

Regional Updates from Nova Scotia

Submitted by: Dr. Keri-Leigh Cassidy

In news from our region, the annual **Atlantic Provinces Psychiatric Association** meeting was held in Saint John New Brunswick on June 9th to 11th for psychiatrists from our four Atlantic Provinces. The keynote speaker was world renowned geriatric psychiatrist and past president of the American Psychiatric Association, Dr. Dilip V. Jeste. Dr. Jeste spoke about Positive Psychiatry of Aging, a new branch of our field that he is leading to promote the science of healthy aging, mental wellness and resilience. These are areas of significant need for development in the context of a growing senior population and a system currently focused on pathological aging. Dr. Jeste will also be the keynote speaker at the upcoming CAGP Annual Scientific Meeting this fall to discuss this important paradigm shift.

The **Atlantic Seniors Mental Health Network** (ASMHN), established in 2010, joined forces this past year with the Canadian Coalition for Seniors Mental Health (CCSMH), the Seniors Health Network (SHN), Baycrest's Geriatric Mental Health Program (GEMH) and Geriatric Mental Health Interprovincial Education Program (GeMIE) to form a larger network for active Continuing Professional Development in Atlantic Canada. Our regional physician representatives are: Dr. Keri-Leigh Cassidy (Chair, Nova Scotia, GEMIE), Dr. Sarah Thompson (New Brunswick), Dr. Yomi Otusajo (Prince Edward Island) and Dr. Catherine Hickey (Newfoundland), and Dr. Cindy Grief (Baycrest, GeMH, GeMIE). Drs. Grief and Cassidy will be presenting on this GEMIE collaboration at the upcoming CAGP ASM—come to the workshop to offer your input and ideas to expand this exciting CPD program into other regions.

The Dalhousie Geriatric Psychiatry Program focused on several major projects over the last year including:

- 1) Fountain of Health Initiative for Optimal Aging,
- 2) Dalhousie Enhanced Cognitive Behavioural Therapy Program, and
- 3) Royal College subspecialty Training Program.

1) Fountain of Health Initiative for Optimal Aging

In terms of the Fountain of Health Initiative for Optimal Aging, this national seniors' mental health promotion initiative was developed at Dalhousie University to provide evidence-based information on healthy aging, and health change behavior tools for use by the public, and by clinicians. The five key areas of healthy aging include: social activity, positive attitudes towards aging, physical activity, taking care of one's mental health and lifelong learning. Please visit <http://fountainofhealth.ca> for more information or to try the clinician tools including the **Clinician's Guide** (see <http://fountainofhealth.ca/clinicians-corner>). Of note, Dr. Beverley Cassidy presented on the Fountain of Health Initiative at the International Psychogeriatric Association conference in Berlin, Germany, and Dalhousie psychiatry resident Dr. Vanessa Thoo published a peer-reviewed paper, "The Fountain of Health: Bringing Seniors' Mental Health Promotion into Clinical Practice" in the Canadian Geriatrics Journal (CGJ vol. 18 no. 4 pp.217-224). Dr. Thoo also

received a CAGP Resident Research Award last year, and since completed subspecialty training at the University of Toronto.

In June, Dr. Keri-Leigh Cassidy and Dr. Jeste hosted the first International Think Tank on Optimal Aging, the inaugural event of the World Aging and Brain Health Institute, in collaboration with the Fountain of Health Initiative for Optimal Aging, the CCSMH, the CAGP and the UCSD Stein Centre for Research in Aging. Dr. Keri-Leigh Cassidy will present the Fountain of Health Initiative at CAGP ASM this fall in both a plenary, and with Drs. Dilip V. Jeste, David Conn, Mark Rapoport and Cindy Forbes in an interactive workshop. Please attend the workshop to learn more and to offer your input on the Fountain of Health Initiative's evidence-based clinical tools and materials.

2) Enhanced Cognitive Behavioural Therapy Program

Regarding the Enhanced Cognitive Behavioural Therapy Program, Drs. Meagan MacNeil, Janya Freer, Beverley Cassidy and Keri-Leigh Cassidy are providing leadership in further developing the training program in enhanced Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. They offer resident training in this group therapy in the fall and the spring each year and are adding new clinical materials and conducting quality assurance research on this program. Please join the CAGP Symposium this fall on enhanced CBT-- Dr. Linda Gobessi will also be presenting on having brought the Dalhousie' eCBT program to Ottawa. CAGP members are warmly invited to learn more about eCBT and try it out in their own practices!

3) Royal College Geriatric Psychiatry Subspecialty and Training

In terms of the Royal College Geriatric Psychiatry Subspecialty and Training, Dr. Janya Freer continues in her role as the Geriatric Subspecialty Training Program Director until September and then will be replaced by Dr. Terry Chisholm. Together with Dr. Cheryl Murphy they have been working hard to fully develop the Royal College accredited subspecialty training program curriculum. There is a strong level of interest among residents in the training program, with several residents starting research electives with expressed interest in pursuing subspecialty training in geriatric psychiatry. The geriatric psychiatry team continues training all the residents in their core geriatric psychiatry experience: Drs. Michael Flynn, Sameh Hassan and Meagan MacNeil provide three months of training at the Nova Scotia Hospital site, and Drs. Bosma, Murphy, Freer and Cassidy provide three months of training at the QEII site. Together, they also offer a formal biweekly curriculum throughout the residents' six months of training.

At the national level, Dr. Mark Bosma formally stepped into his role as the Chair of the Royal College Geriatric Psychiatry Subspecialty Committee in July. Dr. Cheryl Murphy is the Region 5 Representative on this national committee, as well as on the Royal College Geriatric Psychiatry Subspecialty Examination Board. Drs. Janya Freer and Keri-Leigh Cassidy have been the regional board members of the Canadian Academy of Geriatric Psychiatry (CAGP). This year Dr. Mark Bosma and Dr. Meagan MacNeil successfully completed the Royal College subspecialty examination, the only psychiatrists currently in the province to accomplish this milestone.