

FEMAP NEWSLETTER



FEMAP TEAM (First Episode Mood and Anxiety Program): Elizabeth Osuch, M.D. FRCPC; Jennifer Barfett-Lloyd, Admin Assistant; Melody Chow, Research Assistant; Jo Anne DePace, Research Coordinator

FEMAP Open House

The FEMAP team is hosting an open house on May 28, 2009 to celebrate the new location at 860 Richmond Street. Over the past few months, we have been working to ensure the new location is well-equipped to suit program needs and the needs of youth with mood and anxiety disorders in our community. We are happy to report that feedback from our clients regarding our new location has been very favorable. We would like to thank all those involved in our relocation, in particular LHSC & SJHC Facilities and Planning, Dave Crockett, Sandra Fisman, Michelle Winder, Bert Reis and Jim Nicholson for all their help in making this a smooth transition.

Clinical Care Update

FEMAP continues to work closely with community partners to triage and manage clients in order to provide timely access to clinical services. Dr. Osuch has been managing the steady stream of referrals and successfully keeping the wait list down.

The next few months we will see some new additions to the FEMAP team. Starting in July a new psychiatrist, Dr. Sarah Armstrong, MD, will be joining our clinical team. Dr. Armstrong comes to us from Rochester, New York. A very warm welcome to Dr. Armstrong.

The FEMAP team is currently recruiting a much needed substance abuse counselor, one day per week, to assist in supporting clients with addictions and conduct some clinical research in addictions associated with mood and/or anxiety disorders.

We will very soon be recruiting a team member to run a clinical research project involving the implementation and evaluation of a novel mental health system approach for youth with mood and/or anxiety disorders in London. This project will involve outreach into schools and primary care, computerized evaluation and telephone interviews, treatment algorithms, referral, and three-month follow-up. This project will help us quantify the prevalence of a variety of mental health concerns of youth seeking help and then identify gaps and obstacles to youth attaining the care they need in our community.

Best wishes go out to psychologist, Dr. Roger Covin, who has completed his contract with FEMAP and moved to Montreal to work in private practice. While with FEMAP, Dr. Covin collaborated on several research projects as well providing clinical support for the program. Good luck Dr. Covin!

The FEMAP team is in the initial stages of organizing a resource room at the FEMAP house. The resource room will provide up-to-date mental health literature and DVDs as well computer access to information for clients and families.

Research

FEMAP has resumed work on imaging studies now that the new 3-tesla scanners at Robarts Research Institute and Lawson Research Health Institute are up and running.

We continue to recruit for our stigma study evaluating obstacles that youth experience getting mental health care. Unfortunately, due to lack of funding for mindyourmind.ca (MYM), the MYM staff will be unable to continue to collaborate with FEMAP on this study. We regret the loss of this important and valued resource within the broader mental health community and our involvement with the MYM team in our research endeavors in particular.

We are thrilled to announce that we have been awarded a two-year grant from the Ontario Mental Health Foundation to study the interaction of marijuana and depression on brain function and cognition. The team is currently working to implement this study. A new research assistant will be hired to facilitate with the coordination and completion of this project.

As mentioned above, FEMAP has been awarded funding from the AHSC AFP Innovation Fund to complete a project involving the implementation and evaluation of a mental health care delivery model for youth. This work is co-led by Dr. Evelyn Vingilis, Ph.D. from the Department Medicine, Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry. We will be hiring a Clinical Research Associate to lead this project by mid-summer.

This summer, the FEMAP research team will include two student volunteers: Angela George and Phoebe Bao. Angela has just completed her first year of medical school at the University of Western Ontario. Phoebe has completed her first year of an undergraduate program at the University of Toronto. These students will be involved in assisting with various research activities for the summer months. Welcome Angela and Phoebe!