



West Hudson Psychiatric Society
of the American Psychiatric Association
serving Rockland, Orange, Sullivan & Delaware Counties



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eSynapse: November 2010

Editor's Comments

James Flax, MD, MPH, DFAPA

This is our 10th issue of eSynapse. My thanks to those who have contributed.

My goal in publishing is to increase communication between and among all of our members. I can only do this with your participation. I want a psychiatrist from every organization, clinic and institution in the counties of Rockland, Orange, Sullivan and Delaware to send me an article, of any length, describing any events, news, changes, presentations or opinion. That means that YOU can contribute by designating someone at your place of employment, or volunteering yourself, to send me something about where you work, how you practice, opinions about anything of relevance to psychiatrists, etc.

There are a *myriad of opportunities* for you to become involved in your community through your district branch. The advantages are numerous in addition to the pleasure of giving back. There is the true pleasure of working with your colleagues in psychiatry and/or in other mental health fields. There is the opportunity to be creative in developing a program around your interests. There is the joy of learning something new. You can read about our annual fall meeting and the Depression Screening below.

FREE LUNCH

**West Hudson Psychiatric Society
Next Executive Council Meeting
Il Fresco Restaurant, Orangeburg, NY
Date: Friday, December 17th, 12 Noon**

**Journal Club (15 minutes) hosted by Dr. Flax. PROMPTLY
at 12 Noon followed immediately by Business Agenda**

If you are curious about what happens at the executive council meetings, PLEASE JOIN US. Our next meeting is Friday, December 17th, 12Noon, il Fresca Restaurant, Orangeburg, NY, 2010, 12 noon. Please contact Dr. Ferro if you are planning to come (drferro@optonline.net). Journal club at the next meeting will be a presentation by Dr. Nigel Bark.

If you speak to your colleagues who are not members of the APA, remind them to become members. If members, tell them you've received your eSynapse and ask if they received theirs. If not, tell them to email me at DrFlax@aol.com with their email address so I can add them to the list.

While some have indicated it is too costly to join the APA, I want to remind them of the many benefits of membership (<http://www.psych.org/Resources/Membership.aspx>). Membership in your district branch is one of the least costly in the nation and we hope to keep it that way. The benefits are numerous.

CORRESPONDENCE

(editors note: I vowed when I started this publication to publish anything sent to me. Please do so. Please send me announcements, news, notices, rumor, recipes, innuendo, ads etc).

Response to Comments On The Health Care Bill

Nigel Bark, MD

I delayed responding to the comments about the Health Care Bill and the idea of a single payer insurance system partly because I have been so busy and partly because it is so contentious and I wonder if it is appropriate for Synapse; discussion of Health Care obviously is, but it is hard to separate from politics and philosophy.

I wonder that previous commentators have such faith in the private sector when the cleverness or greed and carelessness of the banks and mortgage dealers contributed so much to our present recession. And hubris and riskiness of BP led to the disaster in the Gulf of Mexico.

The private sector is the best at making things or providing things that people want and can afford and pay for directly (but it does need Government regulation to make it safe and to protect the public).

The private sector has never provided health services for the severely mentally ill or the mentally retarded (what services there were, were provided by the States) and, before the introduction of Medicare and Medicaid, only to very small numbers of the elderly and poor.

Medicare and Medicaid ensure that all these groups have health care: the private sector providing the majority of the services only to the elderly - with Government money - (from workers contributions in the case of Medicare). Medicaid covers 37% of births, 33% of children and 60% of people in nursing homes. Government and, to a lesser extent, non-profit organizations with Government money provide nearly all the care for the severely mentally ill and mentally retarded - not the private sector.

If it were not for Medicare and Medicaid it would be embarrassing being an American - living in the richest country in the world and neglecting the poor and incapable.

Measures of health show that the elderly and children in the US have nearly the same health care and outcomes as in those countries with universal health care (showing that for all their faults these programs are effective) but that those between 20 and 65 have much worse outcomes because a large number with chronic illness have no health insurance; e.g. ten times the death rate from diabetes.

That is the group that lacks health care and is not covered by Medicare or Medicaid and there is no way the private sector will help them without Government aid. There are now about 50 million people without health insurance. They will get treated in an emergency

- accident or acute illness - but we will all pay for that with our taxes and insurance premiums. They will not get treated for chronic illness (the American way of rationing) until it's so bad they've lost their job and get Medicaid and again we all pay.

That's why I believe everybody should have Health Insurance and just as it is compulsory to have Car Insurance it should be to have Health Insurance. Insurance is about sharing the burden and being prepared for accidents or illness. I support this aspect of the Bill and many others that might better be described as Insurance Reform rather than Health Reform.

(An aside about dealing with bureaucracies: my experience is that Medicaid is by far the easiest and most pleasant to get approval for medication: there is a real live lady who is very courteous and always says "yes". Insurance companies are terrible, requiring repeated calls and refusing more and more.)

(As to other things written in this context I might think that "kakistocracy" applies much better to the previous administration, which also betrayed the Constitution, American Values and Human Rights and I might think the views about President Obama's earlier life are fantasies and lies - and hateful ones at that - but I think such views do not have a place in Synapse.)

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN: **Make a Difference**

Dominic Ferro, MD

Our educational dinner meeting last week was another great success. Again, we are indebted to Jane Kelman, M.D. for organizing it. We ask her to deliver high quality programs at modest cost to the Society and she keeps delivering.

Our speaker was Carol Bernstein, M.D., the current President of APA. The title of her talk was "The Changing Face of Medicine: The Next Generation of Psychiatrists." In it she reviewed sociological data about the differences between generational cohorts.

The population is aging: over the next decade 70 million Americans will retire, and only 40 million will enter the workforce. This societal statistic resonates strongly with our local Society: our members are aging and a cadre of younger psychiatrists ready to assume the mantle is not amassing. So, I listened intently as Dr. Bernstein gave us a primer on the Generation Y psychiatrists that are on the way.

"The Millennials" as they are known are less religious and more progressive than previous generations. A positive is that they tend to be more trusting of institutions. They were raised by hovering, "helicopter" parents, so they expect authorities to provide them with opportunities for creative and inspiring work. They tend to believe that government should do more to create favorable conditions.

Raised on the Internet, The Millennials expect to be stimulated; they are the generation of "continuous partial attention." Exposed to much (they are the most educated generation in U.S. history), they tend to be tolerant of differences and inclusive of all groups. They want to be part of communities, and they want a balance of vocational and avocational activities.

Dr. Bernstein spoke about the 3 P's of organizational activities: posturing, process and products. Previous generations have more highly valued posturing: they approached institutions with a sense of reverence and loyalty. Baby Boomers were more interested in the process of government. Dr. Bernstein expects that the next generation of psychiatrists will be looking for the APA to produce for them. They will want communities to support them, and they will want tangible aids in helping them develop their practice.

Quite coincidentally, Dr. Bernstein's talk spoke directly to the challenges facing the West Hudson Psychiatric Society. In order to continue to accomplish our mission of advocating for our patients and our profession, we will need younger members active in our organization. Dr. Bernstein commended us on our involvement in the community through our Public Forum and Depression Screening. And, she left us wondering about ways that we could reach younger psychiatrists and involve them in our activities.

Please join the discussion by sending your ideas to us. What opportunities in our community

would interest young psychiatrists? Are there events to which we could invite young psychiatrists? Please join us at our next Executive Counsel meeting on Friday, December 17th, 12Noon, il Fresca Restaurant, Orangeburg, NY.

West Hudson Psychiatric Society Sponsors
Mental Health Screening Event
At The Nyack Street Fair
October 10th @ the Nyack Street Fair.

Mary Mavromatis, MD

This year our district branch participated in National Depression Screening Day (on its 20th anniversary) by hosting our event at the Nyack Street Fair on Oct. 10th.

It was a beautiful sunny fall day and all our volunteers enjoyed the weather, the camaraderie, and the fairgoers, who even when they declined the screening, asked questions, and took informational pamphlets and public and private referral lists. We also had quite a few mental health professionals who asked who we were and wanted more information about us (which we obliged them with).

We screened 27 individuals for depression, bipolar disorder, generalized anxiety disorder and PTSD. The screenings were positive in 6 people for depression, 5 people for bipolar disorder, 5 people for generalized anxiety disorder and 5 people for PTSD. 10 referrals were made to both public and private outpatient treatment. All in all our day was a great success as we provided an important community service both with screenings and with educational material and with providing a warm and friendly face to psychiatry. This year in particular (especially since we did not run a screening last year) I was personally struck with how the people I screened had been triggered by the economic downturn. Many of the people we screened stayed and talked to the screeners for quite some time. I want to thank my co-chair Mona Begum, who stayed from 8 am until after 4pm and all the other volunteers who gave up time on a beautiful Columbus Day weekend. Our volunteers were

Jane Kelman, Rick Brand, Alexandra Berger, Marc Tarle, Rochelles Kepes, Inderpal Bhathal, and last but not least Dom Ferro who snagged us a tent and helped take everything down and pack it all up!



WHPS
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MINUTES
DATE: 10/29/10

Present: Dominic Ferro, Jim Flax, Raj Mehta, Mary Mavromatis and Diane DiGiacomo
Absent: Lois Kroplick, Jane Kelman, Nigel Bark, Bob Sobel, Mary Barber, Syed Abdullah, Richard Brand, Mona Begum, Madhu Ahluwalia, Marc Tarle, Susan Hoerter, Lina Haber

- 1) Distribution of agenda and minutes- Minutes accepted
- 2) President's Report – Dominic Ferro, M.D.
Dr. Ferro discussed various items related to the budget and costs that we will need to plan for in our budget for next year. We spent very little money on our last few education meetings and he suggested that we may want to look for speakers that will be reimbursed with an honorarium as we have saved money by paying ourselves for the dinners and using speakers who graciously donated their services for free.
- 3) Public Affairs – Lois Kroplick, D.O.
Dr. Ferro mentioned that the Mental Health Coalition's Fall Forum on PTSD was a great success.
- 4) Public Relations – Richard Brand, M.D.
Mary Mavromatis mentioned that it was difficult to get the Journal News to cover an article about our Depression screening booth at the Nyack Street Fair as there were other non- profit groups represented at the street fair. In the future, we will consider trying to send in a letter to the editor or asking for an article related to National Depression Screening Day, not just our local effort.
- 5) Secretary Report – Diane DiGiacomo, M.D.
Diane DiGiacomo mentioned that she has been receiving emails regarding transfer of members. Dr. Ferro and Dr. Flax spoke about trying to retain members by reaching out to them with personal phone calls. We will pursue this issue further.
- 6) Treasurer Report – Susan Hoerter, D.O.
- 7) Membership/Mentoring Dominic Ferro, M.D.
See discussion about retaining members #5
- 8) Private Practice – Jim Flax, M.D.
Jim Flax spoke about redoing our information brochures for private practice referrals. He also led a discussion on website development.
- 9) Legislative Report – Andrew Hornstein, M.D.
- 10) Assembly – Nigel Bark, M.D.
- 11) Professional Education – Jane Kelman, M.D.

Dr. Ferro reported that Dr. Kelman stated that 29 psychiatrists attended our Fall Education Dinner. He said it was a great meeting and that we are grateful for all of Dr. Kelman's efforts on our behalf. We spent about \$200 on the dinner and because we have been consistently keeping costs low we might want to think about hiring a speaker with an honorarium.

12) Synapse - Jim Flax, M.D. , Syed Abdullah, M.D.

Jim Flax continues to publish Synapse issues every 4-6 weeks.

13) Women's Committee – Jane Kelman, M.D.

Next Women's Lunch meeting is November 5th at 12:15 PM at Lois Kroplick's office.

14) Ethics – Marc Tarle, M.D.

15) Public Psychiatry – Mary Barber, M.D.

16) Depression Screening – Mary Mavromatis, M.D. and Mona Begum, M.D.

Mary Mavromatis reported that the depression screening was very successful at the October Street Fair in Nyack from all of the volunteer feedback. It was very personalized and screenings were conducted for 27 people and referrals for treatment were given to them. The approximate cost of the event was about \$650; a new banner was bought for the event. We may need to budget in tent purchase or rental for next year's event. Mary also suggested that we may want to print brochures to give out with a mission statement for the West Hudson Psychiatric Society. Jim suggested that we could add a page or paragraph to our current private practice referral brochure with a mission statement about the West Hudson Psychiatric Society.

17) Early Career Rep

18) Journal Club - Jim Flax led the journal club with an article from the American Journal of Psychiatry – September issue about cognitive sequelae of bipolar disorder and functional disability. It was an interesting discussion with Jim tying in information on patient cases and his job as a disability reviewer of patient charts. We had a lively, spirited question and answer discussion with Jim and it was lots of fun. Looking forward to the next journal club at the next meeting to be led by Nigel Bark.

Date of Next Meeting: Friday, December 17th, 12Noon, il Fresca Restaurant, Orangeburg, NY

Anna Munster, M.D. (1913–2010)

Syed Abdullah, M.D.

Anna Munster passed away on September 12, 2010 at the age 97 in Pearl River, NY.

Hers was a life of struggle for survival, growth and service on a grand scale.

She was born in 1913 in Buscovina, an Eastern European Region that was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Later it became part of Romania, then was occupied by Germany, followed by occupation by Russia presently, it is Romania. Anna's schooling was in a French elementary school. She had a baccalaureate at 17 and went to the medical school in Strasbourg, France, graduating from the faculty of medicine in 1937, she was trained as a chest specialist and in tuberculosis. It was a time when war clouds were gathering over Europe. In 1940, as the German armies marched into France, she fled south with only a suitcase in hand. She survived on the run by working in vineyards and gardens and occasionally as a lab technician. She stayed in the middle regions of France until the Germans came threateningly close.

With the help of an Austrian priest she found safety in a series of French camps for the refugees established by the Vichy government. Here she was safe but restless. Finally she reached the Swiss border and in 1941 crossed the border to start a life hopping from camp to camp as a refugee. She worked as pediatrician and general practitioner in six different camps in Switzerland. In 1944–45 she won a scholarship for an intensive course in social work that comprised child psychology, social psychiatry and prevention of mental illness. She stayed in Switzerland from 1941 to 1946, during this time she availed of every opportunity to do whatever postgraduate courses she could find.

In 1941 she married a Frenchman in Switzerland who had climbed the 600-foot mountainous border with her. Her daughter, Angela, was born in 1945. Today Angela has a PhD in philosophy, and teaches at the university of N. Carolina in Asheville. In 1946 the family returned to France where she took further courses in Pneumonology in Paris. In 1949 she came to the USA for the first time, accompanied by her husband who having worked as an interpreter during the Nuremberg trial, got a permanent job as an interpreter with the United Nations. Their son Marc was born in 1949 in the USA. He holds a PhD in communications. From 1951 to 1953 she was chief resident in the pulmonary division of Montefiore hospital, Bedford Hills NY. In 1954 she went to Israel, where she worked for two years in a number of camps as a pediatrician and general physician.

IN 1956 she immigrated to USA. She obtained a Maryland license in 1957, NY license in 1958, and NJ license in 1970, and a N. Carolina license in 1983. She completed her psychiatric training and took the General Boards in 1961 and Child Psychiatry Boards in 1965. She was in charge of a 175-bed unit for children and adolescents at Rockland Psychiatric Center, where she did some pharmacological studies. She also used physical exercises based on eastern yoga routines with asthmatic children. Later she moved on to teaching position in child psychiatry at Cornell and Mt Sinai medical schools. She was there until she turned 70 and retired.

On May 3rd 2002 West Hudson Psychiatric Society, at its Spring dinner meeting honored Anna Munster a longstanding member of our district branch. It was a well-attended gathering at the Dellwood Club where she was presented with a plaque in recognition of her dedication to the profession and service to the community. She also received a certificate of commendation from the County Executive Mr. C. Scott Vanderhoef, and another one from the Governor's Office of Aging.

In her 'thank you' address she included the following remarks: "Since my medical school days my interest was in prevention. Thus foreseeing my old age and the possibility we all dread, namely loss of independence through bodily impairment and acuity of mind, I started practicing yoga, pursuing it to this day. It helps to deal with common stresses of living and helps body and mind functioning.

"Professionally, an unexpected side effect of this was the successful application of breathing, posturing and relaxation techniques, during psychotherapeutic sessions with asthmatic, disturbed and hyperactive children. Most notable in adults was the change of direction in the stream of thought, when breathing and posture were attended to. In conclusion, I gained personally and professionally from the practice of yoga."

At age 50 she had started taking yoga classes, and ended up inheriting her teacher's class and teaching it. She developed a system, which enhances and maintains physiologic functions. She attended classes by other yoga teachers in France and Switzerland, and incorporated their techniques into her own method. She made a video of her class in action and donated it to the Pearl River Public Library where it is available for borrowing.

For many years with her assistant Linda Morrissey, she conducted a free class, at the library open to all. She welcomed people to join the class or just come and visit the class in progress. I had gone to one such class and was sold on it.



NEWS FROM THE APA

Resource: Guidelines on Psychiatrist Relationships with Clinicians

Psychiatrists often need to work with other professionals and nonprofessionals in a variety of settings in the course of patient care. The APA developed a resource document, *“Guidelines for Psychiatrists in Consultative, Supervisory or Collaborative Relationships with Non-physician Clinicians,”* to help navigate these relationships. The article provides information on when psychiatrists should take the lead in such relationships, third-party payment issues and legal responsibilities. It also describes the different types of relationship and the psychiatrist’s role in each. This and other APA [Resources Documents](#) are available to members on the APA website.

Links: <http://www.psych.org/MainMenu/EducationCareerDevelopment/Library/Resource-Documents.aspx>

Let’s Talk Facts Brochures Provide Mental Health Information for Patients

The American Psychiatric Association has developed a series of brochures that explain mental illnesses and issues around mental illnesses in straight-forward, simple terms that are easy for patients and family members to understand. APA members get a 10 percent discount on titles in the *Let’s Talk Facts* series, which are sold in packages of 50. Visit the [American](#)

[Psychiatric Publishing, Inc.](#) website to order or visit healthyminds.org for a preview of each brochure. *Let’s Talk Facts About Depression* and *Let’s Talk Facts About Anxiety Disorders* are among the most popular brochures. Other topics in the 29-brochure series include phobias, teen suicide, psychiatric dimensions of AIDS, college drinking and obsessive-compulsive disorder.

Links: <http://www.healthyminds.org/Functional-Library/brochures.aspx>



Residents, Students, Fellows Eligible for Poster Competition

Medical students, and research or clinical fellows can participate in a new poster competition at the 2011 Annual Meeting in Hawaii. The submission categories are Psychosocial and/or Biomedical Research Projects; Patient-Oriented and Epidemiology Projects; Curriculum Development and Educational Projects; and Community Service Projects. All posters will undergo expert review and will receive feedback on scientific quality, innovation and creativity, and presentation of the posters. An award and plaque will be given for the best poster within each category. See the [APA Member Update](#) for more information. The session will be May 14.

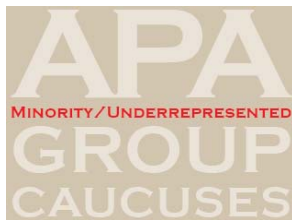
The submission period for all posters opens Nov. 2, and the last day to submit an abstract is Dec. 7, 2010. Abstracts must be submitted electronically through the website at, <http://www.psych.org/onlinesubmission/>.

Minority Caucuses Explore Professional Growth, Advocate for Patients

APA minority caucuses give minority psychiatrists a chance to explore common issues, voice diverse opinions, and promote needed change. APA members from minority and underrepresented (MUR) groups are eligible to join a caucus. Participation is free. Caucus members meet during the Annual Meeting to advocate for minority patient populations, discuss social and health-related issues, and explore concerns related to professional growth and advancement for members. Each caucus elects two voting representatives to the APA Assembly.

Seven APA Minority and Underrepresented Groups caucuses are:

- American Indian/Alaska Native/Native Hawaiian



- Asian-American
- Black
- Hispanic
- Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual
- International Medical Graduates
- Women

For more information, visit the [Minority and Underrepresented Group Caucuses](#) page on the APA website.

Links: Information on APA Caucuses <http://www.psych.org/Share/OMNA/APAOMNACaucuses.aspx>

Therapy office in Pomona, NY (Rockland County) for

Sublease in Dr. Flax's suite. Available Sundays and other times by arrangement. Office is right off of Exit 12 of the Palisades Parkway. It is furnished, quiet and sunny, in a suite of four offices with a shared waiting room and a separate exit, with beautiful art work throughout. If interested, contact Lorraine Schorr, lorrainesara@aol.com or 845 354 5040.

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