

PENN PSYCHIATRY

MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER | RESURGENCE AND ANTI-RACISM

MARCH 24, 2021



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Faculty, Staff and Trainees,

It's happening tonight at midnight. At exactly 12:01, Mercy Philadelphia will become HUP Cedar. The signage all over the hospital will be swapped out. The formulary and medication dispensing software will switch to HUP's. The electronic health record will change to PennChart. And psychiatry will have a total of 7 inpatient units! Now, we will have 2 medical detox units (PPMC and HUP Cedar); two dual diagnosis units (PPMC and HUP Cedar); 2 general psych units (PAH and PPMC) and 1 geriatric unit (PAH). It is still not clear if there will be a Crisis Response Center (CRC) at HUP Cedar as we have at PAH, but we hope that negotiations with the city will allow us to reopen one at HUP Cedar. That is a lot of change and a lot of extra clinical capacity!! In the next months, we will be working with the HUP Cedar team to harmonize the way in which we provide inpatient clinical care. Many people have worked tirelessly on this project. Kudos to Juliette Galbraith who has led the effort for a seamless transition. Of course, there is a lot of work to be done, but we will get it done!

Last evening, we had a town hall focused on racism. It is a difficult topic. People spoke up but there was also a lot of silence. Based on a suggestion during the town hall, the next time, we will have break out groups so people have a cozier space to speak. It will also allow people who don't normally work together to get to know each other. At the end we will hear reports from the breakouts and engage in a more general conversation. I think it could be very interesting!

I cannot finish my message to you without a reminder of the importance of staying safe. I am sorry to report that the COVID-19 inpatient census across UPHS is climbing again. At Medical Staff meeting this morning, we heard reports of a prevalence of 5% of COVID cases in the region, 100 times higher than at PSOM. And I get it, with Spring in the air bringing warmth and optimism, it is just so tempting to throw caution to the wind! But now is the time to work hard to keep ourselves safe, especially in view of the variants cropping up. Variants are not very common at UPHS according to analyses conducted in PSOM's Department of Microbiology, and we want to keep it that way.

Finally, please take care of yourself. Remember your routines in terms of eating, exercise, sleeping. Try to find time to practice gratitude and avail yourself of the many opportunities for altruism that our work and life in general offer. They will help you build resilience. And I can't say it enough: thank you for all the work you do day in and day out. It is critically important!

Warmly,
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Philadelphia VA hosts pop-up COVID-19 vaccine event targeting Veterans with mental health needs

The Corporal Michael J. Crescenz VA Medical Center (Philadelphia) vaccinated 344 patients against COVID-19 at a specialized Behavioral Health event targeting patients with mental health needs from March 11-13. The focused event administered the Janssen vaccine to Veterans who indicated their preference for the single-shot vaccine, simplifying the process for some of VA's most vulnerable patients.

Recently published research indicates the critical, life-saving importance of COVID-19 vaccine access for patients with mental illness. Not only are these patients more likely to be infected, but a [study published in January in JAMA](#) concluded that those with severe mental illness were significantly more likely to die from the virus. Poorer general health, barriers to medical care, as well as environmental and lifestyle factors all contribute to these outcomes.

Aside from the opportunity to offer the single-shot option to Veterans who may benefit most, other advantages of the specialized pop-up event were that Veterans were personally contacted by Behavioral Health staff and that they were able to receive their vaccine in a familiar setting. For a few patients who hadn't been in care for an extended period of time, the event was an opportunity to reconnect.

WELLNESS RESOURCES

Click [here](#) to access our Wellness Resources.

During these uncertain times, help is available through [PennCOBALT](#) and [PennMedicineTogether](#).

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE.

Vision

Promoting health for the brain and mind to transform lives and the world.

Mission

Penn Psychiatry develops and implements new ideas to understand, prevent, and treat disorders of the brain and mind, through innovative research and discoveries, outstanding educational, world renowned clinical services, and transformational public health policies.

Click [here](#) to access the Penn Psychiatry website.

Click [here](#) to access the CPUP Committee on Anti-Racism

