted after a compound has been approved by the regulatory authorities.

The Mental Health Clinical Trials Unit (MHCTU) continues to pursue the goal of finding new and better pharmacological treatments for psychiatric disorders. We participate in phase 2, phase 3 and phase 4

studies. Our recent clinical trials cover the areas of schizophrenia, attenuated psychosis syndrome (prodromal psychosis) and ADHD. Being in a clinical trial offers participants the opportunity of receiving treatment with novel pharmaceutical compounds that are not yet commercially available as well as receiving frequent assessments and oversight of care. Please be aware that many participants experience an improvement in their symptoms while participating in a clinical trial.

Like many other programs, our activities were significantly impacted by COVID-19. All clinical trials were initially closed for further recruitment. We were able to use online assessments for subjects who were already enrolled in our trials. We recently resumed our clinical trials activities in keeping with the COVID-19 safety parameters. We were recently informed that Boehringer Ingelheim terminated two clinical trials in relapse-prevention in schizophrenia and attenuated psychosis syndrome. We also completed recruitment for a phase 4 study in ADHD.

The MHCTU is currently participating in the following clinical trials:

NaBen Studies:

NaBen (sodium benzoate) is already approved as a food-additive (E211). This compound is being tested in clinical trials as it is thought to improve the function of the NMDA-receptor. Previous studies have shown excellent efficacy and safety for NaBen in improving symptoms of schizophrenia.

The NaBen Adolescent Schizophrenia Study (NCT01908192) assesses the effects of sodium benzoate as an add-on medication to ongoing antipsychotic treatment on symptoms of schizophrenia in adolescents with schizophrenia between the ages of 12 and 17 years.

The NaBen Adult Schizophrenia study (NCT02261519) assesses the effects of add-on treatment with sodium benzoate in adults with schizophrenia, who continue to struggle with psychotic symptoms despite ongoing antipsychotic treatment.

The NaBen Clozapine study

(NCT03094429) assesses sodium benzoate as add-on treatment in subjects who failed to experience sufficient benefits from treatment with clozapine.

BI Cognition Study in Schizophrenia 1346-0038 (NCT03859973):

BI 425809 is an orally administered glycine transporter-1 inhibitor and may improve the function of the glutamate NMDA-receptor. This phase II clinical trial assesses whether treatment with this compound, in combination with regular computerized cognitive training, helps improve cognition in schizophrenia.

The MHCTU is also involved in the SPICE-P and SPICE-T studies. The studies look at prevention and treatment of cannabis use disorder in subjects with first episode psychosis (PI: Dr. David Crockford).

The MHCTU was approached participating in different phase 2, phase 3 and phase 4 clinical trials in the areas of schizophrenia, MDD, OCD and cocaine use disorders. We will keep you informed once these studies are ready for recruitment.

We continue to rely on your support for our clinical trials program. Please feel free to contact myself at Thomas.raedler@ahs.ca, Geri Anderson at phone 403.210.6903 or email Geri.Anderson@ahs.ca, or Jeff Cheng at phone 403.210.8679 or email cfj.cheng@ucalgary.ca if you wish to have more information about our current clinical trials, or if you wish to refer a patient for possible participation.

Awards and Achievements

- The First Episode Psychosis Services Fidelity Scale and Manual Author, Addington D
 has been published by University of Calgary Press.
 https://press.ucalgary.ca/books/9781773852089/
- Trainee Awards/Accomplishments
 - Clara Tapia (MSc Graduate Student, MacMaster Lab) earned the runner up slot for the Keith Cooper Award for the second highest course marks in graduate neuroscience (MDSC 619 courses). March 3, 2021
 - Tasmia Hai (PhD Graduate Student, MacMaster Lab) got matched with the Northern Ontario Psychology Internship Consortium (NORPIC) for her APPIC internship.
- Summer Studentships (\$10,000)
 - Allesha Eman Alberta Children's Hospital Research Institute (ACHRI) Summer Studentship (\$4,000)
 - o **Daria Merrikh** O'Brien Centre Summer Studentship (\$6,000)

Upcoming Events

Flor-Henry Lecture

We are pleased to announce that we will be hosting a virtual event on June 4, 2021, for this year, for the Flor-Henry Lecture. Our guest speaker is Dr Edward Bullmore from the University of Oxford. He will be doing 3 exciting lectures.

Please visit https://flor-henry.ca/ for more information.

Department of Psychiatry Grants

- \$240,976 Canadian Institutes of Health Research. COPE LTC Study: Care pathway for Older Persons with dEpressive disorders in Long Term Care. Goodarzi Z (PI), Hoben M, Seitz D, Virk N, Bruneau M, Estabrooks C, Ewa V, Fox L, Gruneir A, Holroyd-Leduc J, Ismail Z, Knopp-Sihota J, Poss J, Quail P, Sutherland J, Watt J (May 2021- Jan 2024)
- ❖ Understanding cannabis use by Canadian Veterans and its impact on their health, well-being and quality of life, PI: Brémault-Phillips, S, **MacMaster**, F Co-Applicant, Budget: \$115,000, Funder: CIHR, Program: Catalyst Grant: Cannabis and Mental Health
- ❖ COVID-19 Physical Distancing, Virtual Delivery of Trauma Therapies to Trauma-Affected First Responders, PI: Brémault-Phillips, Sm MacMaster, F Co-Applicant,

Budget: \$206,137, Funder: Alberta Labour and Immigration, Program: Supporting Psychological Health in First Responders

- ❖ Text4PTSI: An E-Mental Health Solution to Prevent and Manage PTSI among First Responders in Alberta, PI: Agyapong, V, **MacMaster**, F Co-Applicant, Budget: \$150,000, Funder: Alberta Labour and Immigration, Program: Supporting Psychological Health in First Responders
- Project Understanding Medical Value and Risks for Veterans: Medicinal and Recreational Cannabis Use, PI: Brémault-Phillips, S, MacMaster, F - Co-Applicant, Budget: \$300,000, Funder: Alberta Innovates, Program: Real-World Evaluation of Cannabis-Based Medicines
- ❖ Royal College Strategic Initiative Grant 2021-2023 (\$30,000.00): Co-Investigator: Roach P, Kassam A, Rabi D, Chu P, Philpott J, Joneja M, Smyth P, Goez H, Ruzycki S, Johnson N, Barnabe C, Osei-Tutu K, Bharwami A, Gye E, **Okoro D**

Publications

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- ♣ McGirr A, Devoe DJ, Raedler A, Debert CT, **Ismail Z**, Berlim MT. Repetitive Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation for the Treatment of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder: A Systematic Review and Network Meta-analysis: La Stimulation Magnétique Transcrânienne Répétitive Pour le Traitement du Trouble de Stress Post-Traumatique: Une Revue Systématique et une Méta-Analyse en Réseau. The Canadian Journal of Psychiatry. 2020 Dec 23:0706743720982432.
- ♣ Smith E, **Ismail Z**. Mortality Risk Models for Persons with Dementia: A Systematic Review. Journal of Alzheimer's Disease. 2021 Jan 16(Preprint):1-9.

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- ▶ Yoon EJ, **Ismail Z**, Kathol I, Kibreab M, Hammer T, Lang S, Ramezani M, Auclair-Ouellet N, Sarna JR, Martino D, Furtado S, Monchi O. Patterns of brain activity during a set-shifting task linked to mild behavioral impairment in Parkinson's disease. NeuroImage: Clinical. 2021 Feb 13:102590.
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- ♣ Hrabok M, Nwachukwu, Izu, Gusnowski A, et al. Mental Health Outreach via Supportive Text Messages during the COVID-19 Pandemic: One-week Prevalence and Correlates of Anxiety Symptoms. The Canadian Journal of Psychiatry. 2021; 66 (1):59-61. doi:10.1177/0706743720969384
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- ♣ Binet E, Bellville G, Ouellet MC, Lebel J, Bekes V, Morin CM, Bergeron N, Campbell T, Ghosh S, Bouchard S, Guay S, **MacMaster FP**. A portrait of mental health services utilization and perceived barriers to care in men and women evacuated during the 2016 Fort McMurray fires. Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research (2021) 28: 1-13.
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Mind Matters is distributed to psychiatry medical staff and faculty, psychiatry residents, program directors and section chiefs, Alberta Health Services executives, and psychiatry support staff.

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