

Research Support

Division of Biostatistics

Eva Petkova, Ph.D.

Acting Division Head

The Division of Biostatistics provides investigators access to and training in state-of-the-art statistical techniques as needed for optimal use of their research data. This includes developing and applying new methodology for the design and analysis of psychiatric studies, participating in major funded research projects, and consulting on data-analysis and design issues for grant submission and manuscript preparation. The division also provides continuing education for statisticians and data analysts working at the Institute.

Four additional grants were funded with co-PIs from the division. Dr. Petkova, with a colleague from Wright State University, continued work on a NIMH R01 grant to develop statistical methodology for identifying placebo responders among subjects treated with active drugs. Biostatistics staff also collaborated on 16 new grant submissions and resubmissions.

The annual meeting for biostatisticians who are involved in mental health research and who work at the University of Pennsylvania, Yale and Columbia was hosted again by NYSPI and Columbia.

Comparative Medical Science

Mohamed Osman, D.V.M., Ph.D.

Division Chief

The Division of Comparative Medical Science is the animal resource center that provides care for the laboratory animals for the scientists in New York State Psychiatric Institute. The research programs focus on gaining insight into mechanisms for memory and learning, the evolution of intelligence, the pathogenesis of psychiatric and neurologic diseases and the development of treatments for such diseases.

The Division has modified its standard operating procedures to heighten the safety levels for both the animals and the facility users. The Continuing Education and Occupational Health Programs are expanding to meet the growing needs of research at New York State Psychiatric Institute.

This year, the facility was commended by the USDA for keeping the animals healthy and meeting the high standards for health care. The animal care program is in compliance with state Department of Health, USDA, and NIH guidelines for the care and use of animals. The program is also fully accredited by and in compliance with the standards of the Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care (AAALAC) International.

Research Library

David Lane, M.S.

Director

During the year the library continued its mission to serve as a reference and bibliographic resource for PI researchers, clinicians, and students. The journal list was expanded with many new titles, and book acquisitions increased due to the many recent publications appearing in all areas of psychiatry. Heavy use of electronic journals continued, stimulating a major effort to expand the availability of titles in this form.

New technology enabling internet transmission of journal articles is a major consideration in planning library services. Already the majority of the serials collection is online through either the PI Library or the Columbia Health Sciences Library websites, and plans for the coming year call for adding many more titles.

Memberships in clearinghouse organizations such as the Northeast Regional Medical Library network have enhanced the library's visibility and have made the collection accessible to libraries throughout the country. As a result, interlibrary loan statistics rose during the year to an all time high of 7,534 loans supplied to other institutions.

Quality Management

Amy Bennett-Staub, R.N., M.P.A.

Deputy Director

The Quality Management division at the New York State Psychiatric Institute coordinates all program evaluation, quality improvement, risk management, regulatory compliance and service utilization activities.

Throughout 2006, the quality/risk management staff worked in collaboration with the Cabinet, Medical Staff Organization, Unit Chiefs, Discipline Chiefs, and Research and Support Service departments to systematically monitor, analyze and improve clinical outcomes and associated services at the Institute.

- Prepare and submit the annual Periodic Performance Review under JCAHO. The Institute anticipates an on site survey sometime in 2007.
- Maintain very low rates of restraint and/or seclusion, patient falls, medication errors, and safety and security events.
- Continue development of clinical information systems and the Institute-wide Intranet
- Facilitate development of a program for prevention of workplace violence

Patient Satisfaction surveys are collected on an ongoing basis on all three inpatient units. Questionnaires were successfully collected from 45% of discharges with LOS >7. Overall ratings to the survey questions are overwhelmingly positive.

Technology and Information Systems

Gerry Segal, MS

Chief Information Architect

The Department is responsible for formulating and implementing a strategic design for an institution wide information infrastructure for workstations, network topology, databases, and security.

The Psychiatric Institute has a wide area network of over 1,500 computers connected to a network backbone. Each machine has full access to the Internet including E-Mail, Calendar, Groupware and World Wide Web Services. All facilities within the Institute are connected via a fiber optics backbone Utilizing 100 megabits per second (mbs) Fast Ethernet protocol to the desktop and OC3 ATM protocol.

This year, TIS installed a Citrix server for data application management; increased the memory capacity of PI's Storage Area Network to 6 Terabytes, for the support and distribution of medical imaging files and centralized backup; and installed GroupWise Guardian SPAM detection and virus protection.

Websites

David J. Hellerstein, MD

Director

The departmental websites, including NYSPI.org, Columbiapsychiatry.org, and NYPPsychiatry.org, are a central resource for communication. Major audiences include patients and family members; students and trainees; professionals including clinicians and researchers; and the general public.

The main goal in 2005-6 has been to assess the status of website development and begin a process of redesign and reintegration of departmental websites. The initial project has been a redesign of the Columbiapsychiatry.org website. The new site includes updated sections on education and training, clinical services, and research.

New applications have been developed including an innovative "Ask the Experts" section, in which faculty members respond to questions from the general public. Departmental calendar and faculty listings have been updated. The site will also include a comprehensive list of actively-recruiting clinical studies within the department; as well as on-line streaming and downloadable audio and video content. With the coming year, the NYSPI.org website will be redesigned and integrated with other departmental websites. The overall goal is to make the Columbia psychiatry department websites the best such sites in the U.S.