



PARTNERS

A collaboration between the University of California, San Diego Center for Community-based Research In Older People with Psychoses and the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency Adult and Older Adult Mental Health Services

Volume 1, Issue 3

November 17, 2003

OUR MISSION

Our Mission is to improve the quality of life and to reduce disability in middle-age and older adults with schizophrenia and other chronic psychotic disorders living in the community.

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Geriatric Psychiatry Specialist Named Interim Director of UCSD Aging Institute



Dilip Jeste, M.D., Professor of Psychiatry and Neurosciences, and Estelle and Edgar Levi Chair in Aging, has been named Interim Director of UCSD's Stein Institute for Research on Aging (SIRA). He succeeds Dennis Carson, M.D., Professor of Medicine, who leaves the position after thirteen years to become Director of the Rebecca and John Moores UCSD Cancer Center. Both appointments became effective November 10, 2003.

SIRA, which this year celebrates its twentieth anniversary, was established to foster healthy aging by supporting advances in patient care through innovative research, training, and education. SIRA brings together a critical mass of scientific talent, encourages and funds age-related research, purchases scientific equipment, supports student education, enhances patient care, and provides community education through a popu-

lar monthly newsletter and monthly lectures.

Jeste, a specialist in geriatric psychiatry, has been widely honored for his leadership in psychiatric research, education, and clinical care. A member of the UCSD faculty since 1986, he serves as chief of the UCSD Division of Geriatric Psychiatry, which includes the Senior Behavioral Health Program, offering inpatient and outpatient services for older patients with mental health needs. He is also a geriatric psychiatrist with the Veterans Affairs San Diego Healthcare System.

He is principal investigator of the Center for Community-based Research in Older People with Psychosis, a \$7.5 million effort funded by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), in partnership with the San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency's Adult and Older Adult Mental Health Services. The goal of the project is to develop effective new therapies for middle-aged and elderly people with schizophrenia and other chronic psychotic disorders. He is also the principal investigator of two national research training grants in geriatric mental health.

Jeste earned his D.P.M. from the College of Physi-

cians and Surgeons in Bombay, and his M.D. from the University of Bombay. He completed his residency in psychiatry at the Cornell Medical Center and his neurology residency at George Washington University Medical Center. Prior to joining the UCSD faculty he held positions in the Neuropsychiatry Branch of the NIMH, Saint Elizabeth Hospital; and at the George Washington University Medical Center.

He has published extensively in his field of specialty, and is in the Institute of Scientific Information's list of the world's most cited authors comprising less than .5 percent of all the publishing researchers of the last two decades. He has served as president of the American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry as well as the International College of Geriatric Psychoneuropharmacology. He is Editor-in-Chief of the *American Journal of Geriatric Psychology* and was lead author of the widely cited 1999 report, "Consensus Statement on the Upcoming Crisis in Geriatric Mental Health: Research Agenda for the Next Two Decades," published in the *Archives of General Psychiatry*.

- Leslie Franz

The San Diego Older Adult Mental Health and Substance Abuse Coalition

In October, the San Diego Older Adult Mental Health and Substance Abuse Coalition celebrated its first birthday. On October 9, 2002, several community stakeholders gathered to learn about developing an effective coalition. Bob Rawlings was the facilitator for that session. Mr. Rawlings was active in forming the Oklahoma Mental Health and Aging Coalition in 1990 and has since provided consultation for building similar coalitions across the country. "We have come a long way in just one year", says Maureen Halpain, current Chairperson for the Coalition. "Many organizations and community members have come together to find out how we can work towards addressing the mental health needs of

older adults, which often includes substance use issues. During this year, we have established a statement of purpose and by-laws; we have elected officers; and have begun the implementation of our Education and Advocacy Campaign."

As part of the Education and Advocacy Campaign, the Coalition is working with major employers throughout San Diego to send out a holiday message to the employees of these companies. Geraldine Trinidad, current Chairperson of the Education Workgroup for the Coalition, states, "Everyone has a grandma, an older uncle, a friend or a neighbor who is an older adult. We need to echo the message that depression is NOT a normal part of aging. If we define "healthy aging" and "healthy minds", then we give people something positive to work towards. Raising peoples' awareness about mental illness or substance use issues often brings about their motivation to seek help. This holiday message could, in

fact, be the most valuable gift that many receive this year."

The mission of the San Diego Older Adult Mental Health and Substance Abuse Coalition is to improve the quality of life for older adults in the diverse communities of San Diego County by addressing the issues of mental health and substance use through education and advocacy. The Coalition is composed of consumers, caregivers, advocates, health and social service providers, educators, and concerned community members.

General meetings are scheduled for December 19th, January 16th, and February 20th at the Mental Health Administration Building (3255 Camino del Rio South, San Diego, CA 92108) from 8:30-11am. Contact Geraldine Trinidad at (858) 642-3966 or Sdseniorcoalition@yahoo.com if you are interested in participating in the workgroup projects.

- Dahlia Fuentes, M.P.H., M.S.W.



PARTNERS is a quarterly newsletter of the Center for Community-based Research on Older People with Psychoses (CCROPP) and the San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency's Adult and Older Adult Mental Health Services (AMHS). This publication reports items of interest to individuals with psychoses, their families, health care professionals, researchers, interested friends and supporters, and the public. CCROPP and AMHS do not provide medical advice, nor do they promote, endorse, or recommend any product, therapy, or institution. Check all drugs, treatments, therapies, and products with your physician. Statements and opinions expressed in articles are not necessarily those of CCROPP or AMHS. Send all correspondence to: Advanced Center for Interventions and Services Research, a Division of Geriatric Psychiatry, 0603-V, UCSD School of Medicine, La Jolla, CA 92093-0603. For more information contact Jody DeLaPena at 858-552-8585, ext. 2743 or e-mail us at jodelapena@ucsd.edu. Our website is <http://geropsych.ucsd.edu>.

Early Career Development Training in Aging and Mental Health Research

The Summer Training on Aging Research Topics - Mental Health (START-MH) Fellowship, recently funded by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) and administered by the University of California San Diego Division of Geriatric Psychiatry, is a unique national program that offers competitive scholarships to undergraduate, graduate and medical students who may be interested in aging and mental health research. The program gives the selected students an opportunity to gain research experience and work closely with an established mentor/investigator in the field of aging and mental health research. During the 10-week summer program, students work on specific projects developed by, or in conjunction with a mentor. The training is designed to expand the pipeline of new researchers in geriatric mental health by providing early opportunities and exposure to research for students. *START-MH* helps students understand that a research career involves such steps as establishing a relationship with a mentor and building networks that benefit their academic and career advancement.

START-MH fellowships are

awarded on a competitive basis to undergraduate sophomores, juniors and seniors who have a minimum GPA of 3.0 and may have an interest in pursuing a career in aging and mental health research. Any graduate or medical students with an interest in pursuing a career in aging and mental health research are eligible to apply. In its inaugural year, *START-MH* received a total of 85 applications, in a six-week time frame. 30 students from 22 institutions were selected to participate. The participant pool was diverse, of the 30 trainee selected to participate in the program, 83% were women and 33% were from ethnic minority groups.

A defining feature of the *START-MH* program is pairing students with established mentors in the field. Having a mentor has been consistently linked with academic and professional success. 34 mentors from all across the country were selected to participate in the program. Some trainees were matched with a pair of mentors. We were fortunate to have highly esteemed researchers serve as mentors to the inaugural class.

Some activities trainees participated in included attending regular

weekly research meetings, library research, and data collection. Many of the trainees also gained first-hand experience in preparing an article for publication in a scientific journal. The trainees also attended a *START-MH* Conference at UCSD August 1-3. The conference provided the trainees the opportunity to present the results of their research on a poster platform and share their plans for future research careers. Several participants have submitted the results of their summer research projects in the form of abstracts to various professional conferences such as the 2004 American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry meeting and the Western Student Medical Research Forum.

The *START-MH* alumni will be asked to complete a follow-up survey on an annual basis. The purpose of the survey will be, in part, to evaluate participants' career development over time. Please visit the website at: <http://startmh.ucsd.edu> for program details and application forms or contact Geraldine Trinidad at (858) 642-3966.

- Maureen Halpain, M.S.

- Geraldine Trinidad, M.S.

P.E.D.A.L.

P.E.D.A.L. (*Programa de Educación para el Desarrollo de Habilidades para Latinos*) is a training program aimed at teaching older Latinos who have schizophrenia or schizoaffective disorder the skills necessary to live independently. The skills taught include planning and organization, communication, financial and household skills, medication management, and transportation. Because schizophrenics and schizoaffectives tend to have poor memory or other cognitive problems, the 30 sessions (24 weekly and 6 monthly) involve plenty of repetition, role-playing, and practicing of the skills. Our group leaders make sure that the classroom is a safe, friendly, and respectful environment where participants feel comfortable practicing their skills.

P.E.D.A.L. is based on an

ongoing program called Functional Adaptations Skills Training (F.A.S.T.). In fact, P.E.D.A.L.'s teaching module is the Spanish translation of the F.A.S.T. module. As a first step, all translations of classroom materials and assessments were reviewed by a committee of bilingual professionals to ensure accuracy of language and content. In addition, several steps were taken to ensure that P.E.D.A.L.'s teaching material was culturally appropriate and relevant to the Hispanic culture. Not only are the classes conducted in Spanish but the modules were written using informal Spanish after finding that the Hispanics, for the most part, had a much lower level of education. In addition, participants taking the class were asked to point out anything about the modules they felt needed modification. Their suggestions included revising wording, changing the quiz formats at the end of chapters

from multiple choice (which they were not used to) to open-ended questions, and changing role plays to be more relevant to the Hispanic way of life and sensitive to issues related to culture and gender.

P.E.D.A.L. and F.A.S.T. may have several long-term benefits. We expect the participants to experience more daily independence as a result of the new skills they've learned in the classes as well as increase their self-esteem and confidence. We also expect participants to become more active which would in turn help them prevent weight gain and diabetes, common anti-psychotic medication side effects. We hope that when both projects gain more recognition, the classes will be implemented nationwide.

- Sherrill Goldman, M.A.

Older Adult Mental Health Promotion, Wellness, and Educational Campaign

On October 10, 2003 the third in a series of events took place as part of the Promotion, Wellness, and Educational Campaign sponsored by a UCSD grant awarded to Dr. Dilip Jeste for his Center for Community Based Research in Older People with Psychosis (CCROPP) and the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency Adult and Older Adult Mental Health Services. This Wellness Campaign entitled "Understanding Prescription Medications: Use, Misuse and Compliance in Older Adults" aimed to educate the community about mental health issues affecting Older Adults.

Mayor Jerome Stocks and the City of Encinitas also co-sponsored this event. Both the mayor and DISTRICT 3 Supervisor, Pam Slater provided a warm welcome to the attendees, which included over 50 primary care providers, caregivers, and families of older adults. Supervisor Slater began her introduction by stating: "The partnership between UCSD and the County of San Diego has served seniors in the community well. Through UCSD, the County has access to the latest research on geriatric psychiatry. UCSD, in turn has access to seniors who can benefit from their research. Most importantly, this win-win relationship benefits seniors. As a result of this partnership, seniors receive top-notch care from UCSD that they may not otherwise have access to. In addition, program participants are contributing to research that will benefit the entire senior population in the future. That is innovative government!"

The speakers included Drs. Jonathan Lacro and William Mastin. Dr. Jonathan Lacro, is an Associate Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at UCSD and Clinical Pharmacist at the VA Healthcare System. Dr. Lacro is also a Pharmacotherapy Specialist and a Psychiatric Pharmacist. He has been conducting psychopharmacologic research since 1991 and is the Principal Investigator of a National Institute of Mental Health supported grant on "Medication Adherence Therapy in Older Psychotic People." Dr. Lacro's presentation on medication considerations in the older patient included data on adverse drug reactions, polypharmacy, and a very interesting discussion on medication compliance vs. adherence.

Dr. Bill Mastin is the Chief Pharmacist for the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency. Dr. Mastin provides clinical and distributive oversight for the County's Mental Health and Public Health Programs. He is strongly focused on patient advocacy and patient education and is a Certified Geriatric Pharmacist. His engaging presentation was both rich in information and humor, and provided useful specifics on prescribed medication interactions, drug-alcohol interactions, medications with herbs, and nutraceuticals and dietary supplements.

The presentations provided insight about prescription medications and their affects both positive and negative on older adults. Nearly 80 percent of seniors (65+) use at least one prescription and/or over the counter drug. Many seniors use multiple prescription

drugs. 40 percent of seniors do not take their medications as prescribed. Managing prescriptions and knowing the potential interaction of these prescriptions is extremely important, especially for aging adults.

Older adults are the most vulnerable to medication problems such as adverse drug reactions, drug-drug interactions and overdose. Since most medications are sold with a middle-aged adult in mind, often times the dosage of a medication must be adjusted for an older person. Certain medications may interact dangerously with other medications or health conditions. The combination of physiological changes of aging, disease processes and multiple medications can lead to adverse outcomes for older adults. Misuse of medications can increase this risk.

Medication if used properly, can also greatly improve a senior's quality of life as well as their life span. And, medication can be managed properly if older adults are educated about their health conditions and the medications that are treating them.

The UCSD Center for Community Based Research in Older People with Psychosis and the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency Adult and Older Adult Mental Health Services would like to extend a gracious invitation to anyone who is interested in attending future events in this series. For more information or to be placed on the Wellness Campaign mailing list please contact Jody DeLaPena at 858-552-8585, extension 2743 or email at jodelapena@ucsd.edu

The staff at the CCROPP want to extend our sincere best wishes for new beginnings to all those who were victims of the recent San Diego Wildfires. Our thoughts are with you.