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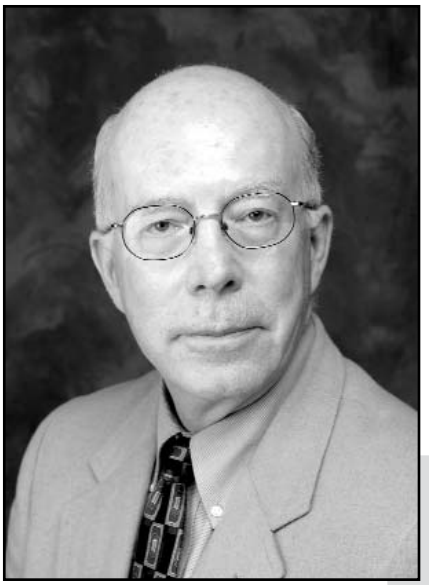
A Glimpse of Psychiatry in Russia



Last October my wife, Kay, and I traveled to Russia as members of the People to People Ambassador Program. Our group of sixteen psychiatrists and eleven guests were led by Dr. Alan Tasman, Chair of Psychiatry at the University of Louisville Medical School and the North American Delegate to the International Psychiatric Association. We spent three days in Moscow and three in St. Petersburg.

In Moscow, we visited the Russian Scientific Research Institute of Psychiatry of the Russian Federation Health Ministry (equivalent to our NIMH) and the Independent Psychiatric Association of Russia (a volunteer organization of human rights advocates).

In St. Petersburg, we visited the East-European Institute of Psychoanalysis, the Psychiatric Hospital #3 of St. Petersburg and the V.M.-Bekhterev Psychoneurological Research Institute.

In both cities, we enjoyed a variety of cultural activities: museum visits, symphony, ballet, opera and folk dance performances. The personal highlight for Kay and me was a wonderful evening of warmth and hospitality spent with the family of Guiouzel Nabieva, MD, one of our second-year residents.

My professional observations include the following: Psychiatry in Russia is comparable to that segment in the U.S. of community mental health centers and state hospitals. There is little or no "private practice," although that seems to be, now, beginning to develop.

Secondly, diagnoses are based on ICD-9 terminology, similar to ours and treatment principals are similar. The "modern" medications are used in the large hospitals and research facilities but are not available in the outpatient settings where tricyclic antidepressants and conventional antipsychotics are used.

Thirdly, psychiatry is currently underfunded with the concern of even further reductions in federal and regional (state) funding due to drastic budget restraints at both levels (sounds familiar!).

We had many other positive professional and personal impressions, which I would summarize by saying that the trip was very educational and highly enjoyable and I would highly recommend such a visit to anyone.

Donald R. Brada, M.D.

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Health Literacy: Ending Patient Confusion

By Khang Vu, MS4, KUSM-W and Mohamed Ramadan, MD, Chief Resident, Department of Psychiatry KUSM-W

On January 25, the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences had a grand rounds presentation on Health Literacy: Ending Patient Confusion. Khang (John) Vu a fourth-year medical student at KUSM-W and the president of the students' Ambassadors, presented. The grand rounds was well attended by medical students, residents, faculty members and other health care providers.

The term "health literacy" refers to a patient's ability to understand common health care communications, such as prescription instructions, test results and insurance forms. According to the Institute of Medicine Report on health literacy, 90 million people have difficulty understanding and using health information.

Studies show that people from all ages, races, and income and education levels are challenged by this problem. Individuals with low health literacy incur medical expenses that are up to four times greater than patients with adequate literacy skills, costing the health care system billions of dollars every year for unnecessary doctor visits and hospital stays. Compounding the problem is the fact that most patients hide their confusion from their doctors because they are too ashamed and intimidated to ask for help.

Khang (John) Vu a fourth-year medical student at KUSM-W

The American Medical Association (AMA) became the first national medical organization to adopt policy recognizing that limited patient literacy effects medical diagnosis and treatment. The AMA Foundation has since been working to raise awareness of health literacy through various projects including providing grants that made this presentation possible.

PsyIG group off and running . . .

By Benjamin S. Davis, PsyIG President, MS4 KU Wichita

Hello! The Psychiatry Interest Group (PsyIG) is off to a great start this semester. The first meeting was a great success due to the number of 3rd and 4th year students who attended, and plans were made for the semester. Plans include having a movie critic come and do a movie review. This should be a great way to have fun with psychiatry and its role in movie making. The interest group will once again help with the Sedgwick County Suicide Prevention Task Force run-walk event. Susan Carr, MD, has offered to host a gathering at her place once the weather warms up. The members may get involved with the new student-run clinic. PsyIG is always looking for new events to help with and new projects to become involved in.

I would like to say thank you to everyone for their help last semester. I firmly believe we have one of the best student groups on campus. I know, definitely, our level of community involvement from screenings, community talks, student lectures, and suicide prevention talks places KUSM-W and us as a valuable asset to the community. From articles in the KUSM-W Monitor to our cooperation with Sedgwick County with suicide prevention efforts, we are becoming known not only throughout the medical school but also throughout the state.

Our last meeting reaffirmed my belief in the importance of PsyIG. Students interested in psychiatry and family practice make up the majority of students attending. I feel the combination of multiple areas of interest at our meetings assures a future respect and understanding that will continue between all of our specialties in our future careers. Third-year students attending the meeting asked about fourth-year rotations. They were very interested in geropsychiatry and research opportunities.

Again, thanks to everyone for your help and commitment, and a special thank you to Laurie Coyner, MD, for her effort and time.

American Psychiatric Association Report *By Don Brada, MD*

The Assembly of District Branches met November 5-7, 2004 in Washington, DC. The assembly was called to order Friday afternoon by speaker Jim Nininger, MD, followed by remarks by President Michelle Riba, MD, President-Elect Steve Sharfstein, MD, Treasurer Carolyn Robinowicz, MD, and Medical Director Jim Scully, MD.

Dr. Scully gave an encouraging report on the continued growth in membership and the improving financial position of the association.

The candidates for President-Elect, Pedro Ruiz, MD, and Sidney Weissman, MD, both made remarks to the assembled delegates.

On Saturday morning there was an enlightening focused session on workforce issues with several references to a paper by David Blumenthal, MD, MPP, *New Steam From an Old Cauldron* - The Physician-Supply Debate, N Engl J Med 2004; 350: 1780-1787, Apr 22, 2004 or www.NEJM.org.

There were eighteen action papers discussed in the area councils and the assembly. Among those approved were several membership issues: automatic membership transfers and upgrades, dues payment options and expanding inducements for members-in-training and training directors to join the American Psychiatric Association.

Also approved was a measure asking the board to investigate the feasibility of joining a coalition against handgun injury. Two action papers supporting various aspects of same sex unions were approved. Another approved action paper addressed the fact that there is very little material on bipolar disorder in children and adolescents in DSM-IV in spite of burgeoning scientific literature. The paper asked the board to explore the possibility of including that information in the next edition of DSM-IV rather than waiting for DSM-V (about 2012).

The assembly completed its business about noon on Sunday and will reconvene just prior to the annual meeting in May.

George Dyck Endowed Lecture Series *By Mary Spachek*

The second annual George Dyck Endowed Lecture was held on Tuesday, November 30, 2004. Sanford Finkel, MD, presented on "Action in the Field of Mental Health and the Law." Dr. Finkel, currently at the University of Chicago Medical School, is a pioneer in the field of geriatric psychiatry. He was a founder of the American Association of Geriatric Psychiatry in 1978 and has served as its president, and was a co-founder of the International Psychogeriatric Association, also serving two terms as its president. He has extensive experience in geriatric forensic psychiatry, and has researched and published widely on the management of agitated behaviors in patients with dementia.

Dr. Finkel and Dr. Dyck visit after Dr. Finkel's presentation at the Psychiatry Grand Rounds.

The George Dyck Endowed Lectureship was established in 2003 to honor the life-long work of Dr. George Dyck and his extensive contributions to teaching medical students and residents and to caring for elderly patients and their families. The lectureship also contributes to the ongoing education of geriatric psychiatry of health care professionals in south central Kansas.

Additional funding of $15,000 is still needed to completely endow the lectureship. We would ask that you consider a contribution. Your check should be made out to: KUEA George Dyck Endowed Lectureship and returned to: KUSM-W Endowment Association, 1010 N. Kansas, Wichita, KS 67214.

Mid Year Checks and Balances

By Mohamed Ramadan MD, Chief Resident

It has been a busy first half of the year for residents and for the department. During the past six months, a lot of changes and activities have taken place. We started our pioneer mentor program. In this new program, we divided residents and attendings into groups with each group having a resident from each class. The residents and faculty members have been meeting and enjoying this new experience.

We have continued our **OCD** conflict resolution policy. In case of conflict every resident is asked to talk to the **O**ther resident before talking to the **C**hief resident. If no resolution is found then the residents involved in the conflict can go to the program **D**irector. I am happy to say that there has not been any conflict between residents during the past six-months. This reflects on the nice working atmosphere and the quality of our residents in the psychiatry program. Also, for the first time, we had the call schedule for the whole year done so residents could plan their time off.

In September, we had the department annual picnic. The residents continue to have their monthly dinners where residents, faculty members and their families meet after work to socialize. We find this a very nice way to get to know each other and to increase cohesion in the department. The department grand rounds have been a great success. We have had national, regional and local speakers. The third-and fourth-year residents in our program have been involved with National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI) Wichita and going once a month to answer questions for patients' families. I have enjoyed working with our medical students and the department's psychiatry interest group. Finally, this year we had our first Law and Medicine presentation that was very useful and hopefully will be an annual event.

Health of the Public (HOP) Student Rotation

By Susan Carr, MD

The 2005 class and all medical students are required to study public health issues for one month during their fourth year of training. The course is taught and coordinated by Tim Scanlan, MD, and Amy Chesser, MAC. This rotation is through the Preventive Medicine and Public Health department. Lectures are given on public health issues and basic concepts in epidemiology. Each student is mentored by a faculty member from one of the various departments at KUSM-W. The students do a literature review, present an article, and do a poster session on a study of interest. Dr. Carr is the current mentor for the HOP students for the Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences department.

Two students, Chris Johnson and Hank Doering, chose to mentor under the Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences department this past November. Several more students are expected to participate in the February and April rotations. The students have recently been involved in a univariate analysis of the suicide data from the Sedgwick County Suicide Prevention Task Force and will be obtaining Geographic Information System mapping for this data for this next month's rotation. Other projects the students may choose to work on include: tabulating post-test responses from student evaluations of the Yellow Ribbon suicide prevention presentation program, evaluating the tool used, and potentially looking at a cost-benefit analysis for the program. Alex Reed, PhD, from Wesley Family Medicine may be participating with our students as well in doing a chart review to determine whether suicide assessment has been documented on patients diagnosed with depression or those treated with an antidepressant.

If there are topics or studies which any of the Psychiatry faculty are involved in which might be amenable to this type of learning experience for the HOP students, please contact Dr. Carr at 293-2647.

Spring Conference April 22

The Kansas Psychiatric Society (KPS), the University of Kansas School of Medicine-Wichita Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences Department, and Via Christi Regional Medical Center will be offering a Spring Conference the afternoon of April 22, 2005. The conference will be held at the Via Christi Good Shepherd Campus.

The conference will focus on advocacy issues in mental health care and will feature Jeremy Lazarus, MD, and Jane Adams, PhD. Dr. Lazarus, who chairs the APA Council on Advocacy and Public Policy and the AMA task force on Medicare/Health System Reform Board of Trustees, will speak on current issues in mental health care and APA/ AMA organizational response, the ethical issues involved, and how to get involved in advocacy. He will also discuss briefly the APA Vision Statement for Mental Health Centers. Dr. Adams served as Commissioner for the President's New Freedom Commission and will discuss the report recommendations and implementation in Kansas.

The KPS business meeting will proceed the conference.

Attempts are underway to determine the interest of attendees in meeting for dinner after the conference before heading home; if interested please notify Dr. Susan Carr by e-mail at scarr2@kumc.edu or by phone at 316-293-2647. Watch your mail for more information.

FACULTY, STAFF, RESIDENT AND STUDENT NOTES . . .

WELCOME

Kerri Kamm, Lasandra Taylor and Peggy Martinez who have recently joined the billing department team.

PUBLICATIONS

Silkey B, **Preskorn SH**, Golbeck A, Shah R, Neff M, Jones TL et al. Complexity of medication use in the veterans affairs healthcare system: Part II. Antidepressant use among younger and older outpatients. *J Psych Prac* 2005; 11(1):16-26.

Preskorn SH, Silkey B, Shah R, Neff M, Jones TL, Choi J et al. Complexity of medication use in the veterans affairs healthcare system: Part I: Outpatient use in relation to age and number of prescribers. *J Psych Prac* 5 A.D.; 11(1):5-15.

Khan, A.Y. Examining concentration-dependent toxicity of clozapine plasma levels: Role of therapeutic drug monitoring. *J Psych Prac*. In Review. 2005.

Ramadan MI, Werder SF, **Preskorn SH**. Serious adverse events secondary to drug-drug interactions involving antidepressants and mood-stabilizing drugs. *Current Psychiatry*. In press. 2005.

Preskorn SH. Multiple medication Use in patients seen in the Veterans Affairs Healthcare System: So what? *J Psych Prac* 2005; 11(1):46-50.

Ramadan M, **Khan A** and **Preskorn S.** D2 Blockade and possible Ziprasidone-induced galactorrhea. *International Clinical Psychopharmacology* Dec 2004. In press.

Ramadan M, Whalen B, De Santes K. Hyperexcitable blink reflex preceding the diagnosis of neuroblastoma. *Journal of Pediatric Hematology Oncology* Oct 2004; 26(10):665-667.

Ramadan M. State hospital training. *American Psychiatric Association Psychiatric News* December 2004.

PRESENTATIONS

Don Brada, MD, presented "A Glimpse of Psychiatry in Russia" on December 14, 2004 at the Psychiatry Grand Rounds in Wichita, Kansas.

Mohamed Ramadan, MD, has presented at the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI) share and care Ask the Doctor meetings in October and November 2004.