Mary’s Center: New Community Partnership

The Department of Psychiatry’s Child and Adolescent Section, under the direction of Matthew Biel, MD, has partnered with Mary’s Center, a local Federally Qualified Health Center, serving culturally diverse and underserved individuals/families throughout the Washington metropolitan region. The Department provides evaluation/treatment for children and adolescents one day a week as a part of an integrated approach to the Center’s ongoing mission to deliver comprehensive health care to the community. The partnership serves as an exciting training opportunity for Child Fellows and, more broadly, enhances the Center’s ability to help those in need.

Research Update

• Alfie M. Breland-Noble, Ph.D., MHS.c., Assistant Professor has received a planning grant award from the Georgetown—Howard University Center for Clinical and Translational Science (GHUCCTS) for a research study on mental health stigma reduction and treatment engagement for racially diverse populations, focusing on African American youth and families. Through a community/academic partnership, Dr. Breland-Noble and Dr. Mary Carter-Williams of the First United Methodist Church of Hyattsville, MD, will use faith based health promotion and a community based participatory framework to: collect data on knowledge/attitudes about mental illness and treatment from clergy, leadership, and congregants; develop, refine, pilot test a community developed intervention to reduce stigma and improve treatment engagement; and, identify receptivity/barriers to faith based health promotion.

• Matthew Biel, MD, MSc, is the co-recipient of two Reflective Engagement grants from the President’s Office at Georgetown University. For the first study, Dr. Biel serves as co-investigator on an interdisciplinary research team including clinicians from Pediatrics, Psychiatry, and the Center for Child and Human Development, together with scholars from the Law School and the Center for Social Justice, to develop an action plan to address mental health, medical, and social service needs of the more than 400 homeless families and 700 homeless children in the District of Columbia. Additional, in partnership with colleagues from the Departments of Family Medicine and Linguistics, Dr. Biel is a co-investigator on a study that will explore how autism is covered in the Spanish language media, and if the media can play a role in promoting early autism recognition and self-advocacy. The investigation will be informed by patient, family, and community partners.

Psychotherapy: Enhancing Clinical Treatment

Psychotherapy is an important component in the treatment of mental health conditions offered by MedStar Georgetown University Hospital’s Department of Psychiatry. Psychiatrists, psychologists and clinical social workers provide a wide range of psychotherapy skill sets to facilitate individual behavioral change and personal growth. Within the Department, collaborative relationships among the mental health disciplines foster an ongoing interface between colleagues in all phases of clinical treatment including evaluation, treatment and referral. Judith Kroes-Smith, MD, director of the residents’ psychotherapy clinic, facilitates residency training for psychotherapy, assuring the participation of clinicians and residents in the teaching, supervision, and screening of patients. Modalities of clinical treatment and training comprise cognitive behavioral therapy including exposure response prevention therapy, Insight oriented psychodynamic psychotherapy, systemic family and child therapy, and supportive psychotherapy. The Department includes clinical psychotherapeutic specialties in the: Women’s Mental Health Program, Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Program, Mood and Anxiety Disorders Program, Psycho-oncology Program, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program, Trauma and Loss program.

Department News

• We are pleased to have jointly recruited, with the department of neurology, Karen E. Anderson, MD, the new director of Georgetown University Medical Center and MGUH’s Huntington Disease Care, Education and Research Center. Dr. Anderson will lead a team of specialists who will evaluate/treat patients and direct research efforts focused on new advancements in treating disease symptoms and progression. Dr. Anderson earned her medical degree from the University of Chicago, Pritzker Medical School, completed her internship at Columbia University Medical Center, and postdoctoral research training in psychiatry at Columbia University and the New York State Psychiatric Institute. Her subspecialty certifications include neuropsychiatry and behavioral neurology. (Read more about Dr. Anderson—link below)

• For the second year in a row, chief resident Ted Liao, MD, was recognized by being nominated by the SOM’s String of Pearls Committee for his positive impact on student medical education in psychiatry.

• This July, the Department will welcome seven new interns, two forensic fellows, two psychosomatic medicine fellows and if the media can play a role in promoting early autism recognition and self-advocacy. The investigation will be informed by patient, family, and community partners.

• Stacey Kaltman, Ph.D, Associate Professor, received a two-year grant from the American Diabetes Association to conduct a pilot study examining the feasibility and acceptability of an integrated self-management intervention that concurrently targets type 2 diabetes mellitus and depression among Latinos in under-resourced primary care settings. The intervention’s development will be informed by patient, family, and provider perspectives. By adapting and integrating existing evidence-based vehicles into a single, seamless, culturally acceptable intervention, both conditions can be targeted simultaneously.

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