

Psychiatry Digest

October 16, 2020

With the arrival of the second wave of the pandemic and the realization that we are going to need to continue working very differently, and in relative isolation for many more months, we are recognizing that many of the short-term adjustments we made in the spring will be harder to sustain, especially as winter sets in. This means we need to look at adjustments we can make in two areas in particular, to make both our professional and personal lives a little easier.

The first is the way we could be using IT. The working group that prepared the recommendations that were circulated last month will be meeting again shortly to identify priorities and to develop an implementation plan. If you would like to join the working group for this one-off session just let me know and I will send you the invitation.

The second is to find ways to reduce the stress that these changes have created, and that are being experienced to a greater or lesser degree by every Department and Program at McMaster. Our days seem to be as busy as ever – maybe even busier – but the inexorable pressure of email and virtual meetings that often happen back to back to back give us little downtime during the day, while days and weeks have fewer natural boundaries and we have fewer opportunities for breaks to get some exercise or chat to a colleague. The Department Executive is exploring what we can learn from our experiences over the last 8 months, and what has worked in other places, particularly in a) the structure and activities of the work week, b) how we use meetings and Zoom and, c) how we can continue to support one another when not in daily contact, and will come up with a plan for things we can do differently. If any of you have suggestions for things we could be doing that might help, or if you are interested in playing a more active role in this work, can you let Karen Saperson know.

And sadly this week, following the news about the death of **Nate Epstein**, I also learned that another long-serving and much-loved former member of our Department – **Peter Elder** – had passed away in June. Peter was a child psychiatrist and a gifted teacher and clinician who worked at Mac, primarily at the Chedoke Child and Family Centre, from 1968-1998 before returning to the United Kingdom. Our condolences to his wife Mary and all his family.

Nick

Department News

Congratulations to...

I am very pleased to announce that all of our graduating residents successfully passed their Royal College exams, which had been delayed by 4 months because of COVID. Congratulations to **Avni Pardasani, Anne Lizius, Sarah Payne, Khaja Farid Ahmad, Mara Smith, Madeline Wootton, Amanda Ritsma, Marc Legault, Alyssa Wang** and **Lauren Forrest**.

And also to those members of our Department who received awards at St. Joe's Research Institute's virtual celebration on October 1st. **Gary Chaimowitz** received the CARSTAR Automotive Canada Research Innovation Fund; **Sabrina Syan** (supervised by **James MacKillop**) won a Studentship Award; **Suzanne Archie** received the Dr. Ian and Shirley Rowe Research Fund to Explore Innovative Ways of Managing Psychosis in the

Community; and **Andrew Olagunju** won the Forensic Psychiatry Program Research Award.

Stelios Georgiades and everyone on the **MacART team** who participated in the 6th Canadian Autism Leadership Summit which was held on October 5th and 6th. The Summit's theme was "Connect. Inform. Act. Sustain." – focusing on deepening the conversation on how to link policy, practice and data around the development of a National Autism Strategy.

Equity Diversity and Inclusion

Thanks to **Arig Al-Shaibah**, **McMaster's Vice President for Equity and Inclusion** for a tremendous presentation at Rounds on Wednesday. Her slides, *Mobilizing EDI Commitments to Action*, are attached [here](#) and her presentation has been posted on our YouTube Channel [here](#).

I also want to share an article written recently written by **Reid Finlayson**, a resident and faculty member here in the 1970's and 80's, talking about his experience as a resident and faculty member living with a mental illness. While written for another University that he moved to after leaving Mac, it was reassuring to read how supportive he found friends and colleagues at McMaster to have been, and how this helped him. Full article [here](#).

Anti-Black Racism



This is a short piece by **Bode Akintan** about some of his experiences as a black psychiatrist at McMaster entitled, *"Why I wear a suit"*, It can be found [here](#).



Magdalena Janus was co-author on a study out of UCLA on racial inequities in 5 year olds in the US revealed in a study that used the EDI, and which was published in Health Affairs. This is the first investigation of the intersection of race and child development at school entry using the EDI and is not available in Canada due to lack of data. The study was also picked up by several media. Link to Health Affairs [here](#), NBC4 [here](#), MyNewsLA [here](#), Telemundo52 [here](#), and NeuroscienceNews [here](#)

COVID News and Updates

The City of Hamilton's COVID website contains the most up to date information about cases of COVID-19 in Hamilton. It is updated daily - [website](#).

And this was a very helpful article in the NEJM on supporting clinicians during COVID and beyond. Article [here](#).

Evan Klein recently spoke to the Globe and Mail about the etiquette of hosting holiday gatherings in a pandemic and why there is a rise in casual behaviour and the breaking of distancing guidelines. Full story [here](#)

Active Minds, a US nonprofit organization supporting mental health awareness and education for young adults between the age of 14-25, conducted a survey of students regarding the impact of COVID on their mental health in September. The findings of that survey can be found [here](#). A number of resources can be found on their website [here](#).

Media News

Stelios Georgiades wrote an opinion piece, *"Canada needs a national autism*



strategy, now more than ever", which was featured in the Hamilton Spectator. Full article [here](#).

Research News

Congratulations to **James MacKillop** who received a four year CIHR funded grant for his research project entitled, *"Longitudinal effects of cannabis legalization in a community cohort of Canadian adults"*.

The **Research and Postgraduate Offices of the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioural Neurosciences** are pleased to present the **3rd Annual Research & Scholarship Marketplace** on:

Wednesday, October 28th, 2020
5:00-7:00pm (virtually)

The evening is focused on learner and faculty engagement, providing an opportunity to learn about current research and scholarship being conducted in the Department, and new ways learners can become involved. All learners associated with or interested in our Department are welcome to participate. Please see the attached flyer for more details.

Please RSVP to Dana Waldern (waldernd@mcmaster.ca) by October 23, 2020 to receive a detailed Agenda and connection details.

Education News

The Office of the Vice-Provost, Faculty will be holding a **workshop on the use of teaching fundamentals and technology use** on Friday, October 23rd from 3:00-4:00pm. If interested, please register [here](#).

McMaster's Program For Faculty Development have a number of courses and upcoming events scheduled for this Fall, including HYPHER - Health Professions Education Research, Mindfulness Retreat, Women in Academia, Lessons from the first American pandemic: Racism and much more. To learn more about these events or other events and to register, please visit the MacPFD website [here](#).

Interested in education? Not sure where to start? Done some teaching and not sure where to go next? Come and join **Sandra Westcott, Sheila Harms, JoAnn Corey and Anita Acai** for an evening to discuss opportunities in Health Professions Education!

November 10, 2020
7:00-8:30pm

Registration is required and can be found [here](#). Contact Sandra Westcott, PGY4, for more information - sandra.westcott@medportal.ca

This event is open to all faculty and psychology and psychiatry residents.

Stay Connected



