



For Immediate Release:
Tuesday, May 26, 2009
N-477, 2008-09

Contact: John Beckman
212.998.6848
john.beckman@nyu.edu

COLLEGE COALITION MARKEDLY IMPROVES DETECTION AND TREATMENT OF STUDENT DEPRESSION

Outcomes of Bold New Model/Practices to Identify and Treat Thousands of College Students to Be Shared at Conference

Too many U.S. college students struggle with depression and remain unseen by college counseling services. According to the National College Health Association, as many as 2.35 million college students may experience serious depression during their college years, and a recent AP-mtvU poll of over 2,200 college students found 85 percent reported feeling stressed and 13 percent showed signs of being at risk for at least mild depression. Yet while virtually every four-year institution offers counseling services to their students, research shows that most students who commit suicide have never visited their campus mental health clinic.

The National College Depression Partnership (NCDP) was established in 2006 among 20 colleges and universities to respond to this challenge by universally screening students for depression and thoughts of self-harm when they seek routine health services, applying rapid and effective treatment strategies, measuring clinical recovery rates, and maintaining a safety net for at risk students.

At the American College Health Association meeting on May 28, 2009 in San Francisco, representatives of the partnership will announce that since the establishment of NCDP's protocols over 100,000 students have been screened for depression in primary care campus health settings, and over 2000 students have been treated for depression who might otherwise have gone untreated or been lost to follow-up. Results to be unveiled also indicate that clinical and functional recovery outcomes of students treated in this model meet or exceed national community norms for the treatment of depression. Over 90% of students with clinical depression and significantly impaired function initiated evidence-based treatment within 4 weeks of initial identification and almost 50% of them reported normal or near-normal return to function after only 12 weeks of treatment. This percentage is almost twice that of patients who recover their function in a similar time frame receiving usual community based care.

Henry Chung, M.D., National Project Director of the NCDP and Associate Vice President of Student Health at New York University, said, “ The gap between what is known about evidence-based treatment for depression and the lack of consistent application of such care is problematic in real world settings; this is the first demonstration of the effectiveness of the collaborative care model for depression in higher education settings with rapid implementation by partner institutions using an innovative and exciting shared learning approach that actively breaks down campus silos so that we can better serve students. College health and counseling services have increasingly taken the view that addressing the health and mental health needs of students is essential to the academic success. NCDP participating institutions have learned and disseminated valuable lessons about increasing quality of care, implementing measurable improvements, and maximizing existing resources using peer and national benchmarking efforts.”

Dr. Jan Collins-Eaglin, Director of Counseling at Michigan State University (MSU), an NCDP participant, said. “The public health impact of this program is enormous. Screening in primary care has given us access to more students and expanded our ability to reach students. At MSU, the program has fostered a rich discourse between students and the primary care, counseling, and psychiatric staff, who now offer treatment options more consistent with student preference. The treatment provided is culturally competent, accessible, and allows for resources to be utilized strategically in helping students.”

With the help of national experts on depression and healthcare improvement, NCDP partnering institutions have developed and implemented innovative, award-winning systematic treatment and rigorous follow-up reassessment protocols through a shared year long learning model developed for campus medical and counseling professionals. Wary of adding high cost programs in these tough economic times, health administrators from the NCDP partners have embraced this program because it maximizes existing resources. The increased collaboration between primary care, counseling, and student affairs departments has also helped schools better identify and help college students most vulnerable to slipping through the cracks, and particularly those from groups that typically underutilize counseling services.

The National College Depression Partnership will be seeking to expand its efforts through the development of a national Collaborative Action Network (NCDP-CAN) offering the opportunity for more colleges and universities to join and implement the NCDP methods and protocols on their campuses. On July 22nd, a free webinar will be offered from 12:00 – 1:30 pm to those interested in learning more about this high-impact program. For further information, contact Michael Klein, Ph.D. National Co-Project Director of the NCDP at michael.klein@nyu.edu , or register directly at www.nyu.edu/ncdp.

Since 2008, The NCDP and the NCDP-CAN have been generously supported by the Charles Engelhard Foundation. The Regional College Breakthrough Series – Depression (CBS-D) Pilot from 2006-2008 was supported by the Aetna Foundation, the New York Community Trust, the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, and the American Psychiatric Institute of Research and Education.

#

Partner Institutions

(2008-2009)

- Baruch College/CUNY*
- Bowling Green State University
- Case Western Reserve University
- Columbia University
- Louisiana State University
- Michigan State University
- New York University*
- Penn State – Altoona
- Princeton*
- Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
- Saint Lawrence University*
- Sarah Lawrence College
- School of the Art Institute of Chicago
- Skidmore College
- Texas Christian University
- The Evergreen State College
- The New School
- Tufts University
- University of Arizona
- University of California, LA

CBS-D Pilot Institutions

(2006-2007)

- Cornell University
- Hunter College/CUNY
- Northeastern University