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The Newsletter of the New York County District Branch of
the American Psychiatric Association

Spring 2008

Addiction Psychiatry in the 21st Century

Petros Levounis, MD, MA, President, New York County District Branch

Addiction treatment in the 20th century essentially revolved around three efforts: (a) facilitating the engagement of the patient with mutual-help groups, mostly Alcoholics Anonymous, (b) confronting the patient's denial and dysfunctional defenses, and (c) providing methadone for heroin addiction. Addiction Psychiatry in the 21st century has kept (a), discarded (b), and greatly improved on (c).

Many of us in the field of Addiction Psychiatry firmly believe that Alcoholics Anonymous and other mutual-help groups offer a tremendous—but not sole—vehicle to recovery; in fact, mil-



lions of people around the world have found support and healing through 12-step programs. When it comes to providing psychotherapy and counseling, our field has moved from confrontation to motivation, the latter method being best exemplified by the Motivational Interviewing approach. Along with cognitive-behavioral techniques, motivational enhancement therapy is more focused on working with ambivalence and fostering self-efficacy than on breaking down defenses. Finally, while methadone clinics continue to provide invaluable treatment to

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Members Meet Legislators at Ninth Annual Citywide Breakfast

By Ann Sullivan, M.D.

Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney spoke of the Federal initiatives regarding parity and attempts to increase health-care coverage for the uninsured, especially the SCHIP legislation that is focused on expanding coverage for uninsured children. Although President Bush vetoed the expansion legislation, Congresswoman Maloney told the audience that new legislation would soon be passed by Congress that, while not as extensive, would still substantially increase the services available to uninsured children nationwide. Parity is successfully moving forward, and Congresswoman Maloney emphasized the historic significance of this critical legislation.

With increasing numbers of veterans returning home from the war in Iraq, the Congresswoman spoke of major federal funding for the mental health issues of returning veterans, especially for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Finally Congresswoman Maloney discussed her personal commitment to ensure adequate funding for the physical and mental healthcare of the World Trade Center first responders and assist workers across the city suffering from illnesses resulting from their work on and after September 11, 2001.

Access to care for the uninsured was a major legislative theme, and was discussed at the New York State level by Assemblyman Richard Gottfried. Assemblyman Gottfried presented his soon to be released plan to effectively increase affordable health and mental health insurance to all New Yorkers. APA members echoed their support of the need to provide true



access to care for all our patients. State Senator Liz Krueger emphasized the importance of ensuring the effective implementation of New York State's existing parity law, known as Timothy's Law, and encouraged NYS psychiatrists to work closely with the new Commissioners of Mental Health and Substance Use on areas of importance to our patients and our members.

Lloyd Sederer, M.D., OMH's Medical Director and an APA member, also echoed the sentiment that there was a "new administration" in town at the State Office of Mental Health, and that it was open to working closely with NYSPA and local DBs on such key issues as access to state hospital beds, adequate housing and community-based services for our patients, and adequate payment for outpatient services. NYSPA and local legislative representatives will be working hard on these issues over the next year.

Assemblyman James Brennan of Brooklyn, a longstanding supporter of our positions at the state level, emphasized the need for all of us to be active with our legislators on a regular basis. City Council member David Weprin, who had sponsored a Council motion in favor of parity for mental illness also attended and spoke with individual members. Members also had the opportunity to meet and discuss issues with state Assembly members Jonathan Bing and Micah Kellner.

The brunch was chaired by Ann Sullivan, M.D., Legislative Representative

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Why Continue Your APA Membership as a Member-In-Training (MIT) or Early Career Psychiatrist (ECP)

By Laurence Dopkin, M.D. and Jose Vito, M.D.

Our collective experience as MIT and ECP members of the APA has been beneficial both educationally and practically. As a dues-paying member of the APA, you also automatically belong to the New York State Psychiatric Association, as well as your local District Branch. Both of these regional and local governing bodies are valuable sources of information, providing you opportunities to become involved in governance, attend symposia and other educational events, as well as maintain contact with colleagues. Other important benefits can be found on the APA website: Members have free online access to the Practice Management for early Career Psychiatrists Reference Guide; a compendium with topics including: How to Establish and Maintain Your Own Private Practice; Legal Issues; Patient Care Issues; Professional Issues, and Managed Care Issues. Members also get a 25% discount on books and journals from American Psychiatric Publishing, Inc. Members are also eligible for APA awards and fellowships (such as Addiction Minority Fellowships). One of us (Jose Vito) was very fortunate to be a recipient of the Jeanne Spurlock MD Congressional Fellowship where he worked as a staffer with a U.S. Senator on Capitol Hill. Members are also eligible for travel scholarships to the Institute on Psychiatric Services and the APA annual meeting. The other (Laurence Dopkin) was awarded a Public Policy Fellowship through the American Psychiatric Institute for Research and Education while he was starting out in his first job after residency training. That experience sparked his interest and led to his furthering his involvement with the APA.

It can be intimidating transitioning from MIT to ECP, and so the APA provides its junior members mentoring opportunities with senior psychiatrists. Having someone give you advice and guidance can be reassuring when you are



starting your professional career, making a job change, or other transition. Membership in the APA provides the MIT or ECP numerous opportunities for networking with peers, professional development, job banks, and even malpractice insurance. As a member, you get a free "member only" electronic newsletter on advocacy activities in your local, state, and national levels on mental health issues, including parity and confidentiality.

These are only some of the many benefits that membership in the APA provides.

We welcome any questions that you might have. Feel free to contact either of us at the central office at centraloffice@nyspsych.org.

Laurence Dopkin, M.D., Chair, National Committee of Early Career Psychiatrists, American Psychiatric Association

Jose Vito, M. D., Chair, National Committee of Members-In-Training (ACOM), American Psychiatric Association, and Chair,

New York Psychiatric Association Residency Committee. ■

All members are invited to attend the
New York County District Branch Annual Meeting
Thursday, April 17, 2008 at 7:00 PM
 at the New York Academy of Medicine, 1216 Fifth Avenue

The evening will include:

- A special presentation by the Committee on Addiction Psychiatry
- 2008 Resident Research Post Presentation and Awards Ceremony
- The announcement of the newly elected officers and council members

NEW YORK COUNTY DISTRICT BRANCH

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NY County District Branch Launches Early Career Psychiatrist (ECP) Mentorship Program *By Ann Sullivan, MD*

Our collective experience as MIT and ECP members of the APA has been beneficial both educationally and practically.

Early Career Psychiatrists (ECP) who are members of the District Branch will have the opportunity to meet and learn from senior District Branch colleagues in a new and unique mentorship program beginning this spring.

Through a grant funded to our District Branch by national APA, ECP members will be matched with more senior members according to their area(s) of interest. Mentors and mentees will have the opportunity to meet informal-

ly to discuss career choices, challenges and possibilities.

The District Branch will be kicking off this initiative with a "meet and greet" dinner this spring at a Manhattan restaurant (name and location to be announced) where ECPs will have the opportunity to give the DB ideas and suggestions and to meet potential mentors.

If you are interested in attending the dinner, please call (212-685-9633) or email (executivedirector@nycodbapa.org) for additional information. ■

Can your claims examiner pass this test?

1. What does Axis III of the DSM-IV classification signify?
2. What is tardive dyskinesia?
3. What is the significance of the "Tarasoff" decision?
4. How often should lithium be monitored?
5. Which population is most at risk for suicide?
6. What precautions should be taken before administering ECT?
7. What is the definition of suicidal ideation?

We can!

Find out if your malpractice insurer's claims examiners can answer these questions.

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Addiction *continued*

heroin addicts, there is now a powerful alternative to methadone: buprenorphine is a partial agonist to the mu opioid receptor, with superior safety and tolerability profile and can be prescribed on an outpatient basis in a physician's private office.

Twenty-first century Addiction Psychiatry has added two more elements to our work with the addicted person: (a) treating co-occurring psychiatric disorders, and (b) using an ever-expanding list of medications that directly address substance dependence.

To read this article in its entirety, please go to the newsletter section of the district branch website at www.nycodbapa.org.

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PART-TIME BOARD CERTIFIED PSYCHIATRIST

The Hallowell Center in Manhattan (117 W. 72nd St.) specializes in diagnosing and treating cognitive and emotional problems in both children and adults, with particular expertise in ADHD. We are seeking a part-time Board Certified Psychiatrist with experience in an outpatient private practice setting utilizing a multidisciplinary approach. The Hallowell Center offers a competitive salary and benefits in a professional and growing practice. Please contact Christine Robinson, M.Ed. at Christine@adhdnewyork.com.

From the President-Elect

By Jeffrey B. Freedman, MD



I am honored that you elected me to serve as President of the New York County District Branch of the American Psychiatric Association for the next year, beginning this May. My main goal is to make our organization increasingly relevant to our members and the patients we treat.

The launching, with the help of our Computer Technology Committee, of the revamped and improved website will hopefully contribute to achieving this objective. I expect the website will be a useful destination for our members and the public. One function the website can immediately serve is as a forum to promote news of the educational activities, research and publica-

tions of our local psychiatrists. In the past year, I attended excellent meetings involving a number of committees (Disaster, Ethics, Legislation, Resident Research Award and Women) which should have been even better attended. With a well designed website which will hopefully be frequently visited by our members, you will be better informed about these events. For those who cannot attend them, we will be able to post online some of the content of the lectures. We plan to do this for the Resident Research Award and Addiction Psychiatry Committee presentations (April 17th at the New York Academy of Medicine) and the AIDS Committee symposium at the American Psychiatric Association Annual Meeting in Washington on May 8th. Still, there is no substitute for being present at these events, which allows for personal interactions among our members.

I am proud to be part of our district branch, which is the largest in the country. Efforts will be made to continue increasing membership even more. Reaching out to and involving residents is still a priority. As of last year, we have waived dues for residents' first year of membership. The Residents Committee continues to be one of our most active committees.

I look forward to using my role as District Branch President to help promote all that is good in our field. Please feel free to call (212-604-8185) or email (jfreedman@svcmcnyc.org) me with any comments or suggestions. ■

The New York County District Branch

encourages our eligible members to apply to become a Fellow or Distinguished Fellow in the American Psychiatric Association.

APA Fellowship eligibility requirements, applications and additional information can be found on the DB website at www.nycodbapa.org.

Breakfast *cont. from page 1*

from NY County and Area 2 Trustee. Barry Perlman, M.D., NYSPA Legislative Chair, and Chair of the APA Committee on Government Relations, presented on major issues affecting us at the state level, and set the stage for lively discussion. The citywide legislative representatives and district branch executive directors all contributed valuable time and effort in making the breakfast a success.

If you missed the breakfast this year please be sure to attend next year, and let your views be known! ■

New York County District Branch Early Career Psychiatrist Mentorship Program

A "meet and greet" dinner is currently being planned at a Manhattan restaurant to give interested ECP members of the DB the opportunity to find out more about the mentorship program, meet potential mentors, and share your suggestions to help make this program a success. Please contact the DB office (phone: 212-685-9633 or email: executivedirector@nycodbapa.org) for additional information or to register to attend the dinner which will be held this spring.

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