



WINTER NEWSLETTER
DECEMBER 2013

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF HISPANIC PSYCHIATRY

Editor: Leopoldo J. Cabassa

Contributors: Bernardo Ng, Carolyn Rodriguez, Mauricio Tohen, and Roberto Lewis-Fernández

Message From the President

The last 8 months have been a period of intense activity at ASHP. We launched a membership campaign that increased our roster of paid members by 40%. We partnered with the Latino Behavioral Institute to present a symposium at their annual meeting in September, as described by ASHP Board Member Bernardo Ng in this issue. Not only did we share information that is useful for clinicians and researchers working with Latino populations, but we also promoted the organization to a predominantly West Coast audience and established tighter links with our sister organization. Our members have been carrying out important research and clinical activities, as illustrated by the work on Hoarding Disorder conducted by Secretary General Carolyn Rodríguez included in this issue. And we are in the process of developing an exciting agenda of events for the May, 2014 American Psychiatric Association meeting in New York City. This has involved close collaboration with the OMNA on Tour program of the Office for Minority and National Affairs of the APA. Our combined efforts, both conceptual and financial, have resulted in the development of two activities. The first is an Invited Symposium by the APA Scientific Program that will be held during the regular APA program (see more details in this issue). This symposium will focus on *Reducing Ethnic/Racial Disparities Across the Lifecycle in the Age of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA)*. Speakers Guillermo Prado, Mario Cruz, Roberto Lewis-Fernández, and María Aranda, and Discussant Margarita Alegría will present research findings on the extent of disparities in mental health and mental health care in youth, adults, and elder members of racial/ethnic underserved groups and strategies for overcoming these disparities. The talks will always include data on Latina/o populations, but will often also connect this information with data on other US minority communities in an effort to find commonalities that can become modifiable targets in the new health care regulatory environment. We will also discuss special aspects of the Latino/a community, such as the mental health care needs of the high number of undocumented migrants who will not be covered by the new benefits provided by the PPACA. The ultimate goal of the symposium is to help identify implementable mental health care solutions to the disparities that have affected our communities for so long.



The second event organized together with OMNA focuses on the same topic of disparities and the PPACA, but with three major differences. First, the focus of this event will be squarely on Latina/os and the effects of the new health care laws. Second, the event will be held in a community location, not far from the Convention Center, on

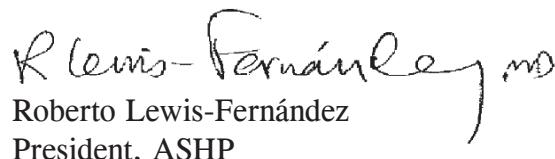
Continued on Pg. 2

Saturday, the first afternoon and evening of the APA meeting, and will include participants from the New York City community as well as members of ASHP and/or APA. Third, instead of a symposium, this will be multi-component activity that will feature a keynote address by Margarita Alegría, a panel discussion by a diverse group of stakeholders in mental health care, a poster session with new investigators, and a reception. The stakeholder panel will be diverse, including community members affected by the new changes, researchers studying their impact on our communities, as well as representatives of entities charged with monitoring and implementing the new regulations, such as public servants and leaders of mental health agency. The poster presentation will be an exciting opportunity for new investigators who are themselves Latino/as and/or who work with this population to present the findings of their research. It will also enable them to establish mentoring links with senior investigators, who will provide feedback on their poster drafts in the months preceding the meeting. Mentoring young mental health researchers, clinicians, and administrators is a key priority of ASHP, and this activity allows us to emphasize this aspect of the organization. This issue of the Newsletter includes the Call for Abstracts that solicits new investigators'

submissions from across the country. Each new investigator selected to present his/her abstract via a poster presentation will receive financial support from OMNA and/or ASHP for travel and lodging expenses. We expect that this event will bring together a very diverse audience of people working with the Latino community and will be a major dissemination and recruitment opportunity for ASHP.

As you can see, this is a very exciting time to become involved in our organization! The Officers and Board Members join me in encouraging you to become a very active member, including considering a role in the leadership of ASHP. As noted in this issue, this is the time of year when we solicit nominations for new Officers and Board Members for the two-year term starting May, 2014. All paid-up members are eligible for nomination. The future of ASHP is in your hands!

Yours,



Roberto Lewis-Fernández
President, ASHP

Summary of Past ASHP Events

ASHP at the Latino Behavioral Health Institute in Los Angeles, California

The Latino Behavioral Health Institute (LBHI) takes place in Los Angeles once a year in September. This year Dr. Bernardo Ng, ASHP Board Member, organized a symposium at LBHI focusing on innovative mental health research in the Latino community. The symposium was preceded by a brief introduction about ASHP's mission and history. The first presentation was conducted by Dr. Maria Aranda from the University of Southern California, who talked about one of her latest projects focusing on a day treatment program for depressed Latino seniors. Her presentation demonstrated the acceptability, feasibility, and efficacy of Problem Solving Therapy, in spite of challenges such as advancing age, low formal education, and language barriers. The second presentation was conducted by

Dr. Denise Chavira from UCLA who talked about the success, not without challenges, of introducing California rural families to a program of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy to help children with anxiety disorders. She compared the unique obstacles in a rural community to those she had encountered in her previous trials among urban populations. Dr. Alvaro Camacho from UCSD presented an intervention for poor Latino depressed individuals living along the US-Mexico border. This consisted of a non-manualized supportive intervention delivered by community health workers at a primary care clinic. He discussed the importance of integrating mental health professionals and the services they deliver in primary care clinics. Last but not least, Dr. Bernardo Ng from Sun Valley Research Center

Continued. on pg. 3

discussed the participation of rural Latinos in industry-sponsored clinical trials, underscoring the importance of promoting their participation in research sites so they can contribute to the development of evidence-based practices in Latino communities. A general theme that was evident throughout the symposium

was the importance of conducting more research with Latino populations living in the US, especially in communities that have not been widely studied, such as elderly individuals living along the US-Mexico border and children residing in rural areas.

ASHP Member Showcase

In this Newsletter, we are showcasing the great work by Dr. Carolyn Rodriguez on hoarding disorders. The article presented below was originally published in the Huffington Post on November 6th, 2013

“Clutter” by Dr. Carolyn Rodriguez, Assistant Professor and Director, Hoarding Disorders Research Program, Columbia Psychiatry.

You are flipping through the channels and suddenly you come across something that makes your body freeze. It is an image of a bedroom filled from floor to ceiling with stuff. Magazines, toothbrushes, clothes, detergent – it’s all in there. The owner of all these things, Sally, seems quite comfortable and describes not wanting to get rid of an empty toilet paper roll because it may come in handy. You shout to the TV “Sally, why can’t you just throw it away? Don’t you see that is too much stuff!?” Sally can’t hear you, of course. She is on TV.

While Sally’s behavior may seem extreme, trouble getting rid of things is actually quite common. In a [study](#) I led as a researcher at Columbia Psychiatry, 43,093 people from across the United States were asked: “Do you have difficulty discarding worn out or worthless possessions?” To our surprise, over 20% said “Yes.” That’s 1 in 5 people who say they have trouble getting rid of things. You may even find yourself relating to Sally, which is why you don’t flip the channel when Sally moves on to an expired coupon for tires.

Of course, not everyone who has trouble throwing things away will be in the same situation as Sally. Sally most likely has hoarding disorder, which is characterized by difficulty discarding AND large amounts of clutter that make it hard to use rooms for their intended purpose - like not being able to cook in your kitchen or sleep in your bedroom. This condition causes lots of distress and problems in a person’s life.

And these problems can be made even worse if the person also has the problem of buying lots of things (or picking up free things) and bringing those home too. Hoarding disorder may begin during childhood or teenage years and may affect over 6 million people in the United States. Individuals with hoarding disorder tend to seek treatment in mid-life. If you think you may have the same difficulties as Sally, the good news is that help is available (see resources below).



Now, going back to the question you originally shouted at the TV, why does Sally (and so many of the rest of us, for that matter) have trouble letting go of things?

People can have many reasons for keeping things, but here are a few:

1. Emotional Attachment- Objects have sentimental connections, including reminding us of a loved one.
2. Aesthetic Appeal – The item looks beautiful in and of itself.
3. Usefulness – You never know when that may come in handy.

This third reason can be trouble for highly creative and intelligent individuals who can find a million uses for a single item. Seen in this light, objects are full of promise and excitement. But, if you don’t have the time follow through, what was once-promising can turn into clutter.

Now you may be wondering, “I don’t have hoarding disorder, but I do have trouble getting rid of things

Continued. on pg. 4

and some clutter. How can I break this habit?" Simply put, the best way to break a bad habit is to build a new habit. In our [clinic](#), we encourage patients to take it "one square foot at a time." Start with small goals – try just 10-15 minutes a day of decluttering. Then, make sure you take time to celebrate small successes, that square foot or multiples of it. Many people forget this step, but it is a key ingredient. Decluttering can take time and for sure it can be difficult at times. But, if you stick with it, and push through the feeling of "I'll never be able to do this," you will have success.

And next time you are flipping channels and freeze when you see clutter, you may even shout to the TV, "Sally, one square foot at a time!"

Amanda Levinson, B.A., Research Assistant, Columbia Psychiatry, contributed to this post.

Resources:

International OCD Foundation - Hoarding Center - www.ocfoundation.org/hoarding

Anxiety and Depression Association of America - www.adaa.org

National Association of Professional Organizers - <http://www.napo.net/>

Our clinic and research studies underway:

[Columbia Psychiatry Hoarding Disorders Research Program](#) – (212) 543-5081 <http://www.columbiapsychiatry.org/hoarding/>

For [research studies click here](#).

Copyright Dr. Carolyn Rodriguez

Originally published in the Huffington Post on November 6th, 2013

American Society of Hispanic Psychiatry Activities at the American Psychiatric Association Meeting, conducted in collaboration with the Office of Minority and National Affairs of the APA

I. Plenary Session, Panel, and Poster Presentation: Latino Mental Health in the Age of the Affordable Care Act

When: Saturday, May 3, Afternoon/Evening

Where: Location to be announced

Keynote Speaker: Margarita Alegría, PhD

Discussion: Stakeholder Panel

Poster Presentations: Early Career Latino Mental Health Researchers

II. Symposium: Reducing Ethnic/Racial Disparities Across the Lifecycle in the Age of PPACA

When: Monday May 5, 2014 from 2-5 PM

Where: Javits Convention Center, Level 1 Rm 1E15

Speakers and talks:

Guillermo Prado, MS, PhD: *Reducing Externalizing And Internalizing Symptoms And Disorders Among Hispanic Youth*

Mario Cruz, MD: *Psychiatrist Communication Behaviors With Depressed African Americans: Does What We Say (And How We Say It) Matter?*

Roberto Lewis-Fernández, MD: *Improving Antidepressant Engagement Among Depressed Latinos*

María Aranda, PhD: *Disparities in Cognitive Function and Rate of Decline By Race/Ethnicity*

Discussant: Margarita Alegría, PhD

Call for Abstract:

APA/ASHP TRAVEL AWARD FOR EARLY CAREER LATINO MENTAL HEALTH RESEARCHERS

Sponsored by:

American Psychiatric Association

Office of Minority and National Affairs (APA-OMNA)

The American Society of Hispanic Psychiatry (ASHP)

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

Description of the Event

This conference focuses on creating an opportunity for new investigators to present their work to senior researchers, community mental health agency leaders, policymakers, consumers, clinicians, and other stakeholders of the mental health care process. The goal of this conference is to help new investigators in the area of Latino Mental Health receive constructive feedback, network with established researchers and other key stakeholders who can inform their research careers and topics, and discuss the policy and programmatic applications of their work. This year's conference will be held on Saturday, May 3rd, 2014 and will host a poster presentation of new or ongoing research by new investigators as part of a meeting focusing on mental health research and service delivery for Latinos in the age of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA).

New investigators whose work focuses on Latino mental health are invited to submit an abstract. For the purpose of this announcement, new investigators are those who are typically within five years of receiving their doctoral degree and/or have not had an independent grant (e.g., R01). Student researchers are also encouraged to submit an abstract. Each new investigator selected to present their abstract via a poster presentation will have their travel to New York City and one night of lodging expenses paid.

A key component of the conference is to provide mentoring to promising new investigators. New investigators who are selected to present will be paired with prominent senior researchers. In the time leading up to the conference, new investigators will have the opportunity to work closely with their assigned mentor on the development of their poster.

Theme

Latino Mental Health in the Age of the Affordable Care Act

Background

Research has highlighted health disparities that exist between minority and non-minority populations in the United States. In the area of mental health, disparities have been noted in the areas of assessment and diagnosis, access to services and quality of care, as well as training and research. In light of recent US Census data, Latinos are now the largest minority group in the United States and the problem of mental health disparities is, therefore, of particular concern among Latinos. However, there continues to be relatively few active Latino researchers and limited research focused on the mental health of this population. This is particularly important at a time when the implementation of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) is creating new opportunities to reduce health disparities but also leaving unanswered questions. Thus, the American Society of Hispanic Psychiatry and the Office of Minority and National Affairs of the American Psychiatric Association (with logistical support from the NYS Center of Excellence for Cultural Competence at the New York State Psychiatric Institute) seek to foster research careers that contribute to our knowledge of Latino mental health. The conference seeks to do so by bringing promising new investigators together with established researchers and other stakeholders in the area of Latino mental health.

To be held during APA OMNA On Tour Event
New York, New York
Saturday, May 3rd, 2014

And during the American Psychiatric Association Annual Conference
LOCATION TO BE ANNOUNCED

Organizing Committee:

Margarita Alegría, PhD
Alejandro Interián, PhD
Oscar Jiménez-Solomon, MPH
Alex Kopelowicz, MD
Roberto Lewis-Fernández, MD, Chair
Annelie Primm, MD
Carolyn Rodríguez, MD, PhD
Mauricio Tohen, MD, PhD

An event to bring promising new investigators together with senior researchers, community agency leaders, policymakers, consumers, clinicians, and other key stakeholders in the area of Latino mental health.

Early career investigators can submit a 300-word abstract related to the topic to:

Oscar Jiménez-Solomon, MPH
NYS Center of Excellence for Cultural Competence
New York State Psychiatric Institute
1051 Riverside Drive, Unit 11
New York, New York 10032
Phone: (646) 774-8247
Email: jsolomo@nyspi.columbia.edu

**Deadline: Friday,
January 24, 2014**

Submission of Abstracts

To submit an abstract, please send the information below via email to jsolomo@nyspi.columbia.edu by **Friday, January 24, 2014**. **Abstracts must be relevant to Latino Mental Health and should be no more than 300 words.** Please "copy and paste" the required information below onto the email.

Name:
Degree:
Academic Position:
Institutional Affiliation:
Mailing Address:
City, State, Zip:
Telephone:
Email Address:
Title of Paper/Presentation:
Authors:

Please paste the abstract below and utilize the following headings:

- (a) Background
- (b) Method
- (c) Results
- (d) Conclusions

**Abstract
Submission
Deadline:
January 24, 2014**

Sponsored by:

ASHP
APA OMNA On Tour
NYSPI Center of Excellence for Cultural Competence

Nominations are open for ASHP Officers and Board Members!!

Election time is here! - This is an exciting time for health care - with the Affordable Care Act underway, we need to keep our vision clear - Our goal is to improve the mental health of all Americans with a focus on the largest minority population - Hispanics - who will benefit in general from the Affordable Care Act. As mental health leaders with a commitment to the Hispanic population we need our voice to be heard.

We are soliciting nominations for President-Elect, Secretary General, Treasurer, Newsletter Editor, and all the Board members to serve for the period of May, 2014 to May, 2016. You can of course nominate yourself. Once we have gathered your nominations, we will send everyone a ballot via email. Elections will take place in February and the new officers and board members will assume their new roles during the ASHP meeting in May, 2014. To be nominated and to vote, you must be a paid-up member of ASHP. This is a good time to update your membership if you haven't already done so. Information on how to do this via PayPal and other payment methods is included in this issue of the Newsletter.

We need you!

Please send one nomination apiece for President-Elect, Secretary General, Treasurer, and Newsletter Editor and up to four nominations for Board members to our Coordinator, Frances Bell, at frda1@airmail.net. Mauricio Tohen, our current President-Elect, is the Chair of the Nominations Committee.

Membership Dues and New Methods of Payment

On February 7th, 2013, the ASHP Board approved a motion to make the dues structure comparable to other specialized professional organizations of similar size. Funds are used to pay for our wonderful coordinator, Frances Bell, maintaining and enhancing our website, supporting the costs of our annual meeting, and other costs associated with upgrading our means of communication among and with members.

Dues can now be paid electronically via PayPal on our website: <http://americansocietyhispanicpsychiatry.com>

General Psychiatrist Member \$90.00

International Psychiatrist Member \$75.00

Psychologists, social workers, nurses and other mental health professionals:

U.S. \$75.00

International \$50.00

Retired \$50.00

Residents and Students \$25.00