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The 29th Annual Research Day

The 29th Annual Research Day of the Department of Psychiatry, University of Ottawa and 12th Annual Y.D. Lapierre Resident Research and Academic Day will take place conjointly on December 5, 2008, in the Associates in Psychiatry Auditorium of the Royal Ottawa Mental Health Centre (ROHMC). Both scientific papers and poster presentations will be included in the Program. All faculty members, Psychiatry Residents and Fellows of the Department of Psychiatry, graduate students as well as all disciplines involved in mental health care and research at all affiliated institutions are encouraged to participate. Presentations will encompass a wide variety of topics. Winner of the first annual IMHR Young Investigator Award will also be announced on the Research Day. This award will be officially presented to the award recipient at the Royal Ottawa Foundation for Mental Health Inspiration Awards.

First Friday Lecture: Neuroscience of Tinnitus

On October 3, 2008, Dr. Larry Roberts, Professor Emeritus in the Department of Psychology, Neuroscience, and Behaviour at McMaster University, presented a lecture titled "The Neuroscience of Tinnitus". In 2002, Dr. Roberts organized a consortium of five laboratories in Canada and three abroad which combined their expertise in physiological, psychoacoustic, brain imaging, and computational methods to investigate the neural basis of tinnitus. Tinnitus (chronic ringing of the ears) is at present a medically untreatable disorder affecting approximately 360,000 Canadians. Many of these existing cases find that tinnitus impairs quality of life leading to distress, adjustments in work and family living. The learning objectives for this lecture were to update listeners on current thinking and evidence concerning the causes of tinnitus, consider the bearing of this evidence on treatment options for tinnitus and finally, consider links between tinnitus and psychiatric disorder.

“Out of the Shadows through Science”

Dr. Roberts (from left to right) Dr. Zul Merali, Romie Christie, Austin Mardon, Sabrina Hammer, Dr. Robert Ouellet, Dr. Bruce Link, Andre Picard & Dr. Heather Stuart

To coincide with Mental Illness Awareness Week (October 5-11, 2008), on October 8, 2008, the IMHR, in partnership with the Mental Health Commission of Canada, proudly hosted a public panel discussion on the pervasiveness and impact of stigma on those battling mental illness. André Picard, Globe & Mail reporter, led the distinguished panelists who included Romie Christie, Manager of Communications, Mental Health Commission of Canada, Dr. Heather Stuart, Department of Community Health & Epidemiology, Queen’s University, Austin Mardon, Researcher & Mental Health Advocate, Dr. Robert Ouellet, President, Canadian Medical Association, Sabrina Hammer, Miss Ontario 2008 & Dr. Bruce Link, Professor of Epidemiology & Sociomedical Sciences, Mailman School of Public Health, though discussions on increasing awareness of the impact of stigma on mental illness in general, and the role of science and research in alleviating stigma.

Following opening remarks by each of the panelists, a question and answer discussion ensued on how we can all help to eliminate the stigma of mental illness with strong participation from individuals affected by mental illness, health care providers and other professionals within the community, as well as health care professionals locally.

This event was attended by over 200 people, with over 100 more viewing the panel discussion through live broadcasts to locations within the Ontario Telemedicine Network including Brockville Mental Health Centre, Community Living Huronia Children’s Treatment Network, Whitby Mental Health Centre, Penetanguishene Mental Health Centre and the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health.

Out of the Shadows through Science

“Out of the Shadows through Science”

Dr. Roberts (from left to right) Dr. Zul Merali, Romie Christie, Austin Mardon, Sabrina Hammer, Dr. Robert Ouellet, Dr. Bruce Link, Andre Picard & Dr. Heather Stuart
Rooted in its core values, the University of Ottawa Institute of Mental Health Research (IMHR), in collaboration with the Royal Ottawa Health Care Group (ROHCG) and ROHCG Research Ethics Board (REB), is committed to conducting health research that meets the highest standards of excellence, integrity, and ethics. The Quality Assurance for Research Excellence (QARE) program strives to promote excellence in all aspects of human subject research through facilitation and verification that standards, policies, and regulations are achieved.

Using a comprehensive internal monitoring mechanism, the Research Quality Associate (Dr. Keith Busby) will oversee this program, ensuring that research is being conducted according to requirements and will identify opportunities for improvement. Findings will be subsequently used to guide quality improvement efforts and system enhancements.

The Research Quality Associate will provide leadership and support for matters related to quality to ensure that a) research complies with local, national, and international policies and regulations; b) researchers, research staff, and the Research Ethics Board have access to internal expertise and support regarding research quality; c) best practices are identified and shared; and d) quality improvement is promoted, facilitated, and celebrated.

**QARE Program**

**IMHR in the Media**

On August 18, 2008, Dr. Zul Merali, President and CEO of the University of Ottawa IMHR, appeared on CJOH to discuss a survey which suggested nearly one in two Canadians believe mental illness is merely an excuse for bad behaviour and personal failings. The survey, part of the Canadian Medical Association’s annual national report card on health care, suggested Canadians are more comfortable admitting to cancer than mental illness.

In May, Dr. Paul Fedoroff, Research Unit Director of the IMHR Forensic Unit, gave an invited presentation to Britain’s Home Office in London, England in which he reviewed research done in the IMHR Forensic Unit that has influenced the assessment and treatment of men with problematic sexual behaviors both in Canada and abroad. The presentation resulted in a reporter from the London Times flying to Ottawa to see first hand how research, teaching and clinical care have been integrated in the Sexual Behaviors Clinic.

On September 7, Dr. Fedoroff also appeared on CBC Newsnight to do an interview concerning sex offenders and the decrease in sex offender recidivism rates to below 15% after 5 years release into the community. News of the Integrated Forensic Programs dramatic success in safely treating sex offenders and the decrease in sex offender recidivism rates to below 15% after 5 years release into the community was published in Feature presentation in the London Times and can be accessed online here: [http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/life_and_style/health/article4591091.ece](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/life_and_style/health/article4591091.ece).

On September 7, Dr. Fedoroff also appeared on CBC Newsnight to do an interview concerning Sex addictions, which was broadcast across Canada and was repeated numerous times throughout the day.


Publications, Presentations, Workshops & Awards Cont’d


Dr. Diana Koszycki, Research Unit Director of the University of Ottawa Institute of Mental Health Research Stress and Anxiety Clinical Research Unit, has been invited to sit on the CIHR internal committee for Behavioural Science B for another year.

Amélie Perron, successfully defended her PhD on August 13, 2008 (Exploration de la construction identitaire de détenu par le biais des discours infirmiers dans un milieu de psychiatrie correctionnelle). Dissertation recommended for a prize at FGPS, Supervisor: Dr Dave Holmes, RN. Amélie Perron, RN, PhD is now Assistant Professor, School of Nursing, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Ottawa

Isabelle St-Pierre, RN, PhD (cand), formerly from School of Nursing, Faculty of Medicine, McGill University joins Dr Dave Holmes, RN at the School of Nursing, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Ottawa (as of August 20) to pursue her doctoral work under Dr Holmes’ supervision (Understanding the Management of Intra/Inter Professional Aggression: A Critical Nursing Ethnography).

Welcome!

Ulrika Drevniok has joined the IMHR Stress and Anxiety Clinical Research Unit as Research Coordinator. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and a Master of Science in Nursing, both from McGill University. She has rowed at the national level and is currently rowing for the Ottawa Rowing Club.

Grant Opportunities & Deadlines

A reminder that anyone wanting to improve their chances of having a successful review of their grant/funding application is invited to submit their protocol for review to the Scientific Review Committee. Interested applicants must allow 3-4 weeks for the review to be completed. Please submit 6 copies of your proposal to the attention of Dr. Keith Busby, Research Ethics Coordinator, in room 5425 of the Research Tower if you are interested in this service.

The Ontario Psychiatric Association offers the Dr. Ann Thomas Award for Best Resident Presentation. It is presented at the OPA Annual Conference as a way to honour Dr. Ann Thomas for her extensive efforts over a six-year period in planning the OPA Annual Conference. The award is a plaque and cheque for $250.00.

Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship Program

The Department of Industry has announced the implementation of two new and prestigious programs that will position Canada as a global centre of excellence in research and education: the Canada Excellence Research Chairs (CERC) Program and the Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship Program (Vanier CGS). The CERC program will award 20 Chair holders and their research teams with up to $10M over seven years to establish ambitious research programs at Canadian universities. When fully operational, the Vanier CGS Program will support 500 Canadian and international doctoral students each year with three-year scholarships valued at up to $50,000 per annum. Both programs are a triagency initiative of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) and Canadian Institutes for Health Research (CIHR). The CERC program is administered by the Canada Research Chairs Secretariat, which is housed within SSHRC. The Vanier CGS program is administered by each granting agency and coordinated by the Canada Research Chairs Secretariat.

Comments & Suggestions

The University of Ottawa IMHR welcomes any suggestions on improving our newsletter and making it more informative. To submit suggestions or material to appear in future editions of Breaking Through, please contact Dr. Owen Kelly, Research Associate, at 613.722.6521, ext. 6727, or by email at okelly@rohcg.on.ca.