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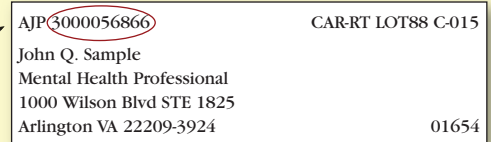
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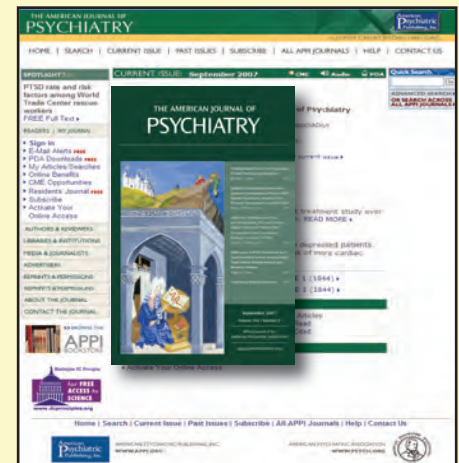
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The American Journal of Psychiatry and the Committee of Residents and Fellows
Residents' Journal
October 2008: Volume 3, Issue 10

Global Mental Health: An International Perspective on Local Challenges
Nomi Levy-Catnick, M.D., M.Phil.
Department of Psychiatry, New York University School of Medicine

The World Health Organization (WHO) will formally launch the Mental Health Gap Action Programme on Oct. 9, 2008, providing an action plan to "scale up services for mental, neurological and substance use disorders for countries especially with low and lower middle incomes...[by] building partnerships for collective action and...[ensuring] the commitment of governments, international organizations and other stakeholders" (1). It is thus an appropriate moment to consider what it means to express an interest in global mental health, particularly in the midst of residency training.

First, it signals an appreciation for the impact mental health has on communities and economies throughout the world. Neuropsychiatric disorders account for 12%-14% of the global burden of disease—second only to infectious disorders (23%), and more than AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria combined (10%) (2). Estimates by WHO in 2002 suggest that 154 million people globally suffer from depression, while 25 million suffer from schizophrenia, 91 million from alcohol use disorders, and 15 million from drug use disorders. Another 50 million suffer from epilepsy and 24 million from Alzheimer's disease and other dementias (which accounts for many of the patients among the neuropsychiatric designation in these estimates). About 877,000 people die by suicide worldwide every year (3).

WHO highlights that "mental illnesses affect and are affected by chronic conditions such as cancer, heart and cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and HIV/AIDS. Untreated, they bring about unhealthy behavior, noncompliance with prescribed medical regimens, diminished immune functioning, and poor prognosis" (3). Put another way, there is "no health without mental health" (4). As physicians, we face the challenge of treating patients as people, addressing their mental health needs in the context of their overall health. This

interplay between medical and mental health care has also been emphasized in reports by Doctors Without Borders/Médecins Sans Frontières. "The integration of both physical and mental health messages in the communities [leads] to a better understanding of health and the relationship between physical and mental aspects in the community" (5). A nurturing model for various levels of psychosocial integration in primary health care settings has also been outlined and implemented in many operational programs (5).

The treatment gap between need and care is significant. As part of WHO's call for action, a recent Lower Global Health Network series was introduced focusing on global mental health, noting that "every year up to 30% of the population worldwide will suffer from some form of mental disorder, and at least two-thirds of those receive inadequate or no treatment, even in countries with the best resources" (6).

The Same and Not the Same

Global mental health programs have received serious international attention over the past decade. One of the starting points was the WHO International Consortium in Psychiatric Epidemiology in 1998, which shortly thereafter launched the WHO World Mental Health Survey Initiative. Also, Project Atlas was launched in 2000 to map mental health resources around the world, and its findings were published in the "Mental Health Atlas 2007" and again in 2008. These efforts document the variability in resources available both within and throughout the international community. The seeming absence of progress subsequent to the publication of these reports highlights the formidable challenges of translating policy statements into programmatic realities.

Moreover, recent studies have taken the venter off the notion that there is necessarily a better

Contents
Global Mental Health: An International Perspective on Local Challenges
Nomi Levy-Catnick
Transcultural Reflections on the Stigma of Mental Illness in Pakistan
Nauman Ashraf
Bipolar Disorder as Culture-Bound Syndrome: A Book Review
Helena Hansen
Conducting Mental Health Research in Rwanda: A Resident's Experience
Anna Yusim

1
2
3
4

1

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For free listing of your organization's official annual or regional meeting, please send us the following information: sponsor, location, inclusive dates, type and number of continuing education credits (if available), and the name, address, and telephone number of the person or group to contact for more information. In order for an event to appear in our listing, all notices and changes must be received at least 6 months in advance of the meeting and should be addressed to:

Calendar, American Journal of Psychiatry, 1000 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 1825, Arlington, VA 22209-3901, jblair@psych.org (e-mail).

Because of space limitations, only listings of meetings of the greatest interest to Journal readers will be included.

NOVEMBER

November 14–17, Annual Conference of the International Society for the Study of Trauma and Dissociation, Chicago. Contact: Heidi Walker, Executive Director; hwalker@amg-inc.com (e-mail), isst-d.org (web site).

FEBRUARY 2009

February 18–22, Annual Meeting of the American Neuropsychiatric Association (ANPA), San Antonio, TX. Contact: ANPA office; (614) 447-2077 (tel), (614) 263-4366 (fax), anpa@osu.edu (e-mail), www.anpaonline.org (web site).

February 25–March 1, American College of Psychiatrists Annual Meeting, Tucson, AZ. Contact: 122 South Michigan Avenue, Suite 1360, Chicago, IL 60603; (312) 662-1020 (tel), (312) 662-1025 (fax), angel@ACPsych.org (e-mail).

MARCH

March 5–8, 22nd Annual Meeting of the American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry, Honolulu. Contact: AAGP, 7910 Woodmont Ave., Ste. 1050, Bethesda, MD 20814-3004; (301) 654-7850 (tel), (301) 654-4137 (fax), www.aagpmeeting.org (web site).

March 27–29, 3rd International Conference of The International Society of Interpersonal Psychotherapy (ISIPT), New York City, NY. Contact: 2009 ISIPT

Planning Committee; hv2009@columbia.edu (e-mail).

APRIL

April 22–26, Annual Meeting and Scientific Sessions of the Society of Behavioral Medicine, Montreal, Quebec. Contact: Society of Behavioral Medicine, (414) 918-3156 (tel), (414) 276-3349 (fax), info@sbm.org (e-mail).

MAY

May 15–17, 5th International Conference on Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders in the Middle East, Limassol, Cyprus. Contact: Conference Secretariat; 1-773-784-8134 (tel), 1-773-782-6747 (tel), 1-208-575-5453 (fax), meetings@worldeventsforum.com (e-mail), www.worldeventsforum.com/alz.htm (web site).

May 16–21, 162nd Annual Meeting of the American Psychiatric Association, San Francisco, CA. Contact: Cathy Nash, APA Annual Meetings Dept., 1000 Wilson Blvd., Ste. 1825, Arlington, VA 22209; (703) 907-7822.

JUNE

June 16–20, 2nd Thematic Conference on Legal and Forensic Psychiatry, Madrid, Spain. Contact: World Psychiatric Association, Alfredo Calcedo Barba, forensicpsychiatry2009@gmail.com.

AUGUST

August 27–30, Canadian Psychiatric Association 59th Annual Meeting, St. Johns, Newfoundland, Canada. Contact: 260-441 MacLaren Street, Ottawa, ON K2P 2H3, Canada; (800) 267-1555 (tel), (613) 234-9857 (fax), conferene@cpa-apc.org (e-mail), www.cpa-apc.org (web site).

OCTOBER

October 8–11, 61st Institute on Psychiatric Services, American Psychiatric Association, New York, NY. Contact: Jill Gruber, APA Annual Meetings Dept., 1000 Wilson Blvd., Ste. 1825, Arlington, VA 22209; (703) 907-7815.

October 27–November 1, 56th Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Honolulu, HI. Contact: AACAP, 3615 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20016-3007; (202) 966-7300 (tel), (202) 966-2891 (fax), meetings@aacap.org (e-mail), www.aacap.org (web site).

MAY 2010

May 22–27, 163rd Annual Meeting of the American Psychiatric Association, New Orleans, LA. Contact: Cathy Nash, APA Annual Meetings Dept., 1000 Wilson Blvd., Ste. 1825, Arlington, VA 22209; (703) 907-7822.

Continued on page A44



THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF PSYCHIATRY

October 2008, VOL. 193

A12 Editorial Board

A14 Highlights of this issue

Editorials

267 Melatonin and its agonists: an update

J. Arendt and S.M.W. Rajaratnam

270 Pros and cons of online cognitive-behavioural therapy

G. Andersson and P. Cuijpers

Review article

272 Relationship between gross domestic product and duration of untreated psychosis in low- and middle-income countries

M. Large, S. Farooq, O. Nielssen, and T. Slade

278 Untitled pictures by Denis Reed (1917-1979) – psychiatry in pictures

C. Ramsey and P. Carpenter

Papers

279 Extrapyramidal side-effects of antipsychotics in a randomised trial

D.D. Miller, S.N. Caroff, S.M. Davis, R.A. Rosenheck, J.P. McEvoy, B.L. Saltz, S. Riggio, M.H. Chakos, M.S. Swartz, R.S.E. Keefe, T.S. Stroup and J.A. Lieberman, for the Clinical Antipsychotic Trials of Intervention Effectiveness (CATIE) Investigators

289 Neurotoxic effects of ecstasy on the thalamus

M.M. L. de Win, G. Jager, J. Booij, L. Reneman, T. Schilt, C. Lavini, S. D. Olabarriga, N.F. Ramsey, G.J. den Heeten, and W. van den Brink

297 Cognitive markers of short-term clinical outcome in first-episode psychosis

M. Bodnar, A. Malla, R. Joober, and M. Lepage

305 Correlation and familial aggregation of dimensions of psychosis in affected sibling pairs from China

E. Vassos, P.C. Sham, G. Cai, H. Deng, X. Liu, X. Sun, J. Zhao, R.M. Murray, D.A. Collier, and T. Li

311 Schizophrenia and offspring's risk for adverse pregnancy outcomes and infant death

E. Nilsson, C.M. Hultman, S. Cnattingius, P.O. Olausson, C. Björk, and P. Lichtenstein

316 Paternal age at birth and high-functioning autistic-spectrum disorder in offspring

K.J. Tsuchiya, K. Matsumoto, T. Miyachi, M. Tsujii, K. Nakamura, S. Takagai, M. Kawai, A. Yagi, K. Iwaki, S.

Suda, G. Sugihara, Y. Iwata, H. Matsuzaki, Y. Sekine, K. Suzuki, T. Sugiyama, N. Mori, and N. Takei

321 Autism – in 100 words

S. Baron-Cohen

322 Tobacco smoking as a risk factor for major depressive disorder: population-based study

J.A. Pasco, L.J. Williams, F.N. Jacka, F. Ng, M.J. Henry, G.C. Nicholson, M.A. Kotowicz, and M. Berk

327 Psychiatric outcomes 10 years after treatment with antidepressants or anxiolytics

I. Colman, T.J. Croudace, M.E. Wadsworth, D. Kuh, and P.B. Jones

331 Rapunzel – poems by doctors

J.D. Eubanks

332 Cognitive-behavioural therapy for health anxiety in a genitourinary medicine clinic: randomised controlled trial

H. Seivewright, J. Green, P. Salkovskis, B. Barrett, U. Nur, and P. Tyrer

337 Lost in translation: the biblical classification of personality disorder – psychiatry in the Old Testament

G. Stein

Short reports

338 Serum levels of P-selectin in men with high-functioning autism

Y. Iwata, K.J. Tsuchiya, S. Mikawa, K. Nakamura, Y. Takai, S. Suda, Y. Sekine, K. Suzuki, M. Kawai, G. Sugihara, H. Matsuzaki, K. Hashimoto, M. Tsujii, T. Sugiyama, N. Takei, and N. Mori

340 Guided self-instructions for people with chronic fatigue syndrome: randomised controlled trial

H. Knoop, J.W.M. van der Meer, and G. Bleijenberg

342 Dedicated community-based services for adults with personality disorder: Delphi study

M.J. Crawford, K. Price, D. Rutter, P. Moran, P. Tyrer, A. Bateman, P. Fonagy, S. Gibson, and T. Weaver

Columns

344 Correspondence

346 Corrections

347 Book reviews

348 Contents of *Advances in Psychiatric Treatment*

349 Contents of the *American Journal of Psychiatry*

350 From the Editor's desk



Continued from page A36

OCTOBER

Oct 14–17, 57th Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Boston, MA. Contact: AACAP, 3615 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20016-3007; (202) 966-7300 (tel), (202) 966-2891 (fax), meetings@aacap.org (e-mail), www.aacap.org (web site).

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