The Department of Psychiatry at UH Case Medical Center enhances the lives of people affected by mental illness and addictions through our comprehensive clinical services, leading-edge treatment, and innovative programs in mood disorders, addiction recovery, child and adolescent psychiatry, community mental health, forensics, and psychiatry and medicine.

As the primary affiliate of Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine, we are committed to training the next generation of physicians and contributing to the body of knowledge about the origins and treatments of these illnesses. Now comprising more than 60 full-time and nearly 200 clinical (volunteer) faculty, the department has grown to be among the larger psychiatry programs in the country.

This fall, the Department of Psychiatry announced a unique collaboration with LifeAct (formerly the Suicide Prevention Education Alliance) and FrontLine Services. LifeAct delivers in-school suicide prevention training to nearly 20,000 high school students each year. The organization estimates that up to 5 percent of participating students come forward to seek help for themselves or friends. In conjunction with the schools and with the assistance of FrontLine Services’ 24/7 crisis hotline and mobile outreach services, students at risk now have access to immediate screening and referral to clinical services, with the Department of Psychiatry as the preferred provider. The department will also collaborate in revising LifeAct’s curriculum and in extending these services to middle schools in 2015.

To contact the department directly, email Psychiatry@UHhospitals.org.
ON THE FRONT LINE

Department of Defense Study Delves into Origins of Soldiers’ PTSD

First-of-its-kind study advances PTSD prevention and treatment

Since 2008, the Mood Disorders Research Program at UH Case Medical Center has served as the coordinating center for the Ohio Army National Guard Mental Health Initiative, the first long-term prospective study of the development of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in active-duty combatants.

The 10-year, multisite Department of Defense (DoD) project evaluates risk and resilience factors in the development of PTSD and other mental illnesses among Ohio Army National Guard soldiers.

A unique aspect of the study is its inclusion of soldiers’ life experiences both inside and outside the military. Traditionally, military PTSD research focused on combat and post-deployment consequences, but soldiers’ experiences during childhood, in the midst of service and after leaving the military can have an important impact on their adjustment and mental health. That is why researchers designed the study to encompass pre-, peri- and post-deployment factors.

Researchers chose to focus on the National Guard because it is an understudied military population. Since the first Gulf War, National Guard soldiers have been deployed to combat zones in increasing numbers. They experience unique stressors in that they are often deployed separately from their units, maintain civilian jobs and have a time-limited amount of health care coverage following deployment.

The initiative currently encompasses five projects across five sites including UH Case Medical Center and the University of Toledo. The Mood Disorders Research Program provides collaborating sites with free access to the data and participants. The main project, which serves as the foundation for all others, is a longitudinal study of risk and resiliency as it relates to five conditions: PTSD, alcohol abuse, alcohol dependence, depression and anxiety. Researchers conduct annual telephone interviews with a random sample of approximately 3,500 National Guard soldiers to catalog their lives and military experiences and track their mental health indicators over time.

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All National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) funding for basic and clinical research is awarded to the School of Medicine at Case Western Reserve University.

The initiative is directed by Joseph Calabrese, MD, Director, Mood Disorders Program, UH Case Medical Center, Director, Bipolar Disorders Research Center, and Bipolar Disorders Research Chair and Professor, Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine. Dr. Calabrese is a nationally recognized researcher who has served as principal investigator in more than 70 studies on the treatment of bipolar disorder and major depressive disorder.

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With the addition of several new hospitals to the University Hospitals network, Robert J. Ronis, MD, MPH, Psychiatrist-in-Chief, University Hospitals, and Douglas Bond Professor and Chair, Department of Psychiatry, Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine, led the service line integration of six hospitals’ psychiatry units in three counties in Northeast Ohio. The integration increased UH’s capacity to more than 135 inpatient beds to better serve persons with serious and persistent mental illnesses and addictive disorders.

Through a contract with the Cuyahoga County Board of Developmental Disabilities, Stephen Ruedrich, MD, Division Director, Adult Psychiatry, UH Case Medical Center, L. Douglas Lenkoski Professor and Vice Chair for the Department of Psychiatry, School of Medicine, now oversees a new psychiatric service agreement at UH for individuals with intellectual disabilities.

John Hertzer, MD, Director, Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Division, UH Case Medical Center, and Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, School of Medicine, was named the James A. Horner Chair in Child Psychiatry in 2014. The Child Psychiatry Division continues to provide clinical services both at the hospital and in the community. In addition to the W.O. Walker Center, our child psychiatrists provide services at UH Rainbow Babies & Children’s Hospital, UH Ahuja Medical Center, UH Medina and Mayfield Village health centers and in the pediatric practices of UH University Suburban and Westlake health centers.

Under the direction of Tiffany Thomas-Lakia, MD, Senior Clinical Instructor of Psychiatry, School of Medicine, and Libbie Stansifer, MD, Clinical Instructor of Psychiatry, School of Medicine, the Pediatric Portal Project continues to retrain pediatricians as child and adolescent psychiatrists. Portal graduates Drs. Thomas-Lakia and Stansifer were joined this year by fellow portal graduate Mary Gabriel, MD, Senior Instructor of Psychiatry, Public and Community Psychiatry Fellow, School of Medicine, in providing consultation and clinical services within the ambulatory clinic at UH Rainbow Babies & Children’s Hospital.

A Women’s Mental Health Clinic has been established by Sarah Nagle-Yang, MD, Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, School of Medicine, and Jaina Amin, MD, Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, School of Medicine, at UH MacDonald Women’s Hospital to provide mental health care to new mothers and women who come to UH MacDonald Women’s Hospital Clinic for their obstetric and general health care.

This year, the Department of Psychiatry is focusing on meeting the challenges of young people ages 15 to 23 with significant mental health issues who are unable to find care in community-based settings. Referred to as transitional youth, this population is at risk for homelessness, addiction, unwanted pregnancy, violence and unemployment. The department has undertaken two initiatives to address these concerns:

- The Transitional Youth Initiative, led by Andrew Hunt, MD, Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, School of Medicine, is developing a psycho-educational group model of treatment based on the principles of dialectical behavior therapy. A treatment team consisting of a psychiatrist, psychology intern and licensed independent social worker will meet with clients and families to help prepare individuals for life beyond school.

- The College Mental Health Initiative focuses on transitional youth who are enrolled in higher education and are experiencing difficulties that negatively impact their studies. Led by Michelle Romero, DO, Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, School of Medicine, the initiative held a summit for student health professionals from schools across Northeast Ohio. Dr. Romero;

Susan Kimmel, MD, Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, School of Medicine; and other faculty provide psychiatric services at five Northeast Ohio universities and plan to establish a College Mental Health Fellowship Program in 2015.

The Mood Disorders Program, under the direction of Dr. Joseph Calabrese, continues to lead the nation in care for patients with bipolar and other mood disorders, highlighted by the following:

- The donor-funded Never Say No Initiative continued to provide expert second opinions and stabilization for uninsured or underinsured patients, who were then referred to community services or research studies for ongoing care.

- The Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT) Program under Keming Gao, MD, Clinical Director, Mood Disorders Program, Medical Director, ECT, and Associate Professor of Psychiatry, School of Medicine, continues to provide services for the largest group of treatment-refractory patients with mood disorders in Northeast Ohio.

- The community-focused Outpatient Psychotherapy Initiative led by Paul Minnillo, PhD, Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, School of Medicine, engages highly trained clinicians to provide counseling and psychotherapy services to patients in UH community-based settings.

The Public and Community Psychiatry Fellowship under the direction of Patrick Runnels, MD, Director, Public & Community Psychiatry Fellowship, Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, School of Medicine, expanded from four to eight fellows this year, thanks to the support of the Medicaid Technical Assistance and Policy Program (MEDTAPP) grant. The department also created an APRN externship program associated with our Public and Community Psychiatry Program and added training for predoctoral and postdoctoral psychologists dedicated to serving the expanded Ohio Medicaid population. This new training is directed by Jeffrey Janata, PhD, Director, Division of Psychology, UH Case Medical Center, and Professor of Psychiatry, School of Medicine.

- In addition to residents and fellows, 24 full-time faculty now dedicate time to community mental health organizations through our locally funded and state-supported Public Academic Liaison (PAL) Program under the direction of Kathleen Clegg, MD, Associate Professor of Psychiatry, School of Medicine. Dr. Clegg now serves as Medical Director for Recovery Resources, a local mental health and addiction services agency. Dr. Patrick Runnels is Medical Director for The Centers for Families and Children.

Farah Munir, DO, Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, School of Medicine, is Medical Director for The Free Medical Clinic of Greater Cleveland. New faculty member Neal Goldberg, MD, MPH, Senior Clinical Instructor of Psychiatry, School of Medicine, serves as Medical Director for the Carriage House Clinic at Magnolia Clubhouse.

- With the support of the MEDTAPP grant, the department continues its efforts to train and integrate advanced practice nurses into our clinical services. Currently APRNs serve in the Mood Disorders, Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Geropsychiatry and Consultation/Liaison Programs. To assist in the integration of these new providers and consolidation of efforts, the department welcomed Rosa Ruggiero, MSN, PMHNP-BC, Senior Clinical Instructor, School of Medicine, to the full-time faculty and clinical staff this year as Director of Advanced Practice Nursing Integration.

Visit UHhospitals.org/CME for the latest in live, webinar and on-demand Continuing Medical Education events.
UH Case Medical Center’s physicians, surgeons and scientists—all members of the faculty of Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine—are leaders in their respective fields, and their ongoing research programs are at the leading edge of medical progress. A strong emphasis on translational, or “bench-to-bedside,” research means that new and innovative treatments and technologies transfer more rapidly from the research laboratory to actual patient care.

TOMORROW’S CURES TODAY.

The Mood Disorders Program’s Mood and Anxiety Clinic, headed by Dr. Keming Gao, has just published the first treatment study in patients with bipolar depression, comorbid generalized anxiety disorder and other psychiatric disorders. Articles about the disagreement between self-reported and clinician-ascertained suicidal ideation among clinic patients has been accepted for publication in the Journal of Clinical Psychiatry and in the Journal of Psychiatric Research.

Dr. Sarah Nagle-Yang is engaged in Institutional Review Board-sponsored research examining the effectiveness of an integrated psychiatry/obstetrics service.

Martha Sajatovic, MD, Director of the UH Neurological Institute Neurological & Behavioral Outcomes Center, the Willard W. Brown Chair in Neurological Outcomes at UH Case Medical Center, and Professor of Psychiatry at the School of Medicine, continues her work on the assessment and treatment of older people with mental health disorders. She presented data from a recently completed study on asenapine treatment for late-life bipolar disorder at the American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry Annual Meeting, and at the International Review of Psychosis and Bipolarity. Dr. Sajatovic also presented an invited lecture titled “Advances in Geriatric Psychopharmacology” at the second Asia CNS Summit.

Jennifer Levin, PhD, Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, School of Medicine, is a scholar for the Neurological & Behavioral Outcomes Center of the UH Neurological Institute. She is involved in research to improve the health of our most vulnerable population: those with both serious mental illness and high cardiovascular risk. She was a co-principal investigator with Rebecca Boxer, MD, of the University of Colorado Denver on a study investigating heart failure self-management in elderly patients and their caregivers. The study results were recently published in the Journal of Cardiac Failure.

Researchers in the Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry continue the Longitudinal Assessment of Mania Symptoms study, now in its 10th year, under the leadership of Nora McNamara, MD, Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, School of Medicine. Also under the leadership of Dr. McNamara, the research group is enrolling participants ages 10 to 15 in nearly 15 clinical trials that investigate the safety and efficacy of innovative treatments for several disorders including schizophrenia, mood disorders, autism, ADHD, anxiety and PTSD.

The child psychiatry research group is also dedicated to community outreach by bringing awareness of mental illness and research to those who might not otherwise be exposed to care in an academic setting. The group functions as a leader in the field, often providing education and support for other research infrastructures relating to enrollment, study start-up, execution of clinical protocols and patient retention.

A new study of memantine and its use in the treatment of adolescents and adults with Down syndrome is also under way at UH Case Medical Center. The project cleared the FDA in March 2014 and secured initial funding from the Alana Foundation USA. The purpose of the study is to determine whether memantine improves memory and cognition in persons with Down syndrome. The study involves researchers from pediatrics, behavioral pediatrics and psychiatry. Dr. Stephen Ruedrich is co-investigator of the study.

Maria Pagano, PhD, Associate Professor of Psychiatry, School of Medicine, continues her work on a prospective, longitudinal, naturalistic study of 195 juvenile offenders court-referred to treatment. Continued follow-up of this sample will provide clinically important data regarding juveniles’ service work and spiritual transformation in Alcoholics Anonymous that facilitates their character development as well as their return to the community following treatment.

Dr. Jeffrey Janata continues his efforts as co-principal investigator on the National Institutes of Health/National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases study, titled “Neurophysiologic & Autonomic Characterization of Interstitial Cystitis/Painful Bladder Syndrome.”

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The commitment to exceptional patient care begins with revolutionary discovery. University Hospitals Case Medical Center is the primary affiliate of Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine, a national leader in medical research and education and consistently ranked among the top research medical schools in the country by U.S. News & World Report. Through their faculty appointments at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine, physicians at UH Case Medical Center are advancing medical care through innovative research and discovery that bring the latest treatment options to patients.
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