



BLACK DOG INSTITUTE

# The Black Dog Institute **GP Newsletter**

VOLUME TWO, ISSUE TWO

AUGUST 2008

Register now on-line for

- future editions of this newsletter
- breaking news in mood disorders

Go to [blackdoginstitute.org.au](http://blackdoginstitute.org.au)

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## Exciting Opportunity at the Institute

The Black Dog Institute is pleased to announce the launch of the **GP Clinical Attachment Program**.

General Practitioners and GP Registrars will now have the opportunity to observe a comprehensive clinical assessment interview with a patient attending the Depression Clinic, and sit in on the ensuing case discussion and treatment planning with BDI psychiatrists. GPs will also have the opportunity to complete a MAP assessment with a 'dummy case' of their own and discover how to read and interpret the report. This is an excellent opportunity to observe the

application of the Black Dog Institute's model of depression (melancholic, non-melancholic, and unipolar and bipolar psychotic subtypes) in clinical practice and to ask any questions you may have. The



process takes from three to four hours.

After attending it is hoped that GPs and registrars will understand how to refer patients to both the Depression clinic and

a MAP assessment, and make best use of these valuable resources. The Clinical Attachment Program will be conducted during office hours at the Institute's facilities in Randwick, NSW. All NSW-based General Practitioners and GP Registrars have been invited to participate in the program.

Registration of interest is essential as numbers are strictly limited.

Further information about the program is available on our website.



## CBT Skills for Managing Depression

*Interested in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and becoming accredited as a provider of FPS?*

The Black Dog Institute's GP Education Team is developing a 20-hour CBT program for GPs and GP Registrars. The course will present an overview of CBT theory, provide an introduction to the BDI model of depression as a rationale for selecting appropriate patients for CBT interventions, and address patient issues

including worry, stress, low self-esteem, and anger. The CBT strategies taught will include mindfulness, cognitive challenging, schema identification, behavioural experiments, and panic surfing. The course will be comprised of a series of face-to-face workshops as well as a self-directed component. Pending approval by the RACGP and GPMHSC, completion of the full program

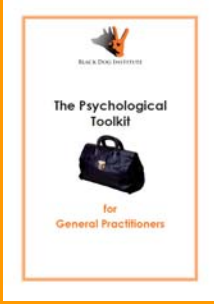
will qualify GPs to register as providers of FPS (formerly Level 2 initial). This program is expected to be completed and approved for delivery in early 2009.

*Please visit our website for updates and course dates.*



# The Psychological Toolkit:

## Sorting out the Issues



Download copies of the Psychological Toolkit from our website.



(Above) For Men Only worksheet

Sometimes in general practice we struggle to work out what patients' problems really are, and this is especially true with psychological issues. This may be due to non-disclosure by the patient (often a particular issue for men) or for other reasons which seem to be overwhelming the patient and confusing for both them and us. The Psychological Toolkit (PTK) has a number of resources that may prove useful in these situations.

**1. For Men Only** prompt sheet. This is designed for men to fill in (at home or in the waiting room) and give to their doctor. The answers provide a starting point to discuss health and related issues. It asks general questions about the different aspects of the man's

life (work, health, family, social networks, etc). In a non-threatening way, it also addresses a number of psychological symptoms and related behaviours (drug & alcohol use, risk taking, etc) which may be evidence of mental health problems.

**2. Identifying Your Priorities.** This sheet has a check list of 18 common issues that may be troubling people and bring them to seek help for psychological distress. It includes such things as negative thinking, anger, loss, health worries, etc. The patient is asked to mark any that are relevant and bring it to the consultation. Patient and doctor can then discuss the list, prioritising and planning treatment approaches. The reverse side of the sheet gives

the doctor a list of suggested strategies that may be useful in dealing with each of the different issues.

**3. Lifestyle Assessment Sheet** Using the acronym 'FANTASTIC' this sheet provides patients the chance to rate their attention to healthy lifestyle factors - both physical and psychological - and gives a starting point for doctor and patient to discuss changes that may be beneficial.

These resources can all be found on the BDI website, health professionals section as part of the PTK, and could prove useful additions to your clinical practice in helping patients with mood disorders and other psychological distress.

## Conferences

The 13th annual General Practice Conference and Exhibition (GPCE) held in May ran very successfully with over 2000 delegates attending. The Black Dog Institute's stand offered delegates the chance to view the Institute's website and resources, speak to staff about the education programs, and gather valuable information to assist in managing patients with mood disorders.

Over 100 delegates

heard the Director of the Black Dog Institute, Professor Gordon Parker, give a talk "In Pursuit of Happiness", covering the definition of 'happiness', positive psychology, underlying neurological bases, and strategies designed to increase happiness.

The education team also delivered a 3-hour version of the workshop 'Troubled Teens: Managing Adolescent Mood Disorders in General Practice' to a full house on each of the three days, training



(Above) from left to right, Dr Sarah Weaver, Kat Dabich & Larissa Briedis at the BDI stand

a total of 88 GPs. The Institute hopes to attend next year's event and give GPs an opportunity to attend another Black Dog Institute training program.

(Below) Professor Gordon Parker speaking at the GPCE in Sydney



# Black Dog in the Bush



Life in rural Australia is tough – isolation, drought, social and financial pressures take their toll, and there is pressure on the limited number of medical health professionals to provide adequate services. The Black Dog Institute puts a special focus on providing support for rural communities and mental health professionals in all aspects of managing mood disorders. This year, the GP Education Team have delivered programs to GPs and GP Registrars in Griffith, Inverell, Ballina, Nowra, Newcastle, and Port

Macquarie. The workshops are highly interactive and have been well received by GPs in these areas. Over the next few months the Black Dog will be on the road in our big bus for our inaugural **‘Let’s Talk about Depression’** Bush Bash. This series of events will be focused on community events and professional education. The bus will be visiting the Deniliquin Ute Muster, Bowral Tulip Festival and the Andrew Johns walk from Newcastle to Sydney. It will then be the focus of a five day program

of events in **Tamworth from 5-9 November**, showcasing community and professional resources, with associated educational programs and community events. Visit our website for updates on events. If you would like a GP training program delivered in your area or have any suggestions on how we can better assist rural GPs, please contact our Education Project Officer, Kat Dabich on 02 9382 8518 or email [k.dabich@unsw.edu.au](mailto:k.dabich@unsw.edu.au)



(Above) from left to right, Dr Vered Gordon and Dr Julian Short delivering 6-hr *Demystifying Depression* workshop for GP Registrars in May this year in Inverell, NSW

## MAP goes Bush too...

The Mood Assessment Program (MAP) is continuing the roll-out of its pilot program across New South Wales and for the remainder of this year will be focusing on the establishment of MAP Centres in rural and remote areas. Two MAP Centres already exist in Port Macquarie and the first MAP centre is about to open in Bowral in the Southern Highlands.

Many GPs have found the MAP to be an invaluable tool in the development of Mental Health Care plans for their patients. Information contained in MAP reports is presented in a format that can be readily used to assist in formulating a Mental Health Care Plan or management plan specific to each individual patient.

If you would like information about how to register as a MAP referrer or about any aspect of the MAP program please don't hesitate to contact the MAP Project Team on 02 9382 3707 or email Wendy Williamson at [w.williamson@unsw.edu.au](mailto:w.williamson@unsw.edu.au)

*"The MAP assisted my patient with acceptance of the diagnosis and treatment"*  
GP, Port Macquarie

## Course Dates

See our website for course updates!

Date:	Program:	Location:
Saturday, 30 Aug	Troubled Teens	Port Macquarie, NSW
Saturday, 13 Sept	Psychological Toolkit	Campbelltown, NSW
Saturday, 13 Sept	Psychological Treatments	Campbelltown, NSW
Wednesday, 17 Sept	Psychological Toolkit	Gosford, NSW
Saturday, 20 Sept	Dealing with Difficult Consultations	Black Dog Institute, Randwick
Saturday, 20 Sept	Troubled Teens	Blue Mountains, NSW
Wednesday, 24 Sept	Psychological Treatments	Gosford, NSW
Saturday, 11 Oct	Troubled Teens	Parramatta, NSW
Saturday, 25 Oct	Troubled Teens	Canberra, ACT

There is no charge for GPs and registrars in NSW to attend these programs.



To register for a program at the Institute please visit our website: [blackdoginstitute.org.au](http://blackdoginstitute.org.au) or email Kat at [k.dabich@unsw.edu.au](mailto:k.dabich@unsw.edu.au) For off-site programs please contact the relevant Division (contact details are on our website).

“A great insight from a sufferer’s perspective— I hope people draw strength from reading how others deal with this condition.” Andrew Johns, Rugby League legend and Bipolar sufferer

### Mastering Bipolar Disorder

An Insider’s Guide to Managing Mood Swings and Finding Balance  
 Edited by Kerrie Evers & Gordon Parker

Prominent Australians speaking openly about their own experiences of mood disorders has contributed significantly to addressing stigmatisation of these conditions in the community. This progress was acknowledged by NSW Treasurer Michael Costa when he recently launched the above book at the Black Dog Institute.

**Mastering Bipolar Disorder** collates excerpts from the stories of nearly 200 people who have written about their experiences of bipolar and ways to manage the highs and lows on a daily basis. The result of our latest annual writing competition. The book includes all aspects of bipolar disorder from first symptoms and diagnosis, dramatic episodes, to times of relative control. The writers emphasise the importance of

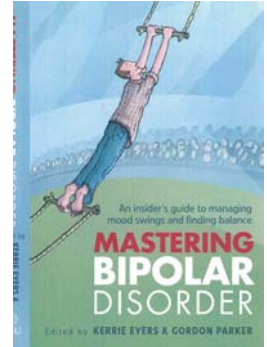
### Hot off the press

personal strategies such as exercise and support networks alongside medication and professional assistance.

With tips from clinicians, and the latest research, *Mastering Bipolar Disorder* offers tested and proven solutions to help everyone with this condition - and their families - experience a better quality of life. It also offers GPs (and other mental health professionals) a real insight from a patient’s perspective into the reality of life with this condition, which can enable us to be much more empathic in our treatment with such patients.

Another valuable resource, not only for the GP, but particularly to recommend to patients diagnosed with bipolar disorder, and their families. It might help to take some of the sting out of a difficult situation.

Published by Allen & Unwin  
[www.allenandunwin.com](http://www.allenandunwin.com)



Excerpts from Mastering Bipolar Disorder:

“At first there was the initial shock of *having* and *accepting* the mental condition, but I was also *relieved* to finally understand what was going on with me and that *bipolar is treatable*.”

“I begin to wonder if I’ll soar too high and break like thunder through the sanity barrier. Or will I plummet in the other direction and be buried in the ground till resurrection?”



Design by Matthew Johnstone

### E-cards for Depression

Have you ever thought of sending a depressed person a get well card? Probably not. And even if you did, where would you find one?

The Black Dog Institute has created a selection of e-cards to send to people who may be struggling with depression, to let them know you care.

See website for selection.

#### 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.

**Black Dog Institute, Hospital Road, Prince of Wales Hospital, Randwick NSW 2031**



All future editions of our GP newsletter will be delivered electronically, If you would like to receive our newsletter, please sign up via our website. Missed a newsletter? Previous editions are available online on our website