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Update from Professor Parker

The MAP (Mood Assessment Program), which was introduced in our last newsletter, has completed its final development stage and will be implemented at MAP centres in Sydney (at the Institute and several general practices) and in two rural regions over the next few months, to assess its usefulness to general practitioners managing mood disorders.

The MAP provides considerable material about an individual's mood disorder, possible contributing factors, the current and

past treatment history, offers a number of key sub-typing diagnostic decisions, and supplies some brief guidelines for consideration by the managing clinician.

It is clearly of central importance that the principal sub-typing diagnoses are valid and, to that end, the research team has completed two major studies. One study, examining several hundred people who completed the MAP and now replicated in a second independent sample, demonstrated that the overall classification in determin-

ing whether the individual had a bipolar condition or not had an 80% success rate. Secondly, the algorithm that decides whether an individual has a melancholic or non-melancholic depression had an overall classification rate of 83%. Both are strikingly high figures and, while there is always a risk of an incorrect diagnosis, such research findings suggest a margin that is acceptable, above expectation and actually comparatively strong when compared to many tests in general medicine. (more on the MAP p2)

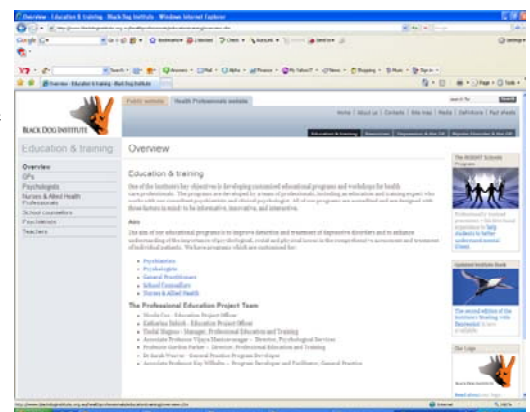
Website Renovation: New Section for GP's

The website is now divided into two sections with the blue tab on the home-page linking Health Professionals to even more clinician resources. GPs can access a 'one-stop-shop' section on the website where they can view the Education & Training calendar, register for training programs, and download a wealth of useful resources to assist in the management of mood disorders in their clinical work.

The materials contained in our 'Psychological Toolkit' have been reviewed and updated and are now grouped together under this heading on the website, providing easy access to these valuable resources that you are free to print out as needed.

We hope you find the blue tabbed section

useful and welcome any feedback you may have. The professional pages can be accessed via the Black Dog Institute's home page.



Focus on the Psychological Toolkit: Information on Bipolar Disorder

A wellbeing plan... "an agreed course of action drawn up by a patient in consultation with treatment team and significant other(s) to maintain mental and physical equilibrium in the short and long term."



Following the launch of our educational program on **bipolar disorder (BPD)**, some new information sheets on management strategies for this condition have been added to the toolkit (which appears on our website and is distributed on a CD Rom to participants in our courses) Three main areas of information are covered.

1. Medication algorithms

There are suggested drug regimes for managing the different presentations of both bipolar I (BP-I) and bipolar II (BP-II), specifically depression as part of BPD, mania and hypomania. These are based on protocols used here at the Black Dog Institute, and while some may vary from other protocols they are all based on clinical experience and research findings.

There are also suggested protocols for

pharmacological maintenance management or both BP-I and BP-II.

2. Information about mood stabilisers

The practicalities of using mood stabilising drugs – Lithium, anti-convulsants and atypical antipsychotics – can seem complex for those not familiar with them. There is a sheet which outlines the doses, side-effects, cautions, monitoring and safety in pregnancy and lactation for each of the commonly used drugs.

3. Non-pharmacological managements

These pages stress the importance of doing more than just medicating when managing patients with BPD. The areas addressed are psychoeducation and **wellbeing plans**, which are 'an agreed course of action drawn up by a patient in consultation with treatment



(Above) A Wellbeing Plan for Bipolar Disorder Template. This can be found in the PTK on our website and can be downloaded to use with patients.

team and significant other(s) to maintain mental and physical equilibrium in the short and long term'. There is a discussion of issues to include in such plans (lifestyle changes, early warning signs, relapse prevention etc) as well as a suggested **template** to complete with patients.

"We are now delighted to announce that the first MAP Centre in NSW has opened in Randwick at the Black Dog Institute building"

The Map Centre : Open for Business

In the last newsletter we announced the piloting of the MAP - a computerised assessment and diagnostic tool for patients with Mood disorders.

We are now delighted to announce that the first MAP Centre in NSW has opened in Randwick at the Black Dog Institute building and accepts referrals from health practitioners in the local area.

The process is that a GP registers as a MAP referrer who is then provided with a package containing referral forms and patient information sheets.

The GP refers a patient for a MAP assessment in much the same way as a patient would be referred for a pathology test.

The patient attends the MAP centre for assessment and the MAP report is mailed to the GP the next

working day after the MAP assessment has taken place. The referring GP also receives a set of Treatment Suggestions.

Watch future editions of this newsletter for more details of where MAP Centres will be opening. If you would like further information about the MAP please do not hesitate to contact Wendy Williamson on 02 9382 3707.

Black Dog Institute and the New Triennium

The RACGP has released its program handbook for the new QA&CPD triennium outlining training requirements for ongoing vocational registration.

Currently BDI has accredited provider status, so that all our courses have attracted CPD points and we are in the process of applying to be reaccredited for the new triennium.

We envisage that all current programs as well as those in development and planning will continue to meet RACGP standards.

Completion of our 6-hour Demystifying Depression program, or of 2 of the 3-hour programs (known as 'Interactive Modules'), counts as an Active Learning Module and accrues category 1 points (previously 30 pts, and 40 pts in the future). Two hour programs attract category 2 points at 2 points per hour.

We will be seeking to continue this pattern of point allocation.

We are also investigating the accreditation of a clinical attachment, and in the future of a 20-hour pro-

gram for recognition as level 2 accredited focussed psychological strategy providers (as per GPMHSC standards).

We will keep you updated on future developments re accreditation.



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Book Reviews

'Dealing with Depression – A common sense guide to mood disorders'

Gordon Parker Allen and Unwin 2nd Edition published 2004

This is one of those really useful books – both a wealth of practical clinical information for the health professional and one that can be recommended to patients and their families struggling with depression.

Based on years of clinical experience and research at the Black Dog Institute, Professor Parker explains how depression is not just a single disease varying in severity or duration but

that there a number of different types of depression.

He outlines a model that clearly differentiates between these types and makes real sense of the different presentations we see in primary practice.

He then goes on to explain how an understanding of these different types informs rational and effective treatment choices.

There are chapters on identifying underlying personality vulnerabilities and addressing them with appropriate psychological strategies, as well as on the use of medications, espe-

cially for the more biological depressions.

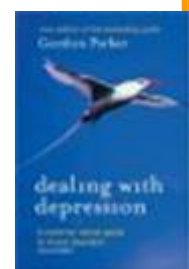
A feature of this second edition is more information on the bipolar disorders, the importance and frequency of which are becoming increasingly recognised.

Appendices include a comprehensive glossary and a list of useful websites (both Australian and worldwide) which can provide further information and support.

The book is available from most major booksellers and is a valuable and inexpensive resource.

"...an excellent overview of the depressive illnesses, written by one of the leading authorities on the subject."

Kay Redfield Jamison, PdD, Prof of Psychiatry, the John Hopkins School of Medicine



Course Dates 2008

There are no costs to attend these programs.

Dates for the 2008 courses are currently being planned. Please visit the Black Institute website for regular updates on courses and availability. Courses will be run both at the Institute in Randwick and in Division and Rural Training Provider locations throughout NSW.

To register for a program running at the Institute please visit our website: blackdoginstitute.org.au or email Katherine Dabich at k.dabich@unsw.edu.au

To register for a program running regionally please contact the local Division (relevant contact details are on our website).

The New Training Team

Alas, we farewell our Manager of Professional Training and Education, Julie Bell who has returned to England. Julie was with the Institute for several years and had enormous input into the development and smooth running of GP courses. The team welcomes two new members—Tindal Magnus, the new Training and Education Manager, and Katherine Dabich as Education Project Officer. Both will be helping to facilitate the role of GP programs and will be happy to help with any inquiries.



About us: The Black Dog Institute is an educational, research, clinical and community-oriented facility offering specialist expertise in mood disorders - a range of disorders that include depression and Bipolar Disorder. The Institute is attached to the Prince of Wales Hospital and affiliated with the University of New South Wales. The Institute is supported by NSW Health.

Breaking News

New Research on Antidepressants in Pregnancy and Breastfeeding

The Black Dog Institute has a number of important Fact Sheets that are readily downloaded from its website. In September 2007, it updated its Fact Sheet titled 'Safety of Antidepressants in Pregnancy and Breastfeeding'. This is an extremely important topic, particularly in suggesting that some of the newer antidepressants that were previously viewed as safe in pregnancy may have some concerns. Please follow the exact link below to this updated fact sheet or go to www.blackdoginstitute.org.au and following the links to Fact Sheets.

<http://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/docs/SafetyofAntidepressantsinPregnancyandBreastfeeding.pdf>

Future Editions

All future editions of our GP newsletters will be delivered electronically. If you would like to regularly receive our newsletter please sign on via our website. We will also keep you up to date with breaking clinical news that may be relevant to GPs!

Missed a newsletter? Our previous newsletters are available online at our website.