

## Research Assessment and Training

*Jean Endicott, PhD, Chief*

*Donald Alderson, MS, Research Scientist IV*

*Yamilette Carmona, MA, Research Project Manager II*

*Julie Chipman, LCSW, Clinical Researcher III-NL*

*Marta Colon, MSW, Research Support Assistant III*

*Jennifer Downey, MD, Psychiatrist II*

*Jill Harkavy-Friedman, PH.D, Research Scientist V*

*Deborah Hasin, PhD, Research Scientist VI*

*Marcela Hoffer-Adou, LMSW, Clinical Researcher Level III-NL*

*Katherine Keyes, MS Assistant Research Scientist*

*Barbara Lilliston, MSW, Clinical Researcher III-NL*

*Donna O'Shea, MS, Clinical Researcher III-NL*

*Selvija Marovic, PhD, Research Project Manager III*

*Quisqueya Meyreles, LCSW, clinical Researcher Level III-NL*

*Susan Messina, LCSW, Clinical Researcher Level III-NL*

*John Nee, PhD, Research Scientist V*

*Valerie Richmond MS, Research Technician*

*Sharon Samet, MSW, Research Scientist IV*

*Dianne Schechter, PhD, Research Scientist IV*

*Joan Schulick, LCSW, Clinical Researcher III-NL*

*Margaret Spinelli, MD, Psychiatrist (Research) II*

*May Vega, LMSW, Clinical Researcher III-NL*

### Overview

Members of the Department of Research Assessment and Training are involved in a variety of research projects focused upon obtaining a better understanding of the diagnosis, evaluation of severity of symptoms and impairment in functioning, genetics, course of illness, and treatment of patients with mood disorders, schizophrenia, and substance use disorders. Although there are several subdivisions within the department, there is considerable cross interaction. Dr. Hasin heads a group investigating genetic, epidemiological, and clinical aspects of alcohol and drug use disorders and associated comorbidity. Dr. Spinelli's projects involve treatment of antipartum depression and premenstrual dysphoric disorder, Dr. Jill Harkavy-Friedman's work stresses the assessment of patients with major mental disorders, particularly schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders. Dr. Schechter studies mood and behavior along the menstrual cycle and characteristics of subjects who volunteer to serve as community control subjects. Dr. Downey is involved in research related to sexual behavior of patients with bipolar disorders. Dr. Endicott and others in the department have continued to develop procedures and training materials to aid clinicians and investigators in their assessment of both patients and nonpatients. She and her staff also continue to coordinate the data collection of the Collaborative Depression Study, a long-term (36 yrs), multi-facility project on the course of illness, risk for relapse, and comorbidity in patients with major mood disorders. Many of the ongoing projects of the department involve collaboration with investigators in other departments within the medical school as well as at other facilities in the US and abroad.

## **Current Research**

Dr. Endicott and staff began conducting clinical interviews in a long-term project involving multiple independent assessments of patients with treatment resistant major depressive disorder who are involved in a Registry. Approximately half of the patients will receive Vagal Nerve Stimulation therapy while the remainder will receive treatment as usual.

The long-term follow-up of the Collaborative Depression Study found that subsyndromal depressive symptoms of patients with BPI and BPII disorders are associated with significant psychosocial impairment and are predictive of relapse.

Dr. Hasin found that in the United States, treatment rates for alcohol dependence remained unchanged from 1991-92 to 2001-02, and that DSM-IV alcohol dependence was associated with a high degree of psychiatric comorbidity, while DSM-IV alcohol abuse was not.

Dr. Hasin also found (and replicated) that a quantitative, continuous model of alcohol dependence fit the data better than the DSM-IV categorical approach or any hybrid categorical model using US national data from 1991-92 and 2001-02.

Dr. Hasin's group conducted a pilot study of a drinking-reduction intervention combining motivational interviewing and self-monitoring through Interactive Voice Response technology and found significant drinking reduction over time in HIV primary care patients.

## **Education and Training**

The Residents asked Dr. Spinelli to teach a course "Seminars in Women's Mental Health Across the Life Cycle" and to supervise the diagnosis and treatment of selected patients. The course is for residents and attendings at the Intensive Outpatient Department.

## **Awards/Honors**

Dr. Endicott was invited to address issues related to evaluation of treatment outcomes at a "think-tank" meeting cosponsored by NIA, NCCAM, NICHD, NIMH, NIH ORWH, and other NIH offices titled "Developing a Research Agenda: New Interventions for Menopausal Symptoms."

Dr. Spinelli was asked to be a consultant to the Department of OB/GYN's effort to develop guidelines for practitioners to screen for post partum depression.

Dr. Spinelli was asked by NIMH to chair the review committee for small business grants to develop educational websites for post-partum depression.

Dr. Jennifer Downer was asked by the APA to organize and chair on On-Line Grand Rounds on Attachment and Sexuality in Psychotherapy. The activity lasted three weeks and involved psychiatric participant both nationally and internationally.

Dr. Hasin became a member of the APA DSM-V Substance Disorders Core Workgroup

Dr. Hasin was an invited speaker on gene-environment interaction in the vulnerability to alcohol and drug use disorders by the American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry.

Dr. Hasin was an invited speaker on phenotype development for drug use disorders at the NIDA Phenotypes Consortium meeting.

Dr. Hasin was an invited speaker at a NIDA/NIAAA/NIMH expert workshop on comorbidity in clinical trials.

Dr. Hasin received a new NIAAA R01 grant to conduct a randomized clinical trial of a novel drinking-reduction intervention in HIV primary care patients combining Motivational interviewing and self-monitoring via Interactive Voice Response.

Dr. Spinelli received the first “Residents Choice Award” and gave a Grand Round presentation on “Infanticide and Postpartum Psychosis.”

The American College of OBGYN appointed Dr. Spinelli to be a consultant on a New York Statewide pilot study on incidence of post partum depression in the OBGYN population.

### **Publications**

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