



NEWS RELEASE

‘QUEUE JUMPING’ TREATMENT FOR DEPRESSION

The Black Dog Institute is offering immediate free specialist psychiatric and psychological consultations for up to 300 people experiencing melancholic depression as an inducement to participate in a 12-week trial.

The reality is that currently people are waiting up to three to six months when they are referred to see a mood disorder specialist, according to the Black Dog Institute.

The “queue jumping” trial announced today will allow people to receive free treatment and make a valuable contribution to a study that is designed to measure best treatments for melancholic depression.

Professor Parker, Executive Director of the Black Dog Institute, has also given an undertaking that if the participants have not improved following the 12-week trial, the Institute will offer ongoing free management for their condition.

Professor Parker said today that melancholic depression was the quintessential biological depression that has been around since ancient times.

It affects one to two percent of men and women in western populations throughout the world.

Professor Parker described it as a very “physical” type of depression. The patient feels “slowed down” and/or agitated, lacks energy (finding it hard to get out of bed in the morning), has impaired concentration, and they can’t be cheered up. Quite often, there is also a family history of depression.

“Melancholic depression has a low spontaneous remission rate (meaning it very rarely goes away of its own accord). It is assumed to respond best to physical treatments, such as antidepressant drugs and this view is being tested by comparing drug and non-drug treatments during the trial” according to Professor Parker.

In the long term, this exhaustive study over three years and involving eight key members of the Black Dog Institute team, including Professor Parker, will help shape clinicians perspective and understanding to optimise treatment for patients with melancholic depression.

The Black Dog Institute is regarded as a leading world-wide authority in this field and Professor Parker declared it was the most important study he had been involved in terms of treatment for the more severe cases of depression.

The trial consists of three separate treatments involving 100 people in each group, which include:

- Individual Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
- A narrow-action antidepressant
- A broad-action antidepressant drug approach.

Participants will be randomly allocated to one of these three treatment groups, which in some cases, involves up to 10 consultations with a psychiatrist or psychologist during the 12-week trial period.

You could be eligible to participate in the trial if you are:

Aged between 18 and 65 years

Able to commit to a 12-week treatment program at the BDI Randwick facility

Not taken any antidepressant drug in the past 12 months

Not undergone Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for five years

Not currently pregnant or breast feeding

To participate: Phone 02 9382 9268 or email: melancholicstudy@unsw.edu.au

MEDIA INQUIRIES:

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