

OUR IDENTITIES AS PSYCHIATRISTS: SUBSPECIALTY AND ROLE DIVERSITY IN CULTURAL CONTEXTS

G. Eric Jarvis, MD
McGill University
Montreal, Quebec, Canada

Sanya Virani, MBBS, MPH
Alpert Medical School of Brown University
Providence, RI, USA

Victor Pereira-Sanchez, MD, PhD
Columbia University
New York, NY, USA

Sarah El Halabi MD, MS
New York Medical College, Westchester Medical Center
Valhalla, NY, USA

Bernadette Mdawar, MD
University of Toronto
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Background: Subspecialty psychiatrists gain expertise in specific skills which include acting as culture brokers to medical and surgical teams, advocating for vulnerable populations, and acting as expert witnesses for competency and custody evaluations etc. In doing so, they not only establish their identities as health providers but also invoke the cultural nuances of their subspecialty training in relation to the patients they evaluate and the colleagues they assist.

Objectives: We aim to create a space for constructive dialogue about professional identities and cultures in psychiatry and explore the challenges and opportunities that come with collaboration across medical specialties and within subgroups of psychiatrists. Participants will learn from the experience of peers and be able to bring their own insights and suggestions.

Methods: The organizer, a cultural psychiatrist, will present a clinical case highlighting transcultural issues for discussion by individual facilitators, all of whom have different subspecialty interests and training (addiction, child and adolescent, consult-liaison, forensic, geriatric psychiatry, and research). Importantly, the case narrative will also point out the impacts of debilities and cultural barriers encountered by the patient and their immediate family.

Every facilitator will then engage the audience in small group discussions to brainstorm creative ideas and solutions for guiding the next steps in the simulated management of the case. In the

end, the actual course of action taken by multidisciplinary providers will be revealed in a step-by-step fashion. Lessons learned will be summarized.

Potential outcomes: The discussions will bring to the fore personal reflections and lay the foundations for further collaboration among interested participants.

Implications: This workshop will assist early- and mid-career psychiatrists, allied mental health professionals, and researchers to interact and reflect on how culture is woven into their work between professionals and patients and among professionals from different specialties (cultures) of psychiatry and medicine.

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to:

1. Appreciate the range of subspecialty work and scope of individual roles (expert witness, advocate, researcher/scientist etc.) that psychiatrists play to serve culturally diverse patient populations.
2. Discuss the challenges faced by cross-specialty collaborators in clinical and research work and opportunities for professional growth through such interactions.