

camhconnexions

CAMH's new CEO takes the reins December 1



On December first, 2009 Dr. Catherine Zahn assumes the role of President and CEO of the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health.

A practicing neurologist who's internationally recognized for her contributions to education and standards of practice, Dr. Zahn joins CAMH from the University Health Network, where she served as Executive Vice President, Clinical Programs and Practice. She's known as a strategic and imaginative leader, particularly in hospital integration, having played a leading role in the renaissance of the Toronto Western Hospital.

Developing the now nationally and internationally renowned Krembil Neuroscience Centre is one of Dr. Zahn's major accomplishments and an example of her long-standing support of research as the path to improving patient care.

Dr. Zahn also played a leading role in a \$100M redevelopment project and has a track record of recruiting and retaining excellent clinicians and scientists. She says she was drawn to CAMH by a "richness of possibility" for the people it serves.

"CAMH is about a spectrum of opportunity, from brain research to city building," Dr. Zahn says. "It's about social change to ensure care and support for people living with mental illness and addictions. It's about the skills and values of a staff who care for our clients. It's about public education and political advocacy. It's about searching for the causes and improving the treatments for mental illness and addictions."

CAMH and youth

Donna, Maria, Nick and Sean, CAMH clients who recorded their lived experiences in public service announcements at The New Flow 93.5 to mark Mental Illness Awareness Week in October.

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CAMH and research

Evaluating peer support as part of the care team

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Centre for Addiction and Mental Health
Centre de toxicomanie et de santé mentale

A Pan American Health Organization / World Health Organization Collaborating Centre
Fully affiliated with the University of Toronto

Specialized program puts school within REACH



David, Nick and Donna are three of the students benefiting from the CAMH REACH Program for at-risk high school-aged youth.

For more than 10 years, CAMH's REACH Program has helped 16- to 21-year-old youth with substance use problems, and frequently a concurrent mental illness, stay in school.

Part of CAMH's Youth and Family Addiction Program, REACH is one of more than 100 'Section 23' Toronto classrooms –so-called for the law under which they were created – and one of the few focused on substance use and mental illness issues.

Students are usually referred as part of a rehab, probation, or court-ordered treatment, and work for high school diploma credits. They spend mornings in classroom studies with a Toronto District School Board teacher and a CAMH youth worker, and afternoons in group sessions or treatment.

It made the difference for both Donna and Nick. "I skipped every day and was failing really badly. Drugs became a problem," Donna says, adding, "There's so much support here. Now I'm almost done my high school."

Nick found new enthusiasm for learning after trying to cope with the pressure of private school. "I can take my time with things. It's more laid back, less pressure. Now I want to go to university for botany."

Successful REACH graduates have continued on to the workforce, into apprenticeships, or higher education, according to Joanne Shenfeld, Manager of CAMH's Youth and Family Addiction Program.



CAMH's Adolescent Service staff (l-r) Dr. Lindley Bassarath, Dr. Tracey Skilling, Shelley Langill and Cheryl Hill report on more than 140 youth cases a year.

The road best travelled: CAMH's Adolescent Service

For over 80 years, Toronto courts have relied on clinical assessments like those provided by CAMH's Adolescent Service to help youth rehabilitate and achieve their potential. And research shows that a youth's risk declines compared to other young offenders when courts and probation officers follow their recommendations.

"[W]e aim for prevention of future recidivism in order to improve the youth's outcome and protect the public," says Dr. Lindley Bassarath, psychiatrist and head of the consultative service within CAMH's Child, Youth and Family Program.

He points to David, a 16 year-old First Nations youth who came to them on a second-degree murder charge, as one good example of those they serve.

"[We] uncovered longstanding behavioural [and family] problems that included Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Polysubstance Abuse, and a Learning Disability," Dr. Bassarath says.

"After multidisciplinary psychosocial, psychiatric, and psychological assessment, we suggested a youth sentence with ... intensive rehabilitation services, rather than ... an adult sentence and correctional system."



Marie Asuncion, a CAMH

Transforming Lives Award recipient, was selected by Bell to participate in the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Torch Relay on Wednesday, Dec. 16 at 5:45 pm. Marie is a frequent public speaker on behalf of CAMH to raise awareness of mental health issues. She will run at 5 pm from Oshawa—check www.camh.net for details.

Please come out and show your support!

CAMH transformation



CAMH's Queen street urban village

After an extensive evaluation process, Infrastructure Ontario and CAMH announced that Carillion Health Solutions has been selected as the preferred proponent to develop the next phase of CAMH's Queen Street site redevelopment (commercial and financial close are expected in December 2009). Construction of three new CAMH buildings-- the Intergenerational Wellness Centre, the CAMH Gateway building, and the Meeting Centre—will begin in 2010 and take about three years.

CAMH is creating an 'urban village', inviting non-CAMH uses, such as restaurants, shops, housing and offices, onto our isolated Queen Street site to connect the hospital with the community and break down stigma.

Forum/Veridroc, CAMH's preferred proponent to develop land right on Queen Street marked for the first non-CAMH uses, is awaiting confirmation from the Province of its proposed allocation of affordable housing. Forum/Veridroc's proposal has been recommended by the City of Toronto.

A groundbreaking event will take place in early February.

Check www.camh.net for information.

Honouring the past, celebrating the future...

Linda Chamberlain, who works at CAMH today as a peer support worker, places a memento in the time capsule at a special event held on Oct 29, 2009 to bid adieu to the Queen Street Administration Building, which will be demolished beginning in early 2010 as part of CAMH's redevelopment project.



New park named after CAMH's founding CEO

Dr. Paul Garfinkel (l) stands with **Ana Lopes**, vice chair, CAMH Foundation Board, **Joe Pantalone**, Toronto Deputy Mayor and City Councilor and **Daniel Burns**, Chair, CAMH Board of Trustees at the dedication ceremony naming Toronto's latest public park in Dr. Garfinkel's honour. CAMH handed the park over to the City as part of our redevelopment project and vision of an urban village.

The CAMH Foundation announced an extraordinary \$5 million gift from G. Raymond Chang, Chancellor of Ryerson University and Chair of CI Financial, to further research and education at CAMH. It's the first matching gift toward CAMH's groundbreaking Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) grant (\$15 million of the total \$38 million is to come from the private fundraising).



Evaluating peer support as part of the care team

A team of CAMH researchers spent the summer exploring the impact of having peer support workers on care teams in the Schizophrenia and Mood and Anxiety Programs.

Extensive collaboration and consultation by the two programs went into developing the peer support role, according to Mood and Anxiety Manager Gillian Young.

“Now we want to answer the question: What impact are the peers having on clients and teams?” she says.

Human Resources Employment Works! Coordinator Diana Capponi, a member of the team, says, “This initial research will assist in clarifying which aspects of [lived experience with mental illness and addictions] are most valued by our clients, while informing our curriculum development plans for CAMH peer support workers.”

Drs. Carolyn Dewa and Nora Jacobson from the Health Systems Research & Consulting Unit and the Work and Well-being Research and Evaluation Program led a research team that invited peers, other team members, the project developers and clients to discuss their views on the roles and impact of the peers in focus groups and interviews. Peers were also asked to complete activity logs that describe their activities at work.

Once finalized, the findings will help guide future training needs, metrics for defining the effectiveness of peer support, and future ways to implement the role. The project also contributes to scientific research with a full report on the benefits and challenges of the peer support worker role.

“[We] engage in non-hierarchical roles with clients, partnering with them to realize goals around self-determination and self-advocacy and supporting those goals as they move from theory into practice,” says Peer Support Worker Shannon Quinn.

Another Peer Support Worker, David Quarter, says there’s still little known about the complexities of this new role. “Bringing all of the peer support facilitators together for this project will allow us to come up with persistent themes surrounding our roles, including things that are working as well as issues that may need addressing.”



Dr. Carolyn Dewa, far left and Dr. Nora Jacobson, far right, flank researchers Yasmin Lalani, centre left, and Lucy Trojanowski, centre right. Yasmin and Lucy are conducting the peer support research interviews over the summer.

National project studies housing the homeless with mental illness

CAMH Senior Scientist Dr. Paula Goering is research lead on an ambitious national research project launched on Monday, Nov. 23 2009 by the Mental Health Commission of Canada to evaluate the effectiveness of providing housing to homeless people struggling with mental illness in five Canadian cities. “We must find the answers to the questions of what works, with whom does it work, and how does it work,” Dr. Goering said.

For the Commission’s Consumer Panelist Susan Gapka, who has lived experience of mental illness and homelessness and chairs CAMH’s Empowerment Council, “A hand up into housing is a hand up into hope and a future.”



Dr. Paula Goering (l) with Susan Gapka, chair of CAMH’s Empowerment Council.

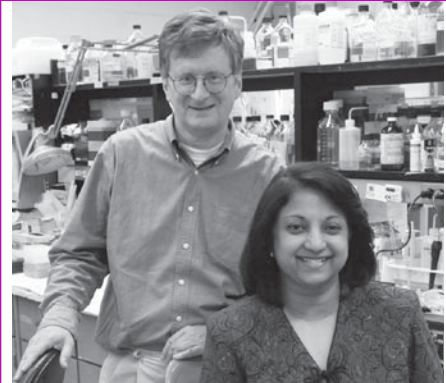


Dr. Benoit Mulsant and Dr. Bruce Pollock.

Pioneering geriatrics research

Dr. Bruce Pollock, vice president, CAMH Research, received the prestigious 2009 **Jack Weinberg Memorial Award for excellence in geriatric psychiatry** from the American Psychiatric Association. It's the most recent of several awards for his leading research in the best medications (particularly anti-depressants) and dosages for seniors, in whom more than 50% of drug-related deaths occur.

In July 2009, camh Physician-in-Chief Dr. Benoit Mulsant was awarded a US National Institutes of Health five-year award of \$1.4 million, as Principal Investigator for Incomplete response in late-life depression – getting to remission. Late-life depression that doesn't respond to treatment is emerging as a major public health issue. The study will use gene science to find treatment-specific factors that impair treatment. His co-investigators include Dr. James Kennedy and Dr. Pollock.



Dr. Brian O'Dowd and Dr. Susan George

\$1.35m research grant marks 18 years of project funding

Researcher Dr. Susan George (co-head of molecular pharmacology at camh with Dr. Brian O'Dowd) was awarded a five-year \$1.35 million NIH grant for the analysis of Receptors Mediating Drug Dependence. Housed at the University of Toronto, the grant marks 18 years of continuous funding by the National Institute on Drug Abuse.



CAMH Senior Scientist Dr. Art Petronis

Major grant for DNA analysis in bipolar disorder

CAMH Senior Scientist Dr. Art Petronis will receive a four-year, \$4.2 million National Institute of Mental Health grant for the project DNA methylome analysis in bipolar disorder. The project will identify major etiological epi-mutations in bipolar disorder.

"We have accomplished the first pilot epigenome scan and detected a number of interesting epigenetic changes in the brains of psychiatric patients," says Dr. Petronis, adding that they will next look to a "much more comprehensive and informative" epigenome scan in bipolar disorder. "We will use cutting-edge microarray technology that allows us to perform millions of measurements in one single experiment."

This research may lead to a better understanding of the changes in the regulation of genes and genomes that occur in bipolar disorder.

Coming events

CAMH at the Mall

The CAMH Foundation's **Light up a Life** campaign will be coming to a mall near you in Toronto for November and December; if you see a CAMH booth please stop by and say hello and join **Light up a Life**.

For more information contact Jacqueline Buscombe at jacqueline_buscombe@camh.net or 416-535-8501 ext. 6442.



Urban Village Groundbreaking:

Celebratory event to mark the groundbreaking of the next phase of CAMH's exciting Queen Street Redevelopment Project is being planned for **February 2, 2010 at 11 am**.

Check www.camh.net for details in January.



Eleventh Annual George Brown College Mental Health Conference will be held on **Thursday, March 4, 2010 from 9 am-4 pm at 290 Adelaide Street East, Toronto**.

The cost for this conference is \$70 (students rate is \$40) plus taxes. This includes a continental breakfast and lunch.

Gifts of Light



Giving Gifts of Light

Unlike most hospitals, CAMH doesn't have a gift shop, and unfortunately, the lack of demand for one comes from widespread misconceptions and stigma surrounding mental illness and addiction, which means that people often suffer alone and in silence.

Once again this holiday, CAMH invites the community to help change these misconceptions by purchasing Gifts of Light today.

Visit www.camhgiftsoflight.ca for more information.

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