



MENTAL HEALTH INFORMATION CENTRE OF SOUTH AFRICA

The big news with this update is a report back on the **2004 Psychiatry for General Practice Congress** that was held at Spier Estate on 16 and 17 October. The programme consisted of a great line-up of expert speakers addressing a variety of topical issues. Primary care and general practitioners registered as delegates, with some coming from as far a field as Namibia, Canada and the USA. A huge thank you to the pharmaceutical industry for supporting this first-of-its-kind congress. We trust that you found it to be a worthwhile experience and that this congress will become an annual national event.

AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS

National Anxiety Disorders Awareness Week:

This national educational and awareness campaign ran from 04 to 10 October. The MHIC distributed press releases to local and national media, focusing on the theme for World Mental Health Day (10 October): ***“The relationship between physical and mental health: Co-occurring mental and physical disorders”***. Dr Jacqueline Muller of the MRC Anxiety Disorders Research Unit compiled a special media release on the somatoform disorders, while the Department of Health: Mental Health Program requested the MHIC’s help in distributing their official press release.

The National Mental Health Media Awards:

As part of our annual World Mental Health Day celebrations, the MHIC hosted the 3rd **National Mental Health Media Awards**. New to this year’s Media Awards was the inclusion of self-nomination in the process of identifying and rewarding journalists who report on mental health issues in a responsible and sensitive manner. A *national panel* took part in this process, and the winners of these prestigious awards were announced during a special **Mental Health Media Awards Ceremony** held on 07 October, at the Two Oceans Aquarium, Cape Town.



Pictured at the National Mental Health Media Awards

(from Left to Right): Laura du Preez, Personal Finance (Winner Magazine Category); Conrad Sidego (Media24); Ilse Pauw, Health24 (Winner TV/Radio/Internet Category and 2004 Overall Winner); Tahira Kassiem, Cape Mental Health Society (accepted award on behalf of Llewellyn Kriel, Mail & Guardian, Winner Newspaper Category); Chantel Cooper (Rape Crisis Centre).

Inside this issue:

Awareness Campaigns	1, 2
Educational Activities	2
Publications	3
Research	3
Conferences	3, 4

NEWSLETTER SPONSORED BY



AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS CONTINUED

Mr Conrad Sidego, Senior General Manager of Corporate Affairs at Media24 presented the keynote address at the Awards Ceremony, while Ms Chantel Cooper of Rape Crisis Centre (RCC) gave a brief but moving account of the emotional impact of rape. Members of a RCC support group collectively made a quilt, which was handed over to Ilse Pauw, Overall Winner for 2004, as part of her prize package.

Publications on awareness campaigns:

Our submission of a case study depicting the MHIC's mental health promotion campaigns of the past three years was accepted and has been published in the joint **World Health Organization** and **World Federation for Mental Health** publication: *Mental Health Promotion: Case Studies from Countries*.

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Psychoeducational talks and symposia:

Paarl Hospital approached the MHIC in 2003 to present a *Stress Symposium* to its nursing and administrative staff. This proved to be such a popular topic that staff from surrounding hospitals and health centres asked to also attend. After many months of planning by Sr Gelderblom of Paarl Hospital to find a suitable venue and time, the symposium eventually took place on 09 September this year at the Paarl Police College. Over 120 healthcare and related workers attended the half-day session.



Stress Symposium at Paarl Police College

The programme covered the causes, signs, basic reactions to, and physiology of stress. Presentations were also made on the anxiety and somatoform disorders, stress management, caring for the carer, and art therapy as a relaxation technique. Feedback was that this was an extremely worthwhile experience and many requests for a repeat activity were received.



Art therapy session at the Stress Symposium

CPD activities:

The collaboration between the *Department of Health* and the MHIC to present monthly CPD lectures to primary healthcare staff at Karl Bremer and Stikland Hospitals continued in the past quarter. Dr Jacqueline Muller spoke on somatoform disorders (July), Dr Juan Schröner on depression (August) and Dr Gerhard Jordaan addressed insomnia (September).

Health/wellness days:

The MHIC was invited to participate in the *ABSA health and wellness days* in Cape Town (September) and Bellville (October). This afforded the MHIC the opportunity to promote its **services to all ABSA** staff, as well as to speak directly to those who had queries on specific mental health topics. On both these occasions we exhibited our educational materials at an information stand and were able to inform the public about the various research activities of the MRC Anxiety Disorders Research Unit. Thank you to all the MHIC and MRC Unit staff members who helped to distribute information and respond to public queries on these days.



MHIC information table at the Bellville ABSA Health Day

PUBLICATIONS

The 7th edition of the prescribing guide *Psychiatric Medications in Primary Care: Algorithms and Guidelines* is at the printers and will be distributed via a SAMA journal. Copies will also be made available through the MHIC Call Centre. The Department of Family Medicine and Primary Care at the University of Stellenbosch have again prescribed this book as reading material for their students. Thank you to those companies who contributed by sponsoring this excellent resource.

All information for the 8th edition of the *Mental Health Resource Guide of Southern Africa* has been collated and we are currently working on editing the new data before the book goes to the printers. This book will be made available through the MHIC offices within the last quarter of the year, as well as through a SAMA journal.

CONFERENCES

SASOP Conference:

The MHIC had an exhibition stand at the recent 13th National SASOP Conference held at Champagne Sports Resort, Drakensberg. This allowed us to display our publications and educational materials directly to mental health professionals. Our new banner, generously sponsored by Aspen Pharmacare, was also on display. Charmaine Hugo and Winnie De Roover presented a poster each, providing feedback on the CPD training programme for primary healthcare practitioners, and on trauma in the life-stories of addicted women, respectively.



Winnie De Roover, Charmaine Hugo and Prof Dan Stein at the MHIC stand, SASOP Conference

RESEARCH

CPD training for primary healthcare professionals:

Gaps in the mental health knowledge of this population group have previously been reported on. This pre- and post-test pre-experimental study, conducted by the MHIC and final year nursing students of the Department of Nursing, University of Stellenbosch, set out to determine the impact of a CPD training programme for primary healthcare practitioners. It was found that a CPD accredited program significantly improved the mental health knowledge of attendees, pertaining to the specific topics covered in each session. Also, that attendees experienced the training to be valuable and applicable to their individual work settings and were interested in further mental health training. An important consideration is that training may increase awareness, which in turn may improve identification and appropriate management. These findings may therefore be valuable to the planning and implementation of future training programmes aimed at general medical personnel, and ultimately contribute towards improving the delivery of primary mental health services.

Survey on mental health and deafness in South African psychiatric facilities:

The MHIC conducted a preliminary survey on the prevalence of co-occurring mental illness and deafness amongst inpatients at psychiatric hospitals and hospitals with limited psychiatric facilities in South Africa. Prof Willie Pienaar presented these results at the first *Mental Health and Deafness Workshop*.

A total of 113 hospitals responded to the survey, with 45 reporting that they admit or have admitted mentally ill patients who are hearing impaired or deaf. Only 5 institutions were found to have a staff member who is trained in sign language. Medical staff in the remaining institutions reported communicating with the deaf/ hearing impaired by using gestures, interpreters, writing for those who can read, and employing other practical methods.

Patients with co-occurring mental illness and deafness who present at these institutions are often diagnosed with schizophrenia or mental retardation, although it is likely that many are misdiagnosed. Due to the lack of resources for these patients, they often deteriorate during hospitalisation and many are admitted for life. It is possible that mentally ill deaf patients are often placed under anti-therapeutic custodial isolation.

Participants in this survey voiced a need for improved communication with deaf/ hearing impaired patients through training in sign language and the availability of rehabilitation material suitable for these special needs clients. Also, that special structures such as halfway houses and sheltered employment should be in place to prevent extended hospitalisation that may not be in the patients' best interest.

CONFERENCES CONTINUED

BIG NEWS: REPORT BACK ON THE 2004 PSYCHIATRY FOR GENERAL PRACTICE CONGRESS:

And finally, the long-awaited and first-ever *Psychiatry for General Practice Congress* took place at Spier Estate earlier this month. The programme included presentations on the New Mental Health Care Act; the second generation antipsychotics; future of antidepressants; AD/HD; healthy aging; HIV/AIDS psychiatry; smoking cessation; suicide; and much more. Expert speakers represented various health disciplines (e.g., psychiatry, psychology, internal medicine, geriatrics, primary healthcare), different institutions (e.g., Universities of Stellenbosch and Cape Town, the SA Cochrane Centre) and those in private practice.



Delegates of the 2004 Psychiatry for General Practice Congress attending one of the academic sessions

Although the initial aim was to focus on general practitioners from the Western Cape, many delegates from other provinces, and even from other countries, registered to attend. Feedback was that a definite need exists for this type of educational event, and that attendees had found the programme, venue and exhibitions on show to be worthwhile and enjoyable. A huge thank you therefore to the many pharmaceutical and other exhibitors at the congress; without your support and presence this congress would just not have been a success. We hope to see you all at the next Congress of this nature!



One of the Spier cheetahs giving congress delegates an impromptu demonstration / side-show

MHIC

MENTAL HEALTH INFORMATION CENTRE

Stellenbosch University
Department Psychiatry
PO Box 19063
Tygerberg
7505

Phone: 021-938-9229
Fax: 021-931-4172
www.mentalhealthsa.co.za



MENTAL HEALTH
INFORMATION CENTRE



(S) Seroquel 25: Each Tablet contains quetiapine fumarate 25.75mg equivalent to 25mg of quetiapine free base. Reg No. 22/2.6.5/038P. (S) Seroquel 100: Each Tablet contains quetiapine fumarate 115.75mg equivalent to 100mg of quetiapine free base. Reg No. 21/2.6.5/039Q. (S) Seroquel 200: Each Tablet contains quetiapine fumarate 230.25mg equivalent to 200mg of quetiapine free base. Reg No. 22/2.6.5/041P. (S) Seroquel 300: Each Tablet contains quetiapine fumarate 345.75mg equivalent to 300mg of quetiapine free base. Reg No. 35/2.6.5/057Q. AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals (Pty) Ltd. CA Reg No. 1992/00554/07-3. Lesemmer road, Scarborough 7157, Private Bag 633, Scarborough 7157. Tel: (021) 787 8000. Fax: (021) 787 8155. © is a registered trademark. Further information is available on request.

