



## NEWS RELEASE

23 June, 2010

### ONLINE MAP TO HELP NAVIGATE THE MAZE OF DEPRESSION TREATMENT

At last! The Black Dog Institute's online Mood Assessment Program (MAP) is now available to GPs and psychologists all over Australia.

The Mood Assessment Program is a world-first diagnostic tool to assist clinicians in the detection and treatment of mood disorders.

The Black Dog Institute has developed and used the MAP over many years, and is now able to offer the service to clinicians across Australia.

The Institute's Professor Gordon Parker, said today the MAP was based on nearly a quarter of a century of the Institute's clinical expertise in the assessment, diagnosis and management planning for people suffering from depression and bipolar disorder.

"The MAP is unique," he said. "No other computerised program offers such a thorough assessment of depressive illness. It provides referring practitioners with a range of information about their patient including depressive subtype, likelihood of bipolar disorder, personality predisposition and social and environmental detail."

Professor Parker said The MAP also alleviated the burden on consultation time in recording and collating a wide range of information, allowing time for thorough follow-up.

"For busy GPs dealing with a significant mental health workload the availability of the MAP online will be a godsend" says Dr Jan Orman, GP Services Consultant to the Institute. "The Black Dog Institute model of depression provides a rational structure on which to base treatment planning for depression. The online MAP will provide easily accessible diagnostic clarity as well as improved confidence and efficiency in treatment planning."

The MAP is available by referral from MAP registered practitioners, and is conducted via a secure online site. The MAP reports are sent promptly to their mental health practitioner, much in the same way the practitioner might receive a pathology report. MAP assessments are free to both patients and referrers.

In helping practitioners to better diagnose and treat mood disorders, the MAP will address the burden of depression, which too often affects the lives of individuals and communities.

It is anticipated that the online MAP will be especially useful to practitioners working in rural and remote areas where psychiatric support is difficult to access. These practitioners often work in difficult circumstances and the support provided by programs like this one is invaluable. The Black Dog Institute is delighted to be offering this service to clinicians and their patients Australia-wide. For details of how to become a MAP registered GP or psychologist go to [www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/healthprofessionals/map](http://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/healthprofessionals/map) .

**MEDIA INQUIRIES:** Ian Dose (M) 0419 618 606 or Email: [i.dose@blackdog.org.au](mailto:i.dose@blackdog.org.au)

#### Other contacts

Dr Jan Orman, GP Services Consultant at the Black Dog Institute T: (02) 9382 4518 (Wednesday only) or M: 0425 215 876

Associate Professor Vijaya Manicavasagar, Director Psychological Services at the Black Dog Institute. Tel: (02) 9382 4320

Matthew Stanton, Clinical Psychologist from *Lifematters*. T: (02) 4965 3530