



School of Medicine
Department of Psychiatry and Health Behavior

DEPARTMENTAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

December 2007

- ❖ It is official!! The **Stoney Building** is now our new home!! We want to say how much we appreciate your patience and understanding during the move. The institution has worked very hard to create a comfortable, pleasant environment for employees and patients. We hope that you find your new surroundings acceptable. This is a major step for our department and your hard work and dedication have allowed us to reach this point.
- ❖ Please mark your calendars! The **Holiday Party** will be held at 7:00 p.m. on December 7th at Dr. Buckley's home.
- ❖ **Frank Whitfield** meets with the new Children's Advisory Council - a group of interested children and adolescents who give input into inpatient mental health care offered to children, teens and their families at the Medical College of Georgia. He currently has four members and is seeking others to serve in this capacity.
- ❖ Members of faculty participate in admission interviews of prospective incoming medical students for the medical student admissions committee.
- ❖ Department of Psychiatry seeks individuals interested in participating on the **MCG Behavioral Health Advisory Council**. Members include current patients or the families of patients who have a vested interest in improving the delivery of mental health care needs at the Medical College of Georgia.
- ❖ Members of faculty met with first year medical student **Josepha Iluonakhamhe** to discuss opportunities for research.
- ❖ **Dr. Manzoor Usman** received and AACAP Educational Outreach Program Grant to attend the AACAP annual meeting and participate in a mentoring program with leading child and adolescent psychiatrists around the country.
- ❖ Faculty are asked to strongly consider participating in the **Deans Student Summer Research Program**. Details and an application can be found on the MCG website. Deadline for application is February 4, 2008.
- ❖ **Dr. Donna Londino** participated as an examiner for the child and adolescent oral examinations in Kansas City (November 17-18).
- ❖ **Dr. Lara Stepleman** spoke at the 2007 Carolinas Consortium on MS Conference in Charlotte on "MS, Sex, and Intimacy: Overcoming physical and emotional challenges."
- ❖ On Saturday October 27, 2007, in downtown Columbia, South Carolina, team members from the MCG Department of Psychiatry took advantage of the cool, overcast weather to raise both awareness for mental health and funds for NAMI Augusta. The team "Psyched to Run for NAMI", founded this year by Brian Miller, a third-year psychiatry resident at MCG, participated in the 35th Governor's Cup Road Race. They successfully raised \$1350 for NAMI Augusta through generous support from friends, family, and other members of the MCG department of psychiatry. Other team members included **Dr. Sridhar Gowda**, attending psychiatrist; **Wanda LaVigne**, 3-South nurse manager; and **Erin Kesterson**, a graduate student in exercise science at USC and Dr. Miller's sister-in-law.

- ❖ [Dr. Donna Londino](#) has been assigned to develop a module for the institutional wide patient family centered care curriculum entitled "Interdisciplinary Team Care Approach to Patient- and Family-Centered Care." This will involve videos and didactics modeling and teaching a interdisciplinary team approach to patient care.
- ❖ [Drs. Anilkumar Pillai](#) and [Sahebarao Mahadik](#) have a research article, entitled "Increased truncated TrkB receptor expression and decreased BDNF/TrkB signaling in the frontal cortex of reeler mouse model of schizophrenia " that has been accepted for publication in Schizophrenia Research. Drs. Pillai and Mahadik also have a research article, entitled "Opposite changes in predominantly docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) in cerebrospinal fluid and red blood cells from never-medicated first-episode psychotic patients" that has been accepted for publication in Schizophrenia Research.
- ❖ [Dr. Sandra Sexson](#) chaired the AACAP's annual Lifelong Learning and Maintenance of Certification Institute at the annual meeting of AACAP.
- ❖ [Dr. Lara Stepleman](#) along with Drs. Wright and Hughes (Neurology) attended the 23rd Congress of the European Committee for Treatment and Research in Multiple Sclerosis in Prague, Czech Republic where they presented the following three posters:
 - Stepleman, L., Wright, D., Hughes, M., Shelton, S. (2007, October). The development of an educational intervention for MS-related sexual intimacy concerns.
 - Stepleman, L., Shelton, S., Hughes, M., (2007, October). Using problem-solving therapy to treat depression within the MS clinic setting.
 - Shelton, S., Stepleman, L., Hughes, M., (2007, October). Utilisation of mental health services by MS centres in the US.
- ❖ Below is the current Grand Rounds schedule for the month of December:
 - 12/6 **No Grand Rounds**
 - 12/13 **Resident Case Conference – Kerry Renner, MA, Psychology Resident**
Evidence-Based Treatments for Social Anxiety Disorder
 - 12/20 **No Grand Rounds**
 - 12/27 **No Grand Rounds**
- ❖ [Dr. Adriana Foster](#) is currently conducting a study on "Pharmacogenetic Study of CYP450 2D6 and 2C19 in Patients with Significant Adverse Effects from Antidepressants" for persons between the ages 18-65, with a diagnosis of depression. The study is a one-visit study and excludes persons diagnosed with bipolar disorder or any anxiety disorder. For more information, please call: Dawn or Rebecca at 706-721-0409 or 706-721-4605.
- ❖ [Dr. Peter Buckley](#) is currently conducting the following research studies:
 - A study on "High-Dose Ziprasidone in Schizophrenia Patients" for persons between the ages of 18-65, concomitant or PRN medications at a stable dose for 6 weeks. The study will last for 3 months and excludes persons with alcohol or substance dependence within the past 12 months or abuse within the past 3 months. For more information, please call: Dawn or Rebecca at 706-721-0409 or 706-721-4605.
 - A study on "RO1 "Relapse Prevention: Long-Acting Atypical Antipsychotics" (PROACTIVE)" for persons between the ages 18-65, diagnosis of schizophrenia or schizoaffective disorder, Exacerbation of illness in within one year. The study will last for 3 years and excludes persons who are 1st episode patients, allergic to Risperidone, or have failure to respond to Clozapine. For more information, please call: Dawn or Rebecca at 706-721-0409 or 706-721-4605.

- A study on “A multi-center, open-label, parallel-group, randomized, flexible dose study to evaluate the safety and tolerability of switching from existing atypical antipsychotics to bifeprunox in subjects with schizophrenia or schizoaffective disorder” for persons between the ages of 18-65, diagnosis of schizophrenia or schizoaffective disorder, stable for 8 weeks, taking only 1 antipsychotic. The study will last for 26 weeks and excludes persons who are acutely psychotic, have any unstable disorders, take depot antipsychotic. For more information, please call: Dawn or Rebecca at 706-721-0409 or 706-721-4605.
- ❖ [Dr. Brian Kirkpatrick](#) is recruiting study volunteers for a brief medical research study on risk factors in schizophrenia. The study requires one visit lasting an hour, a medical history is taken, one blood sample is needed, and subjects are paid for their time. For more information, please call Linh Nguyen at 706-721-0496.
- ❖ **Depression Trial:** Referrals of depressed patients are needed for a Novartis clinical trial of agomelatine (a melatonin receptor agonist) being conducted by Dr. Hobby. Subjects are assigned to receive agomelatine, paxil, or placebo on a 1:1:1: basis for the acute 8-week study, and completers are eligible to continue in a one-year, open-label extension study. All medication and procedures are free of charge and subjects are reimbursed for participation. Please contact Geri Floyd at 706-721-2168 or patients may call 706-721-7835.