

# Psychosomatic Medicine Interest Groups 2005-2008

## American Psychosomatic Society • Lawson Wulsin, MD, Leo Pozuelo, MD

### Cleveland Clinic

The primary project funded by our APS grant during the 2005-2006 year was a neuroscience/psychosomatic medicine journal club. Each session was organized by a student responsible for choosing a peer-reviewed article from the neuroscience primary, or review literature, disseminating that article to the group, and leading a discussion at the meeting. In order to foster an informal atmosphere conducive to discussion, we held our sessions at an inexpensive, local restaurant, using the PMIG funds to defray the costs of the meals. Topics ranged from genetic functional neuroimaging experiments in Williams' Syndrome to anterograde amnesia. We also held a movie night at which we viewed the film *Memento* and had a lively discussion on the basic science and clinical aspects of anterograde amnesia, which spanned the topic for a journal club. We continue with the journal club, and most recently attended a performance of *The Glass Menagerie*, including a discussion afterwards of memory and family relationships with the director and actors.

The activities made possible by the PMIG funding have served to make medical students aware of psychosomatic medicine as a field of research and, generally, to consider the traditional branches of clinical neuroscience as an integrated whole. In part as a result of our relationship with APS, two CCCLM students attended the APS conference in Denver in 2006, and one student recently decided to switch career trajectories from GI to psychiatry, and is now one of the driving forces behind our student neuroscience and psychosomatic activities.

### UC Davis

The PMIG funding has played a big part in the start up and development of the UC Davis PMIG - we are grateful for the support!

Since our first grant in 2006, we have expanded our PMIGs, collaborated with our Psych SBE and provided numerous mentorship and educational opportunities for students interested in the interface between general medicine and psychiatry.

- Some examples include:
1. UC Davis medical student / internal medicine or family medicine / psychiatry resident mentoring dinner
  2. Quarterly Journal Clubs
  3. Case conferences on geriatric medicine and psychiatry, irritable bowel syndrome and depression, the use of cognitive behavioral therapy in the primary care setting, neuroimaging in psychiatry, etc.
  4. Travel assistance for PMIG officers to attend local conferences and develop important relationships with students, residents and faculty who have similar interests in psychosomatic medicine.

The PMIG has also increased interest among students in general psychiatry. The 2009 UC Davis School of Medicine graduating class has 12 out of 105 students who wish to enter a psychiatry residency program.

Thank you and please let us know what we can do to help keep this valuable program going.

### Drexel University

**Interest Group Fair:** Promoting awareness of Psychosomatic medicine with interest flyers and fair presentation, Event where Drexel Medical School's interest groups set up booths for students to learn about/join each group

**Movie Night:** Showed the movie *Safe* (film regarding woman who develops Multiple Chemical Sensitivity and copes with her own understanding of her illness as well as the medical community's interpretation) and had a discussion about psychosomatic medicine with students and their reactions to the film

**Meet the Faculty Night:** Students were able to meet and have discussions with four faculty members from Drexel University College of Medicine - Drs. Mary Ann Delaney, Dilip Ramchandani, Dennis Novack, Brian Chambliss. Students were able to make contacts as well as get exposure to the varied realms of psychology present in our school.

**Hypnosis Session:** Dr. Donald Kushon spoke about the history of hypnosis, its application in clinical practice today, and gave a demonstration on hypnotic techniques. Students were able to get an understanding of this field as well as its use in psychosomatic medicine.

**"The Body Speaks: The Transformation of Emotional Distress Into Physical Complaints."**

Lecture from Dr. Richard Lane, Professor of Psychiatry, University of Arizona. Students watched and discussed the new data on the relationship between patients somatized and the resultant deficit in their ability to mentally represent emotional states.

**Psyche Panel:** 4th Year Drexel Med Student Panel on their matches and discussion on the emphasis of psychosomatic medicine in their med school curriculum and experience on the wards. Discussion on how psychosomatic medicine will play a role in their future practices.

### University Iuliu Hatieganu, Romania

Our team at the University of Medicine and Pharmacy Iuliu Hatieganu from Cluj, Romania received twice the PMIG award: in 2005 for an IG for young doctors, in 2006 for an IG for nurses.

Both IGs filed a successful activity and represented nuclei of dissemination of the principles of PM in our area. The meetings were frequented by very motivated residents and young specialists in internal medicine, gastroenterology, family medicine and psychiatry. A meeting with national participation was organized at the end of the course in 2006 and a textbook partially financed from the grant was issued. The course for nurses was also well attended and continued next year without funding. A textbook was issued as well for the use of nurses. An international course on PM was organized in March 2007 freely attended by the members of the IG.

Both grants were important for increasing the awareness of our healthcare providers of the biopsychosocial approach in medicine.

The educational activity in PM continues after the reception of both awards in very good conditions. Last postgraduate course on PM in Cluj: 24-28 February 2009.

Prof Dr Dan L. Dumitrascu  
Leader of both groups  
Mentor: Prof Douglas A Drossman

### University of Groningen

In our institution, two research groups are involved in psychosomatic medicine. One group (headed by Judith Rosmalen) is investigating the role of stress in the etiology of somatic health problems, including both objective diseases (asthma, metabolic syndrome) as well as functional symptoms (somatoform disorders). This group focuses on mechanisms involved in the stress-health relationship, including psychological processes such as symptom perception and physiological processes such as stress-axis function. This group consists of six investigators. The other group is investigating mechanisms behind the association that has been found between depression after a myocardial infarction and poorer cardiac prognosis and consists of 8 people (headed by Peter de Jonghe). Both groups have strong internal cooperation and cohesion. In addition, both groups meet on a regular basis to inform each other of progress and to assist each other in performing research. Considerable efforts have been (successfully) put in enhancing international contacts. The investigators have different backgrounds, which is very helpful in solving research problems. Most investigators studied medicine, but the disciplines biology and psychology are also represented. In the past year, four medical students who performed their graduation research in the department have chosen to join the team as PhD investigators as a result of the assistance we received from APS in organizing these regular lunch meetings: Petra Hoen, Jerry van Reizen, Sonja van Ockenburg, and Eva Kingma.

### University of Nairobi

The project aimed to foster interest in psychosomatic medicine among the students and staff at Kenyatta National Hospital and to promote research. The staff members gave lectures on somatoform disorders and held a case presentation of a patient with frontal lobe syndrome. We did a study on the use of cognitive behavior therapy by nurses in our institution. The knowledge and practice were both low. We hope to improve the curriculum based on the findings. We organized two training sessions on cognitive behavior therapy over seven days and involved students, nurses, clinical psychologists and social workers from the hospital. These were conducted by Professor Ingrid Wilhelmsson from the University of Bergen who specializes in treating hypochondriasis. One medical student from Bergen is doing a cross cultural study on illness perception in patients with back pain. Following trainings on CBT the group now holds monthly meetings where difficult cases are discussed. We plan to start a national association of Cognitive Behaviour Therapists. A protocol for a study comparing the use of CBT and normal conventional treatment at the hospital based mainly on drugs in treating health anxiety disorders has been reviewed and approved by the ethical committee. This will shed light on the typical worries experienced by patients in this setting. Further trainings are planned to help the health workers within the hospital develop skills in CBT. We aim to have as many health workers as possible develop skills in CBT as there are few mental health workers in the country.

### George Washington University

Our PMIG met over the academic year with students from George Washington University as well as Virginia Commonwealth University. The students ranged from MS1 to MS4. Topics included a "The Clinical Approach to the Patient" "The Somatizing Patient" and "Perspectives in Psychiatry". We also showed movies such as "Reckless" to demonstrate the variations in "truth" or recall as well as which seemed to be a significant endorsement. Our Psychosomatic Fellows were co-leaders with our faculty. At least 3 of the senior medical students who were going into Psychiatry were regular attendees. It was an excellent vehicle for students to discuss Psychiatry and Psychosomatic Concepts whether they were interested in Primary Care, or Psychiatry.

# Psychosomatic Medicine Interest Groups 2005-2008

## American Psychosomatic Society • Lawson Wulsin, MD, Leo Pozuelo, MD

### University of Edinburgh

**The Psychosomatic medicine Interest Group (PIG) at the University of Edinburgh**  
**leader Professor Michael Sharpe**

- Aims**
- Develop teaching about PM in the undergraduate medical curriculum.
  - Promote interest in PM among residents in psychiatry and other medical specialties.
  - Attract medical students and psychiatry residents to a career in PM research.

**Activities and outcomes**

- Focus group meeting of undergraduate medical students: Barriers to psychological medicine teaching were identified and findings used to inform teaching and subsequent PG activities.

- Seminars to promote interest in PM among residents and medical students
  - Psychoneuro immunology: International video conferencing lecture, Prof. Michael Irwin, UCLA
  - Comorbidity Depression and Pain: Prof Kurt Kroenke, Indiana University
  - Hysteria 1850-2008: from Freud to functional imaging, Dr. Jon Stone, Edinburgh University
  - Suicide rates in cancer patients, Prof. Jesse Fann, University of Washington
  - Working in GI psychiatry, Dr. Roger Smyth, Consultant in Liaison Psychiatry, Edinburgh Royal Infirmary
  - Development of Collaborative Care models for depression in primary care, Prof. Wayne Katon, University of Washington.

- Medical student projects:
  - Management of psychological distress in patients with cancer: Views of cancer specialists at the Edinburgh Cancer Centre.
  - Problems reported by cancer patients with Major Depressive Disorder
- Three psychiatry residents and two postdoctoral psychologists have joined the department as fellows training for academic careers in PM.



### University of Michigan

- L. AUTHORS:**
- A. Trainee coordinators:**  
Howard Liu, M.D., Joshua Bess, M.D.
  - B. Faculty advisors:**  
Michelle Riba, M.D., David Knesper, M.D.

**I. ACTIVITIES**

**A. Weakest Link Psychosomatic Medicine Session:**  
To increase the profile of psychosomatic medicine across the psychiatry department, we created an innovative Evidence-Based Medicine (EBM) game. Each month, we chose a clinical psychiatry question with a psychosomatic focus and emailed it to residents. Residents replied in abstract format with their interpretation of the literature. A prize of twenty five to fifty dollars for books or lunch was awarded to the best entry. This program was coordinated by a PGII psychiatry resident, Howard Liu, M.D., geriatric fellow, Lewis Krain, M.D., and faculty mentors Dr. Helen Kales, Dr. Michelle Riba, and Dr. Gregory Dalack.

**B. Psychosomatic Medical Student Teaching Hour:**  
We developed an interactive teaching format for 3rd year medical students rotating on psychiatry. This consisted of a clinical case presented by medical students, review of a journal article by residents, and discussion guided by a psychosomatic attending.

**C. EBM activity featuring the Weakest Link in Psychiatric News**  
April 21, 2006: Volume 41, Number 8, page 14 as well as Poster Presentation at AADPRF.

### University of Minnesota

**Summary of Project**

Description of invited participants in PMIG meetings, University of Minnesota Medical School Duluth, 2007-2008, Faculty Leader: Rick Hoffman, Ph.D. (core faculty - Mustafa al'Absi, Ph.D., Joy Dorschner, M.D.)

October 15, 2007, Dr. Paul Mills, Topic: "Inflammation and Stress in Hypertension and Heart Failure"

December 3, 2007, Dr. Mustafa al'Absi, Topic: "A Brief History of Psychosomatic Medicine and Review of Current Psychosomatic Medicine Research at Our School"

January 14, 2008, M. Skip Sandman, Topic: "Native American Traditional Healing"

March 4, 2008, Dr. Michael Irwin, Topic: "Psychoneuro-immunology" (via collaborative ITV video, facilitated by the U Arizona PMIG)

May, 9, 2008, Dr. Matthew Muldoon, Topic: "Negative Affect and Coronary Heart Disease: Musings about Mechanisms"

June 16, 2008, Dr. Jeffrey Pasley, Topic: "Delayed Onset of Muscle Pain"

Note: For each of the invited speakers, PMIG members were sent 2-4 representative journal articles via e-mail or in print form either by that speaker or relevant to that topic.

**Outcome and Effect at Our Institution in Promoting Interest in Psychosomatic Medicine**

We were fortunate enough to be selected for PMIG funding again in the 2008-2009 Academic Year. Due to the success of last year's program, we currently have 45 medical student PMIG members and we will meet 10 times this year. Because of member interest, we plan to fund our own PMIG activities for the 2009-2010 academic year from department and research institute funds and have already invited 3 nationally known speakers for Fall 2009.



### University of North Carolina

The primary goal of the Psychosomatic Medicine Interest Group was to provide a lunch lecture series of 6 lectures for the medical students at the University of North Carolina. On average, 40 students attended these lunch lectures. The lectures included: 1) Cort Pedersen (psychiatrist) on "Oxytocin and Psychosomatic Medicine"; 2) Doug Drossman (gastroenterologist) on "Irritable Bowel Syndrome: A Model for Psychosomatic Medicine"; 3) Susan Grider (psychologist) on "Ethnic Differences in Pain Sensitivity and Endogenous Pain Regulatory Mechanisms"; 4) Kathy Light on "Predicting Blood Pressure with Family History, Stress Reactivity and Stress Buffers"; 5) Jane Leserman on "Stress and Depression in HIV Disease Progression"; and 6) Douglas Mann (neurologist) on "Behavioral Treatments for Headache Patients". We also worked with two medical students who helped us with scheduling and spreading the word to the students. We distributed the Nov/Dec issue of Psychosomatic Medicine to all interested medical students (60 copies). From the six lectures, 161 attendees filled out evaluation forms. Based on a four-point scale, most students were very or somewhat in agreement with the following statements:

- 94% agreed that the content of the lecture was interesting.
- 97% were likely to attend similar lectures in the future.
- 88% were satisfied with the lectures.
- 80% were likely to use the information in their work or practice.
- 91% agreed the lecture met their expectations.
- 90% agreed that the information presented was new to them.
- 96% agreed the information was clear and to the point.
- 98% were interested in the link between emotional states and physical disease.
- 47% said the lecture affected the area of medicine they wish to pursue.
- 85% said their understanding of psychosomatic medicine has been enhanced.

### University of Pittsburg

The University of Pittsburg has had a PMIG for 4 years. For the first two years, we received funding from the APS and our main activity was about 5 journal club luncheon meetings each year. At these meetings, a student would lead a discussion of a research paper. At each meeting, we would have an invited guest researcher provide some background and help in the discussion.

In our 3rd year, we received funding from the Pittsburg Mind-Body Center and from the University's Student Activities Fund. We revised the approach slightly to have a two-part presentation on 4 topics. For part 1, a guest speaker would give background information on a specific topic (such as psychological factors in bariatric surgery) and the second session would be a journal club discussion of a particular research paper in that topic.

This year, we have gone to a different approach by holding "mind-body medicine" health and research fairs. We held such a fair in November with tables including yoga, acupuncture, sleep medicine and nutrition research) staffed by research faculty and interested students with devices and tools on display. Students would learn about the methods and summer research opportunities. About 40 students attended.

### University of Arizona

One of the challenges in running a PMIG is inexpensively drawing on non-APS talent for lectures and discussion. On March 4, 2008 we conducted an interactive video conference at the University of Arizona in which

"Psychoneuroimmunology: 20 Years of Discovery" was presented remotely by Michael Irwin from UCLA. Other sites participating in real time included the U of Minnesota and U of Edinburgh PMIGs. 16 medical students, 1 resident and 3 faculty members attended in Arizona. This session received extremely high ratings as well as very positive feedback from other sites.

Since video conference facilities may not be widely available or easily accessible, and may be expensive depending upon the site, other technical approaches should be explored, including "GoToMeeting" in which a powerpoint presentation can be presented live under the remote control of the speaker and the talk can be given live using a standard telephone connection, or Skype, a web-based telephone connection with accompanying video. The technical quality of the latter is not as good as videoconference, but it is free, easily accessed and thus potentially more useful for APS PMIGs.

By using technology in this way, the PMIGs can potentially benefit more widely from the talents of the entire APS membership, not just local faculty at the host institution of the PMIG.