UC Davis Behavioral Health Center of Excellence

The Behavioral Health Center of Excellence at UC Davis launched Oct. 1, 2014 with initial funding from California's Mental Health Services Act. Here is a quick summary of the Center's launch:

2014

Governor Jerry Brown signed the state budget in June, allocating $15 million to UC Davis and UCLA to launch two centers. Partial funds arrived at UC Davis a few months later.

After a ribbon cutting ceremony Oct. 1, UC Davis moved quickly to establish an office, hire staff and solidify leadership. The Center structure consists of three core units, an administrative core consisting of lead Dean Frederick J. Meyers, MD, MACP, from the School of Medicine, Director Cameron S. Carter, MD, and Center Administrator Kristy Bird Trouchon, MBA, a Policy and Advocacy core led by former Senate pro Tem Darrell Steinberg who also assumed the position of Visiting Professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, and an outcomes core under the interim leadership of Joy Melnikow, MD, MPH.

The Center developed a partnership in December 2014 with the UC Davis Center for Healthcare Policy and Research to conduct an environmental scan of mental health services in Northern California. This scan helped provide a framework for the 2015 Research Pilot Award program applicants. New faculty will join this outcomes core in late 2015.

The Center also partnered with the UC Davis Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research to announce the BRAIN-STIM pilot awards, based on the federal Brain Initiative a few years earlier. The Center matched 50% of the OVCR's funds for a total of $1 million for 5 awards.

2015

By March, the Center committed almost $4 million to 17 awardees. The awardees were selected by an external scientific review committee which analyzed 50 applications in 4 categories: Clinical Translational, Big Data, Basic Sciences and Policy, Services and Workforce Development. The awards of $200,000 allow researchers to pursue high-risk, high-impact studies designed to attract further funding from prestigious organizations such as the National Institute of Mental Health.

The awardees listed on the reverse side show great collaboration and diversity, as is the hallmark of research at UC Davis, The Center's mission is to expand research opportunities, accelerate innovation for future funding, with a vision of better understanding the brain and behavior. The Center's mission is to bridge sciences with policy and educate the next generation to be leaders for mental health.

Senator Steinberg kicked off the Center's lecture series in April with a motivating talk about the need for more data, evaluation and outcomes in California's mental health system. He also addressed the UC Davis community during the Department of Psychiatry's grand rounds.

With the aim of fostering future collaboration, the Center's team met with many external stakeholders during the Spring.

Staff started writing about the research pilot awardees and the impact of their work in a new series of publications called Innovate.

Planning for a policy education program for graduate students at UC Davis began in July. An elective for fourth year medical students as well as a paid internship through the UC Davis Emerging Leaders in Policy and Public Service (ELIPPS) will be available in Spring 2016.

A second lecture with Center Director Carter, was held in August to showcase the research program and exciting discoveries in understanding the brain at UC Davis.

During the summer, plans for a university-wide campaign for students, faculty and staff mental health began to form. The campaign will kick-off later in the fall.

The first Science Informing Policy Symposium in partnership with UCLA was held in September. This statewide symposium focused on evidence-based early psychosis programs. More than 25 of California's 58 counties attended and many more participated by live streaming and through social media. Keynote speakers and panel discussions shared solutions for communities, given the latest research throughout the country.

The Center's sustainability beyond its initial funding is a top priority for the coming year. An advisory board is being created in the fall, as well as a fundraising committee. Think tanks will connect researchers with industry, the government and other potential partners.

Research Program

Services, Policy Workforce Development & Dissemination

• Ester Carolina Apesoa-Varano, Assistant Professor of Sociology, Betty Irene Moore School of Nursing at UC Davis: "Social Capital and Latina Caregiver Wellbeing Study: Intervention Development and Feasibility Testing"

• Anthony Jerant, Professor, Department of Family and Community Medicine, School of Medicine: "Tailored Patient Activation to Reduce Suicide Risk in Primary Care"

• Tara Niendam, Assistant Professor, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, School of Medicine: "Using Mobile Technology to Detect Early Warning Signs of Mental-Health Challenges and Enhance Treatment Delivery for Youth with Early Psychosis in Community Outpatient Settings"

• Julie Schweitzer, Professor, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, School of Medicine: "Participant-Driven Engagement for Advancing the Dissemination of Diagnosis and Treatment for Attention-deficit/ Hyperactivity Disorder"

• Marjorie Solomon, Associate Professor, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, School of Medicine, MIND Institute, Imaging Research Center: "Improving the Lives of Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorders and their Families: A Pilot Trial of the Adult Social Knowledge (ASK) Workshop"

• Peter Yellowlees, Professor, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, School of Medicine: Telepsychiatry Services Across Languages: Development and Testing of an Automated Translation and Transcription Tool Using Speech Recognition Technologies"

Clinical Translational

• Amanda Guyer, Associate Professor, Center for Mind and Brain, College of Letters and Science: "Charting the Gateway Years: Linking Brain Connectivity Trajectories and Psychosocial Risk Profiles with Substance Use from Early Adolescence into Young Adulthood"

• Charan Ranganath, Professor, Department of Psychology, College of Letters and Science: "Individualized Transcranial Alternating Current Stimulation (tACS) to Enhance Oscillatory Activity and Cognition in Healthy Individuals and Patients with Schizophrenia"

Big Data

• Nick Anderson, Cardiff Professor of Informatics, Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, School of Medicine: "Developing Population-Scale Analytics to Evaluate Long-Term Health Care Utilization and Comorbidities Associated with Autism Spectrum Disorders"

Basic Sciences

• Evangelos (Evan) Antzoulatos, Assistant Project Scientist, Center for Neuroscience, College of Biological Sciences: "A Translational Approach to Development of Electrical Brain Stimulation for Cognitive Enhancement"

• Melissa Bauman, Assistant Professor, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, School of Medicine: "Evaluating Gene x Environment Risk Factors for Neuropsychiatric Disorders in a Rat (Rattus norvegicus) Model of Prenatal Immune Challenge to Develop Disease Prevention Strategies"

• Marie Burns, Professor, Center for Neurosciences and Department of Cell Biology and Human Anatomy: "New Technologies for Assessing Neuroinflammation in vivo"

• Katherine Ferrara, Distinguished Professor, Department of Biomedical Engineering, College of Engineering: "Development and Evaluation of Technology for Ultrasonic Neurostimulation"

• Ben Waldau, Assistant Professor, Department of Neurological Surgery, School of Medicine: "Transplantation of Induced Pluripotent Stem and Neural Progenitor Cells derived from a UC Davis Patient with Mental Illness into a Mouse Model of Endogenously Deficient Dentate neurogenesis"

• Glen Xiong, Associate Professor, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, School of Medicine: "A Pilot Study Examining Use of Asynchronic and Synchronous Telepsychiatry Consultation for Skilled Nursing Facility Residents"

• Karen Zito, Center for Neuroscience, College of Biological Sciences: "Analyzing Functional Plasticity with Synaptic Resolution Using a Novel Genetically Encoded Sensor"

BRAIN-STIM Awards

• William DeBello, Associate Professor, Center for Neuroscience, Department of Neurobiology, Physiology and Behavior, College of Biological Sciences: "Neurorealistic simulation of learned behavior"

• Paul Hagerman, Professor, Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Medicine, School of Medicine: "CLARITY and STED shed light on neurodegenerative disorders"

• Johannes Hell, Professor, Department of Pharmacology, School of Medicine: "Detection of endogenous PSD-95, α-actinin and other proteins and their interactions in live cells by fluorescent peptides"

• Kimberley McAllister, Associate Professor, Center for Neuroscience, Department of Neurobiology, Physiology and Behavior, College of Biological Sciences: "The function-al synaptome: a novel screen for molecular signatures of functional synaptic state to bridge connectomics and large-scale record-ings in mapping the brain"

• Martin Usrey, Professor and Chair of Neurobiology, Center for Neuroscience, Department of Neurobiology, Physiology and Behavior, College of Biological Sciences: "Single-neuron transcriptome classification of primate visual pathways"

Stay Tuned!

We'll continue to share future milestones through our website:

www.behavioralhealth.ucdavis.edu