

Mental Health Services and Policy Research

1. Highlights

Mental Health Services and Policy Research is a new Division in the Department of Psychiatry that was launched January 18, 2007, with the appointment of Susan Essock, Ph.D., as the director. In keeping with its mission to facilitate and provide policy relevant mental health services research, the Division (1) instituted the OMH Policy Scholars program to stimulate such research and (2) convened researchers and other stakeholders to address areas of priority to the NY State Office of Mental Health (OMH):

The OMH Policy Scholar Program

The OMH Policy Scholar Program commenced with the issuing of an RFP on topics of high policy relevance to OMH, review of submissions, and the naming of 12 researchers at Columbia University as this year's OMH Policy Scholars. Scholars are provided a research mentor at Columbia, a policy mentor at OMH, and are invited to events throughout the year relevant to developing skills in the area of mental health policy research. Susan Essock, Ph.D., is leading this Program.

Timothy's Law (NY parity legislation)

The Division convened an all-day planning meeting on April 5, 2007, with Columbia faculty, OMH leaders, other agencies, members of the advocacy community, and potential evaluation funders to review the NY legislation, its evaluation mandate, available data sources, and research on the impact of parity legislation in other states. A concentric tier of evaluation plans for NY State was designed that included cost trends, utilization trends, and mental health outcomes, and funding sources were explored.

Improving Psychotropic Prescribing Practices

The Division convened an all-day planning meeting of national experts in psychotropic medications on August 30, 2007, to improve the quality of psychotropic prescribing practices for New York State Medicaid beneficiaries, with a particular focus on greatly reducing practices that are clinically questionable, common, and costly, such as many forms of polypharmacy. Next steps will include working with OMH on interventions to reduce the prevalence of such practices. Molly Finnerty, M.D., heads this OMH initiative to improve psychotropic prescribing practices, Psychiatric Clinical Knowledge Enhancement System (PSYCKES).

Child and Family Clinic-Plus

OMH launched Clinic Plus this year—a \$62 million initiative to encourage active screening, referrals, and assessments for children ages 4-21. The Division, via Kimberly Hoagwood's Developing Center on Implementation of Evidence Based Practices for Children in a State System, will aid OMH in assessing the impact of Clinic Plus.

New York/New York III

The NYNY III project is a collaborative effort between the New York City Department of Health and Mental Health, OMH, and the other State agencies that includes expanded

housing options for persons with mental illness who are homeless or at high risk of homelessness. Included in the agreement is a provision for the design and implementation of evaluation protocols to monitor the quality and effectiveness of the services developed. The outcomes to be assessed include the impact on homelessness, substance use, and use of acute and routine mental health services.

Investigators in the Division received new grants and contributed to the field of mental health services research as noted below:

-The Division currently has over 9 million dollars in grants and contracts to support its activities.

-Kimberly Hoagwood was awarded a P20 Developing Center from the NIMH on Implementation of Evidence Based Practices for Children in a State System and a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) on Effectiveness of Working Relationships Among Family Organizations and Children's Mental Health Clinics: Follow Up to A National Survey.

-Harold Pincus was awarded a grant from the Atlantic Philanthropies for a "Proposal to Develop a Clinical Geriatrics Policy Scholar Program." He is also the Associate and Co-PI of two of the research Cores of the Irving Institute for Clinical and Translational Science. Columbia is one of first 12 sites to be awarded this prestigious NIH infrastructure Grant. He was selected as Chair of the NIH National Steering Committee for the CTSA Evaluation.

-Alice Medalia was involved in the Cognitive Remediation in Psychiatry 10th annual conference June 2007, the first time it was sponsored by Columbia University Department of Psychiatry. Her NEAR Manual was translated into Japanese and there is now a Portuguese edition of her book: Como lidar com os Defices Cognitivos Associados as Doencas Mentals.

-The Informatics section of the Division, headed by Tom White, MD, MS, MA, partnered with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE), on the CMS Nursing Home Minimum Data Set Standardization Project. Through their work, they solved an IT standardization problem potentially affecting \$1.8 billion/year in Medicare and Medicaid payment decisions. This process is being integrated into the 2008 HIMSS healthcare interoperability demonstration project, and may affect federal policy for future healthcare IT purchases.

-David Kimhy, Ph.D. received a K award from NIMH to study "Psychosis in Schizophrenia: Mechanisms of Recovery." This study examines the role of stress regulation during recovery from psychosis in individuals with schizophrenia. He also received a NARSAD Young Investigator award to study "The Influence of Arousal on Paranoid Ideation in Schizophrenia: An Experience Sampling Study." This study examines the impact of physiological arousal on paranoid ideation during daily functioning in individuals with schizophrenia.

-Christina Mangurian, M.D. received a NARSAD Young Investigator award and an APIRE/Lilly Research Fellowship to study the "Effect of Behavioral Therapy on Adiposity in Antipsychotic-Treated Hispanic patients with Severe Mental Illness: A Washington Heights Community

Service Study.” This study will examine if providing a 14-week behavioral therapy course on nutrition and weight loss can help overweight patients taking antipsychotic medicine lose weight.

-Jimmy Choi, Psy.D., has joined the Division from Yale University School of Medicine. He will continue his work on the “Motivation and Learning in Schizophrenia” and “Efficacy of Olanzapine in Improving Task Engagement in Schizophrenia” at NYSPI.

-Jennifer Wisdom, Ph.D., has joined the Division from Oregon Health and Science University in Portland, Oregon. She will continue her work on her K award from NIDA “Facilitating Adolescent Recovery from Drug Abuse during Transitions in Care” at NYSPI.

2. Staff

Susan Essock, Ph.D., Division Director, Research Scientist VIII
Molly Finnerty, M.D., Associate Director, Adult Division, Psychiatrist II
Kimberly Hoagwood, Associate Director, Child Division, Research Scientist VIII
Jon Morgenstern, Ph.D., Associate Director, Substance Abuse Treatment Division, Research Scientist VIII

Michael Benibgui, MA, Research Scientist III
Geraldine Burton, MA, Research Project Manager I
Don Bux, Ph.D., Research Scientist V
Jimmy Choi, Psy.D., Assistant Professor in Clinical Psychology
Maura Crowe, M.A., Administrator III
Sarah Dodson, M.A., Administrator III
Laurie Flynn, Director of Communications and Dissemination
Cathryn Galanter, M.D., Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychiatry
Alissa Gleacher, Ph.D., Instructor of Clinical Psychology (in Psychiatry)
Phuong-Trang Huynh, Ph.D., Research Project Director I
Carlos Jackson, Ph.D., Research Scientist V
David Kimhy, Ph.D., Research Scientist V
Jessica Mass Levitt, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychology (in Psychiatry)
Christina Mangurian, M.D., Psychiatrist I Hospital
Alice Medalia, Ph.D., Professor of Clinical Psychiatry (in Psychiatry)
Serene Olin, Ph.D., Research Project Director I
Jeffrey Heitekko Parsons, Research Scientist, VII
Matt Perkins, M.D., Assistant Professor in Clinical Psychiatry
Harold Pincus, M.D., Psychiatrist II
Marleen Radigan, Ph.D., Research Scientist IV
Belinda Ramos, M.A., Research Scientist II
James Rodriguez, Ph.D., Research Scientist III
Shabnan Shakiagie, MD, Psychiatrist II Hospital
Anne M. Skrobala, M.A., Division Administrator, Project Administrator IV
Tom Smith, M.D., Research Scientist VI
Ellen Stevenson, M.D., Associate Clinical Professor of Psychiatry
James Weaver, Research Project Manager I

Thomas White, M.D., M.S., M.A., Research Scientist V
Jennifer Wisdom, Ph.D., Research Scientist VI
Kamla Wolsky, Administrator III

Affiliated members (OMH)

CITER Staff

Tami Beery-Baker, M.A., Research Scientist II
Patricia Bott, MPA, Mental Health Program Specialist IV
Jeffrey Braff, M.A., Research Scientist III
Barbara Brown, LMSW, Research Scientist II
Sam Catroppa, MSW, M.S., Mental Health Program Specialist II
Quingxian Chen, M.S., Research Scientist II
Kevin E. Conley, MBA, Mental Health Program Specialist IV
LouAnn Deng, M.D., M.S., Research Scientist IV
Sheila Donahue, M.A., Deputy Director, CITER
Douglas Dornan, M.S., Research Scientist II
Ray Ellermann, Ph.D., Research Scientist IV
Todd French, MPP, Research Scientist II
Steven Huz, Ph.D., Research Scientist IV
Edith Kealy, M.A., MSW, Research Scientist, II
Peter Landis, M.S., Research Scientist II
Carol Lanzara, M.S., J.D., Research Scientist IV
Emily Leckman-Westin, Ph.D., Research Scientist IV
Hailing Li, M.S., Research Scientist II
Blair Maddy, M.S., Associate Director, CITER
Vesna Marincek, M.A., Business Analyst III
Larkin McReynolds, Ph.D., Research Scientist IV
Sudha Mehta, MPH, Research Scientist II
Shannon Monnat, M.A., Research Scientist II
Britt Myrhol-Clarke, M.A., Research Scientist II
Wenjun Shao, M.S., Research Scientist III
Rui Wang, M.S., Research Scientist III
Tim Werder, Mental Health Program Specialist II

RFMH-OMH

Dottie Castille, Ph.D., Research Scientist IV
Jameson Foster, M.S., Research Scientist III
Riti Pritam, M.A., Research Scientist I
Meng Wu, M.S., Research Scientist I

3. Overview

The Division of Mental Health Services and Policy Research helps bridge the gap between research and practice by developing public-academic partnerships between researchers in Psychiatry and policy makers at OMH and elsewhere. Conducting such policy-relevant mental

health services research is important in its own right as the ultimate end of the translational research enterprise. The new Division was designed in partnership with the State Office of Mental Health and focuses on supporting OMH in achieving its mission for the citizens of New York.

The Division's work is practical. Investigators examine the structure, content and outcomes of services as they occur in real world settings. Researchers aim to gain an understanding of what interventions are most helpful in allowing people to maximize their recovery from mental illnesses. This includes examining what interventions work, how well they work, for whom they work best, the cost of these interventions, and the organizational and financing strategies that allow effective interventions to be implemented and sustained. Policy makers should have research to guide them, yet too often the data needed are not available to inform decision making. Similarly, services researchers should address questions of high policy relevance to decision makers so that services issues determine research topics. Hence, the Division emphasizes research partnerships with public sector administrators and other payers.

4. Current Research

Current research highlights in the in the Division include:

Dr. Hoagwood and her group have completed the Parent Empowerment Project (R34). This study is the first experimental study to examine the impact of a parent empowerment program (PEP) developed and led by parent advocates, and designed for low income minority families. As a result of this study, they have substantially revised their PEP program, rewritten the manual, and conducted 5 additional trainings among advocates in New York State. They now have completed a Parent Advocates Guide (in press with Oxford University Press), have revised their training manual, and they are fielding the new PEP program in a pilot study in their Center Grant.

Dr. Finnerty and her Adult Services research group determined that Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) increases access to high intensity/ high cost outpatient services, including Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) and Intensive Case Management (ICM), but overall decreases total Medicaid costs due to decreased utilization of inpatient services. Mental health providers exposed to a one day recovery oriented, anti-stigma training involving recipients of AOT services as presenters had a decrease in stigmatizing beliefs toward individuals with mental illness.

In the Multiple Family Group Family Psychoeducation initiative, a latency between training and beginning of implementation of the program had a curvilinear relationship with success in implementing this evidence based practice, such that programs that began implementation either too quickly or too slowly were less likely to succeed in implementing. One to one consultation was more successful than a train the trainer approach in implementing Multiple Family Group Family Psychoeducation, but had no impact on the fidelity of the program.

After five years of operations, Dr. Jon Morgenstern and Dr. Donald Bux completed data collection for their NIDA-funded research trial, "Club drugs and risky behavior in men" in June

2007. This clinical trial evaluated the efficacy of a brief motivational intervention versus an educational control condition in helping gay and bisexual men reduce their use of club drugs and their involvement in high-risk sexual activity. The study successfully enrolled and randomized to treatment 150 men, making the study the largest to date examining a brief intervention with this population.

After several months of startup activities, Drs. Morgenstern and Bux also began recruitment in February 2007 for their new, NIAAA-funded clinical trial, “Naltrexone and CBT for problem drinking MSM”. This five-year study examines the impact of naltrexone and a specially designed psychotherapy on both drinking and on associated high-risk sexual behavior in gay and bisexual men whose goal is to moderate their drinking, rather than to abstain from drinking. Information about the study can be found online at www.projectSMARTNYC.org.

Dr. Pincus has been meeting with Directors/Core leaders for several of the department's clinical intervention centers and divisions (e.g. Child, Homeless, Disaster, etc.) to assist them in strategizing for their planning and renewal of grants.

Through PSYCKES and the Rational Psychopharmacology Quality Improvement Initiative (RPQI), Tom White and his Informatics unit lead the design, implementation, and analysis of RPQI, which resulted in \$1.2 million/year savings from reduction of extreme antipsychotic polypharmacy without significant negative consequences.

Grants Active 07/01/06 – 06/30/07

Essock, Susan (NYS OMH) “Public/Academic Partnership in Mental Health Services Research”

Hoagwood, Kimberly (R34, NIMH) “Readiness to Adopt EBPs in Schools”

Kimhy, David (K23, NIMH) “Psychosis in Schizophrenia: Mechanisms of Recovery.”

Leavitt, Jessica (Lowenstein Foundation) “New York School Depression, Awareness, Recognition, and Treatment Partnership”

Morgenstern, Jon (R01, NIDA) “Club Drugs and Risky Behavior Among Men”

Morgenstern, Jon (R01, NIAAA) “Naltrexone and CBT for problem drinking MSM”

Pincus, Harold (The Atlantic Philanthropies) “Proposal to Develop a Clinical Geriatric Policy Scholars Program”

5. Education and Training

Postdoctoral Fellows in the Division include:

Christina Mangurian, M.D.

Evan Schwalbe, Ph.D.

Other Education and Training Initiatives

Dr. Pincus has been involved in faculty development by chairing the Faculty Development Committee established by Dr. Lieberman. This committee is composed of a mix of junior and senior faculty and it is tasked with gathering a full range of perspectives on experiences of junior faculty in the Psychiatry Department.

Dr. Pincus is also hosting bi-monthly dinner meetings at his apartment for residents interested in research. The Resident planning committee has scheduled specific topics and invited guests. He co-leads resident research seminar with Diana Martinez. Dr. Pincus organized and ran a Meeting for Junior Faculty & Fellows Interested in K Awards.

The Division hosts a monthly meeting on children's services research (MHIRCCY) in collaboration with Mount Sinai Medical School and NYU Child Study Center.

6. Awards and Honors

David Kimhy, Ph.D.

2006 Extramural Clinical Research LRP Award (NIH);

2007 Mentored Patient-Oriented Research Career Development Award (NIMH)

2007 Beck Institute Scholar, The Beck Institute for Cognitive Therapy and Research, Philadelphia, PA

Molly Finnerty, M.D.

Appointed to the American Psychiatric Association's Steering Committee for Clinical Practice Guidelines

Alice Medalia, Ph.D.

Marie Kessel Award for outstanding contributions in Psychiatric Rehabilitation.

Tom Smith, M.D.:

Awarded Fellowship Status by the American Psychiatric Association

7. Publications

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