

DEPARTMENT COVID-19 UPDATE #21 – June 30th, 2020

On behalf of Nick Kates, Chair, Department of Psychiatry & Behavioural Neurosciences –

DEPARTMENT NEWS

We are coming to the end of perhaps the strangest and hardest Academic Year we will ever encounter. The last 4 months in particular have been full of challenges and uncertainty but they've also been a time which has witnessed some remarkable changes and rapid adjustments, and highlighted your commitment, dedication resilience, compassion and desire to help and support one another.

So with summer finally at hand, and the immediate pressures from the pandemic beginning to ease, I want to thank each of you for the myriad of ways you have helped to support and advance the goals of the Department over the last year, and for creating the kind of environment which has enabled us to cope as well as we have with all the pressures and uncertainty we have faced.

Welcome to our Incoming Residents, who will be joining us on July 1st. They are:

General Psychiatry

Hamilton: Lia Bertrand (McGill University); Ilya Kovalko (Queens University); Jibrán Quraishi (University of Limerick); Lemmie (Odell)Tan (University of Saskatchewan); Victoria Sullivan (Dalhousie University); Emma van Reekum (McMaster University); and Julia Woo (University of Toronto).

Waterloo Regional Campus: Jesse Bauman (McMaster University) and Joshua Osika (NOSM).

We also welcome Huda Al-Imari a new PGY2 resident who transferred here from Queens.

Subspecialty Programs

Geriatric Psychiatry: Alex Dufort (PGY5) & Sarah Payne will be moving to PGY6

Forensic Psychiatry: Maaz Usmani & Omar Alwatban

Child and Adolescent Psychiatry: Natalie Raso (PGY5) & Madeleine Wootton will be moving to PGY6

New Faculty

A very special welcome to **Dante Duarte**, a Geriatric Psychiatrist who will be arriving (fingers crossed) from Brazil with his wife on July 2nd. to join our Department as a GFT, working in the Senior's Mental Health Program.

Congratulations to.....

The following faculty who successfully were promoted to the rank of Associate Professor, effective July 1st: **Nadeem Akhtar, Michael Amlung, Iris Balodis, Brenda Key, Sebastian Prat, and Jane Foster.**

Melissa Kimber, Noam Soreni and Sheila Harms who received a CIHR COVID-19 Operating grant for \$143,000 to evaluate a psychological first aid training program (called LIVES for Families) among mental health clinicians in the Hamilton region, partnering with the Lynwood Charlton Centre. The title of this project is: *Psychological First Aid Training to Address COVID-19 Related Stressors*.

They join **James MacKillop** (Update 19) as Department grant recipients in this recent very tough CIHR competition.

Maddie Wootton, the winner of HHS Medical Staff Association's 2020 resident Award for Psychiatry.

Margaret McKinnon, whose recent paper on moral injury and COVID-19 was featured in a Digest prepared monthly by Research Canada for the Parliamentary Health Research Caucus. Full article [here](#)

Stan Pasyk, one of our Pgy3 residents was first author on a paper recently published in Diagnostics, along with **Zena Samaan** and **Flavio Kapczynski**. Full article [here](#)

Opportunities to join Department Working Groups

There are a number of working groups getting underway addressing very varied facets of our work. I hope you will consider joining one or more of these if you are interested.

- 1. The New Faculty in Psychiatry (NFIP) Committee** is a group dedicated to bringing together faculty within the first 5 years in the Department. It aims to identify the needs of new faculty, recommend information sources and activities and help faculty adjust to their roles in the Department. It will be hosting a **Zoom NFIP InfoSession and Meet & Greet on Monday July 20th from 12-2pm**. which will cover, amongst other topics, understanding educational responsibilities, getting started in research, and beginning in clinical and administrative roles. There will be an opportunity for questions and answers and to interact with other new faculty. Any faculty member within their first 5 years is welcome! For more information or to RSVP please contact Lisa Kennedy lkenne@mcmaster.ca
- 2. The Anti-Black Racism working group**, will be determining how we want to respond to this issue both individually and collectively. If you want to join, please contact either of the co-chairs - Suzanne Archie archies@mcmaster.ca and Bev Pindar-Donick pindon@mcmaster.ca
- 3. The Use of new technology working group** met for the first time last week and will be meeting again in July. The initial focus is going to be on defining our needs and the goals of employing these new platforms and technologies, and if you would be interested in joining this growing group please let Joanne Milne milnej@mcmaster.ca know.
- 4. The Virtual CaRMS Working Group:** As CaRMS will be entirely virtual for the 2021 match, and with visiting electives for medical students not being possible this year (as mandated by the medical schools), we need to begin making plans both for marketing our program, and for re-designing

our CaRMS interview days to virtual. If you are interested in being a part of this creative process, we would welcome your ideas! The first meeting of the **Virtual CaRMS Working Group** will be on Thursday, July 9th from 5-6pm via Zoom. Please contact JoAnn if you are interested jcorey@stjoes.ca.

In the Media

Laura Duncan and **Michael Boyle** appeared in another Hamilton Spectator media piece related to COVID-19, "How far should Canada go to contain the future spread of COVID-19?". Full article [here](#). Laura also did a segment on the Mike Farwell show 570 news. Listen to interview [here](#) beginning at approximately the 44 minute mark.

Randi McCabe was interviewed by CBC Hamilton about Hamiltonians feeling anxious as the city enters Stage 2. Full article [here](#)

Magdalena Janus published an opinion piece with the Hamilton Spectator on the importance of developing datasets to show the racial gaps in health and education among children in Canada. Full article [here](#)

James MacKillop talked to [Hamilton News](#) about determining the success of Cannabis legalization.

Harriet MacMillan and **Melissa Kimber** appeared in the Hamilton Spectator talking about their respective projects - RISE (Researching the Impact of Service provider Education (RISE) project (led by Melissa) and the public launch of VEGA (Violence Evidence Guidance and Action) project led by Harriet. Full article [here](#). **The Blackburn News also picked up the story. Full article [here](#)**

Bernice Downey was interviewed for an article in the Spectator on racism in our local Hospital System. Full article [here](#)

EDUCATION

The MD Program

Clinical clerks will be returning to clerkship effective Monday, July 6th. A huge thank you to everyone who has stepped up and offered to supervise for the July rotation. We are still looking for supervisors to be available for last minute placements that may be needed for August; please let Claudia Castellanos castell@mcmaster.ca know as soon as possible if you can help out.

You will also shortly be receiving an email from Claudia asking for [supervisors for September and October rotations](#). I would strongly encourage anyone who has not been able to commit to one or both summer months to be available for either September or October (or both of course!). We really need your assistance in order to be able to meet the mandate to graduate the Class of 2021 on time. Remuneration is offered and educational credits will be granted."

Postgraduate Program

Save the Date! A quick reminder of our event to welcome our incoming Pgy1 residents,

the **Virtual Funhouse, on July 7th at 6pm**. Further details and links will be sent out closer to the date.

Message on behalf of the Subspecialty Residency Program and Fellowship Directors – Tracy Cheng, Laura Rosato, Yuri Alatishe, and Alina Brotea

Another year is wrapping up...as we prepare for a new one to begin! Thank you to all who supported our residents from clinical rotations to teaching sessions, all while trying to adapt to the changes from the COVID-19 Pandemic.

To all our residents and fellows, thank you for your dedication to learning. This has been a particularly challenging year to be a healthcare professional, and you all met the challenge with grace and professionalism, thank you.

Farewell to our graduating residents

June 30th is the day we say farewell to our graduating residents and welcome our new arrivals. So farewell and good luck with the next stages of your careers, especially to those of you who are taking up faculty positions at McMaster, and thank you for everything you contributed in your time with us.

General Psychiatry

Hamilton: Farid Ahmad, Lauren Forrest, Marc Legault, Anne Lizius, Avni Pardasani, Sarah Payne, Mara Smith and Alyssa Wang

Waterloo: Amanda Ritsma and Madeleine Wootton

Geriatric Psychiatry: Briana Howarth and Sumit Chaudhari

Forensic Psychiatry: Alanna Courtright, Gillian Munro and Jonathan Duboff

Child and Adolescent Psychiatry: Elliot Stansfield

And to our graduating fellows

ADHD: Ana Francisco

Forensic: Noemie Praud, Andrew Olagunju, Florian Erhel (Nov. 24)

WHCC/Schizophrenia: Luisa Caropreso

Mood Disorders: Alejandro Barquero

RESEARCH

The RAC (Research Advisory Committee) met on Wednesday to discuss how we begin to address some of the action items in Suzanne and Bev's presentation last week. It will be exploring how it can best help to advance this work, including how we can use our reserved Rounds slots. In addition, the LGBTQ2S committee will be meeting again in July to discuss next steps for the coming academic year.

WELLNESS

Just a reminder that the Wellness Drop in sessions for July 7th and August 11th will be **cancelled**, reflecting the changing needs of faculty and staff.

And Finally.....

As we start to resume more and more of our former activities, albeit gradually and carefully, I have been looking back at our recent Updates and noticed how the content is gradually changing. Increasingly each Update is now being devoted to ongoing Department business and activities, and less to things specifically related to the pandemic and the changes and adjustments that it forced us to make.

Which means now is probably a suitable time to retire these CoVID-19 Update's and bring back the Department Digest. This will come out regularly and will still include a section on CoVID specific news, as well as general updates on everything happening in the Department. So CoVID-19 Update #21 will be the last the Department Digest will re-appear next month.

And whatever your plans are for the summer - real or virtual - I hope you manage to find time to catch your breath, relax with friends and family and enjoy a break. It's something we all need.

Nick