

PSYCHIATRIST

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Newsletter of the Southern California Psychiatric Society

President's Column

Dear Members

Mary Ann Schaepper, M.D.



Sitting down early Monday morning to interview 6 residency candidates I asked a familiar question, “What is your most memorable Christmas or Hanukah?” This is easy for me, as Christmas of 1979 I married the man of my dreams. My thoughts went immediately to how a wedding on Christmas night was no easy feat. The snow, the beautifully decorated church, and our families all being together was perfect. The challenge was that there were no halls, or restaurants open for the reception. I was amazed remembering how my family and friends came together to transform the church gymnasium into a magical winter wonderland that far exceeded

any hotel ballroom.

Being trained in DBT, I quickly cued myself to being present in the room. As I listened to their memories, knowing they were also nervous about this residency interview I surmised that they must be asking themselves what to share, how much to say, all of the underlying questions we ask ourselves. One young man’s story really surprised me.

“I remember the Christmas mom told us we would only receive gifts that fit into our stockings hung at the fireplace. My brother and I were upset, our dream toys were not possible, the bikes, the skis also not possible. How could she do this?” As he spoke I felt some resignation. “She gave us about two weeks to get used to the idea. At first I was really sad, then I started to think of neat small things.” His demeanor was thoughtful, he then continued, “On Christmas morning we ran downstairs, and what did we find? My mom had sewn a giant 6-foot stocking for each of us, filled with gifts! I was shocked, ecstatic!” Clearly from his expression he was reliving this exceptional surprise. What an amazing “out of the box” experience this mother created for her sons. Where they only saw small, disappointing, impossible, she saw huge, exciting, possibilities. We are faced daily with limitations, broken dreams, and “small stockings”.

(Continued on page 2)

I know this month many of our members, and their patients, are saddened by the closure of the Psychiatric Residency program at Cedars-Sinai. This institution has trained excellent psychiatrists and contributed to the well-being of patients in Los Angeles, and all over the world. As a colleague I want to thank the faculty, staff and residents for all they have given to our pro-

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fession. And it hits home hard. With financial cuts being threatened to General Medical Education (GME) funding, all training directors across the USA are nervous. In the past residency interviewees would ask, "Are you (Program Director) planning to stay in this job?" and this week I have been asked, "How solid is your institution and its commitment to the Residency?"

Just what this change will be for Los Angeles mental health care and training programs is up to all of us. To transform this system, with all the complications, we must stay connected, communicate best practices, educate ourselves, patients, and trainees in excellence and advocate for mental health. This is what SCPS, CPA, and APA are all about. I am grateful to be a part of this mission.

May your Holidays be peaceful, joyful, and inspiring!

SCPS Presents Psychopharmacology Update 23 Saturday, January 28, 2012

Bipolar Spectrum Disorders: Underdiagnosed? Over-diagnosed? Strategies for Treatment - Mark Rapaport, M.D.

Hormone Replacement Therapy: Helping Your Patient Decide - Deborah Yaeger, M.D.

Consequences of Long Term Treatment With SSRIs: What do we know about safety and side effects? - Thomas Strouse, M.D.

Treating Resistant OCD, Compulsive Buying and Skin Picking - Lorrin Koran, M.D.

Borderline Personality Disorder: New Findings and Current Controversies - John Oldham, M.D.

There will be a reception in honor of John Oldham, M.D., APA President, immediately following the meeting. When registering for the conference, please be sure to indicate if you wish to attend the reception. If you are unable to attend the conference, but would like to attend the reception, please contact SCPS at scps2999@earthlink.net, or 310-815-3650.

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Hope to see you there!

Letter from the Editor

Colleen Copelan, M.D.

Doc Fix Patch Policy



The 27.4% Medicare fee cut may have been put off--for two more months. Any delay is in large part due to efforts of organized medicine and phone calls from individual

physicians. As we go to press, the fate of the Medicare fee cut is unknown since the House of Representatives has not passed the Senate Bill delaying the Medicare fee-cut for 2 months.

The flawed SGR-mandated cuts are hot, but small potatoes in the clash of ideologies that make sane policy so difficult in Washington, and

oblige last-minute patches to fend off catastrophe.

December's patches include a bill to--once again--prevent a government shutdown, and a Senate bill to extend the payroll tax cut for two more months.

The two-month Medicare delay, the so-called "doc fix," was rolled into the payroll tax bill--whose fate in the House is unknown at press time.

The flawed Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) is a budget formula that connects physician payment to the Gross Domestic Product, rather than the cost of care. That's why it's flawed. Toward the end of each it cranks out a total dollar figure for physician services which, in recent years, has run about 5% less than the year before.

Every year--and several times a year in recent years--Congress acts to stay the implementation, if only for a few more months. The cumulative suspended cuts--and corresponding budget "savings"--pile up, making it both catastrophic to implement and onerous to repeal. And what policy should replace the flawed SGR?

Medicare is linked to Tricare and indexed by many commercial plans, drawing all physicians into this recurring, cliff-hanging threat to the solvency of health care in the United States.

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When does grief turn into depression?

by: David Fogelson, M.D.

I saw a patient today whose husband died 10 months ago. They had been happily married for 35 years. She was in good physical health. She had ample savings. She was working part time as a professional. She enjoyed the esteem and accolades of her colleagues. Yet, something was terribly wrong.

“Doctor, I just have no joy left in my life. Do you think you can help me? Please say you can help me. My psychiatrist says this is normal grief and that I don’t need an antidepressant. My friends tell me to shake it off. I just feel hopeless. I cannot shake it off, no matter how much I try.”

I learned that her husband and she had been best friends. After a long day at work, she looked forward to nothing more than a quiet evening together. They were planning to travel extensively in their retirement and now all that had vanished. Work had become a refuge from returning to an empty home.

I could feel her devastation. She had lost what was most precious. Would not anyone be depressed in these circumstances? Wasn’t her psychiatrist correct to say this was grief and that she was entitled to her grief? Would not it fix itself with time? Would not most of us feel this way if we lost our spouse of 35 years? Or, is this depression like any other depression, requiring expert psychotherapy and medication?

Recent research by Kenneth S. Kendler, M.D., John Myers, M.S., and Sidney Zisook, M.D. at the Medical College of Virginia/Virginia Commonwealth University and the Department of Psychiatry, University of California at San Diego suggests that depression following the death of a spouse is for the most part the same as depression following any stressful life event and should be treated as such. Depression following the death of a spouse did not differ in age at onset of prior major depression, number of prior episodes, duration of index episode, number of depressive symptoms, risk for future episodes, and pattern of comorbidity. However, individuals with bereavement-related depression were more likely to suffer from guilt, higher levels of fatigue and loss of interest.

My patient complained of joylessness, severe insomnia with early morning awakening, poor appetite with continuing weight loss, an overwhelming feeling of sadness and hopelessness, and a wish to die. I recommended she begin treatment with bupropion and cognitive behavioral therapy and join a bereavement group. After four weeks of treatment she told me that joy had come back into her life. She had begun dating and was making plans for a vacation. Her appetite had improved and she had lost no more weight. Over the next month all her symptoms were in remission. My patient remarked, “Doctor Fogelson, thanks for helping me and giving me my life back.”

Normal grief is not the same as depression. Treat depression no matter the stressful life events preceding the depression.

Editor’s Note: Information included in this article has been changed to protect confidentiality. Hence, the situations presented are constructs provided for educational purposes.

Council Highlights

November 10, 2011

Anita Red, M.D., *Secretary*



Dr. Schaepper called the meeting to order. A motion was made to accept the October minutes. All voted in favor, none opposed. Dr. Schaepper gave a report on the Women's Committee who hosted a high tea in October. Dr. Cheung gave a report on the Conflict of Interest Committee. Dr. Red gave a report on the Website Committee. Dr. Davin Augustines was accepted as the San Fernando Councillor. Dr. Janet Farhie will not be able to continue as the chair of the public psychiatry committee. Nominations are needed. The Sepulveda VA residency program requested the \$500 residency assistance from the SCPS. A motion was made to grant this request. All voted in favor, and none opposed. Mindi reported on a letter the SCPS received describing difficulty with

Blue Cross insurance. APA is offering assistance, and the SCPS will send an inquiry to find other physicians who have shared the same experience. There was a discussion about the managed care committee to address further issues. The director's contract renewal was discussed, specifically terms regarding annual salary increases and bonuses. Dr. Lawrence gave the president-elect report, which included a report on the technology program and updates on DSM controversies. This issue will also be addressed at the Pharmacology program in January. A Nomination Committee is needed to take nominations for the open SCPS positions for 2012: President-elect, Treasurer-elect, Secretary, Inland Region Councillor, San Fernando Valley Councillor (if one has not been appointed by then,) San Gabriel Valley/ East LA Councillor, Santa Barbara Councillor, two West LA Councillors, ECP Deputy Representative, 2 MIT Representatives, and an Assembly Representative. Candidate statements will appear in the January newsletter. Ballots will be mailed March 1st and are due March 27th. The installation event will be April 21st. A motion was made to accept the president-elect's report. All voted in favor. None opposed. The treasurer's report was postponed. Dr. Lawrence gave the Membership Committee report, showing current membership is 1,024. Dr. Thurston gave the legislative report. Dr. Schaepper began a discussion on the CMA position statement to legalize cannabis. Dr. Thurston commented on the CMA's position to legalize cannabis. Dr. Gales gave the Program Committee report. The Psychopharmacology meeting will be in January, with a reception following the program. The committee will investigate details about the reception and make a proposal for the Executive Committee. New business included a discussion about the location of the monthly council meetings, which will continue at current location next month. Dr. Schaepper adjourned the meeting.

*The SCPS Council, Newsletter Committee, and staff
would like to wish you a happy holiday season and
a wonderful new year.*

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A Call for Action
The PER Foundation Update,
Maria T. Lymberis, M.D.
PER Founding President

These are difficult times for most people in California but for the public sector of psychiatry and psychiatric patients, our most stigmatized field and patients, the reality is worse. The recent closure of Cedars Sinai Psychiatric Services is yet another sign of trouble. Clearly, SCPS and all of us psychiatrists are very concerned. Well, we are doing a lot thru our CPA but locally we can do a lot more by joining in the work of the SCPS sponsored foundation: The Psychiatric Education and Research Foundation, The PER Foundation.

As the President and Founder of PER, I have personally steadfastly insisted in bringing to life my 1989 vision, that we need to stand up and insist that supporting education and research to improve treatment for psychiatric conditions in our area, is just as legitimate, in fact, just as "sexy" as supporting the various other medical non profits such as Cancer or Heart Disease.

My tenacity in keeping the PER Foundation alive since its 1990 founding, was finally rewarded in 2010 with the first patient donation of \$50,000 to PER. Within a year, PER was able to launch its first fundraiser. The PER Board selected, as our partner in this multi year funding project, The UCLA Center of Society & Culture directed by Dr. Kenneth Wells. That Center includes the NIMH Partnered Research Center (UCLA, RAND, and USC), the Research Center for Public Mental Health (DMH, UCLA, USC) and Media and Medicine for Communities.

The first PER Annual Fundraiser came to reality on 4/7/11 at UCLA through the generous contribution of a film by Percy and Eleanor Adlon. Their internationally acclaimed film "Mahler on the Couch" was written, directed and produced with their son, Felix Adlon. The PER event was very enjoyable and successful. Almost \$10K was raised with expenses of less than \$4,000. PER will present the check of the proceeds of over \$6,000.00 to Professors Kenneth Wells and Bonnie Zima during the reception for the APA President, John Oldham at the conclusion of the Annual SCPS Psychopharmacology update on 1/28/12 (around 4:00 PM). The funds are being used to support research headed by Dr Zima, details of this research can be found at the PER website.

The Second Annual PER Fundraiser is set for Saturday April 14th 2012 at Zipper Hall of the Colburn School of Music. PER is featuring a special program that is a superb blend of art and psychiatry, with the nationally and internationally acclaimed concert pianist and practicing NY psychiatrist, **Richard Kogan, M.D.** This is a program that you don't want to miss for a cause that, as psychiatrists, we all should support. Do check the PER website: www.perfoundation.org - sign up to attend on 4/14/12 and learn more about this fundraiser and the work of PER.

PER needs you to make this second annual fundraiser a success. Do call all your relatives and friends, pass on the news about the 4/14/12 PER event urging them to join us. See you on Saturday 4/14/12 at the Colburn School of Music's Zipper Hall.

With Best Wishes for the Holidays and 2012

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Creative Genius and Psychiatric Illness

Performance & Talk by
Richard Kogan, M.D.



7:00 -10:00 p.m., April 14, 2012
Zipper Hall, Colburn School of Music. Los Angeles

Second Annual Fundraiser sponsored by
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FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF PSYCHIATRIC EDUCATION & RESEARCH

Richard Kogan, M.D. is a gifted concert pianist and practicing psychiatrist. The Artistic Director of the Weill Cornell Music & Medicine Program, Dr. Kogan is a graduate of Harvard Medical School and the Juilliard School of Music. For over 10 years, Dr. Kogan has been playing piano for audiences nationally and internationally, while masterfully detailing the life and psychic suffering of famous musicians. His performances humanize mental illness while deepening our understanding of the creative role that music plays in life.

See the write-up by Lloyd Sederer, M.D. or a performance by Dr. Kogan on YouTube:
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/lloyd-i-sederer-md/music-madness-and-medicine_b_852867.html
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4_DmRi3Hxkl

The PER ADVOCATE AWARD will be presented to Sharon Dunas, MFT, President of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) in Los Angeles County & Westside Los Angeles.

Registration for this event will open in January 2012 through the PER website:
<<http://www.perfoundation.org>>. For questions, email MGlazerPERCoord@aol.com.

Maria T. Lymberis, M.D, Founding President
The PER Foundation

Back: Scott Alkire, JD;
Harland Westgate, JD;
Jean Bates, RN, BSN, MPPM;
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October 29, 2011- The Olympic Collection



John Luo, M.D. and SCPS' Program Committee Chair, Michael Gales, M.D.



SCPS Tech Meeting in progress at The Olympic Collection



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Khaveri Subrahmanyam, Ph.D.



Albert "Skip" Rizzo, Ph.D.



Michael Swiernik, M.D.

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