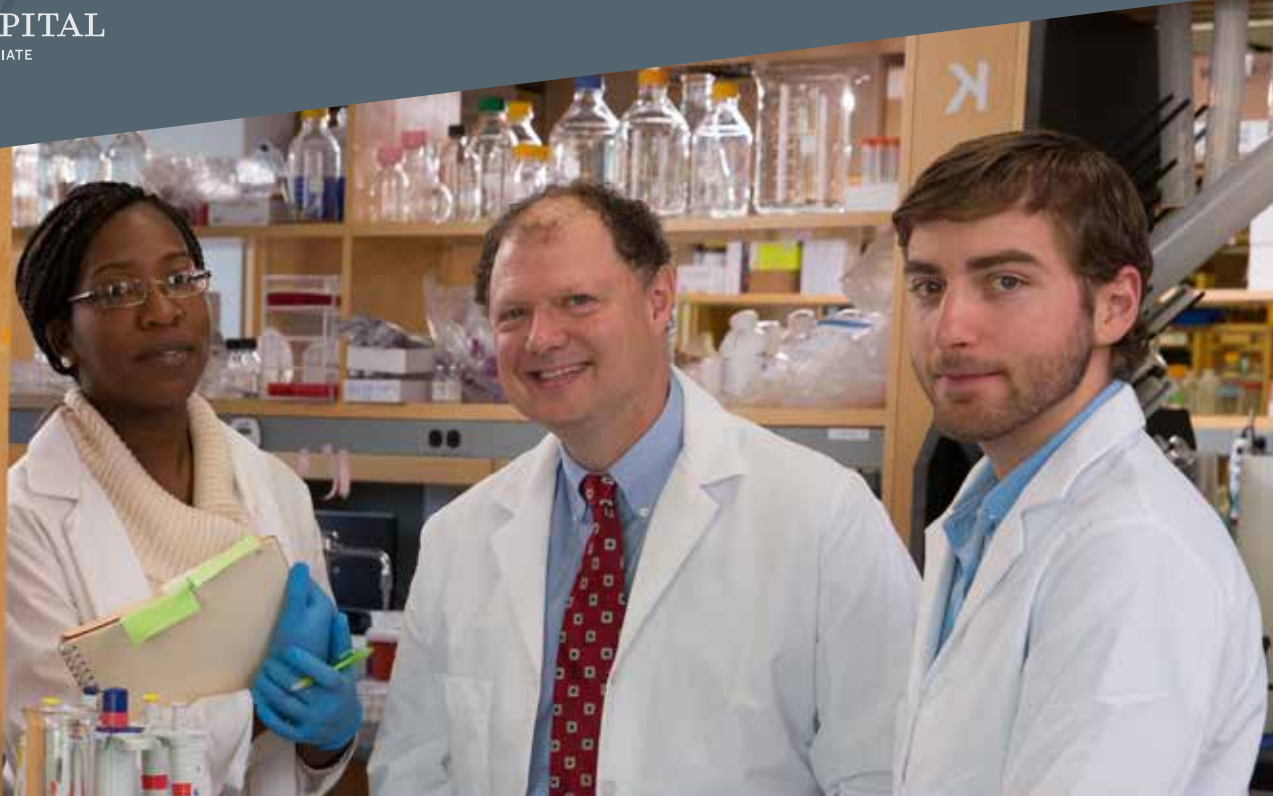


# PERSPECTIVES



McLean HOSPITAL  
HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL AFFILIATE



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## Improving Lives Through Innovative Translational Research

Scientists at McLean Hospital are gaining more insight into the causes of mental illness, neuropsychiatric disorders, and neurodevelopmental disorders by using cutting-edge approaches and technology to manipulate pathways and circuits in the brains of animals that produce behaviors similar to humans.

"McLean is at the forefront of building new treatments and interventions based on our improved biological understanding of the brain. We believe that approaches targeting underlying molecules, cells, circuits, and behavior can be successfully translated more rapidly into clinical care," said Kerry J. Ressler, MD, PhD, McLean's chief scientific officer and the chief of the Division of Depression and Anxiety.

Also the director of the Neurobiology of Fear Laboratory, Ressler's work focuses on translational research bridging molecular neurobiology in animal models with human genetic research in emotion, particularly fear and anxiety disorders. For example, an important observation made in recent years suggests that trauma exposure in the past is associated with increased risk for the onset of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

"New treatment approaches based on our discoveries may inhibit the emotional component of fear memory consolidation without affecting the explicit memory formation," noted Ressler. "What's exciting is that such an approach could prevent the severe emotional reactions that could lead to later development of PTSD."

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# The Truth About Borderline Personality Disorder

Borderline personality disorder (BPD), a complex mental illness often characterized by unstable moods, behaviors, and relationships, has historically been viewed by clinicians as untreatable. An April 2015 article in *The New York Times* referred to BPD as “an intractable condition,” which is misinformation that persists about the disorder according to John G. Gunderson, MD, director of McLean’s Personality and Psychosocial Research Program and developer of the empirically-validated therapy general psychiatric management (GPM).

“Most psychiatrists actively avoid treating borderline patients and even avoid giving them this diagnosis because they think it’s so pejorative,” said Gunderson. “When the biological paradigm took over psychiatry in the 1990s, the training of most psychiatrists focused on treatment with medication for what we thought to be chemical imbalances. Because no medication has ever been shown to be particularly effective for BPD, psychiatry turned its back on this disorder, even when it was proven that these patients can be treated quite effectively.”

When dialectical behavior therapy (DBT)—a specific type of cognitive behavioral psychotherapy developed in the late 1980s—proved to be effective in treating BPD, “that certainly contradicted the prevailing myth that this was a disorder of people who were untreatable. What persists is that they’re not very treatable with medications, and that’s

the part which unfortunately many psychiatrists have held on to,” said Gunderson.

Not only is BPD treatable it has a pretty good prognosis. “What’s remarkable,” Gunderson pointed out, “is that so few clinicians are trained to treat these patients.”

To address this problem, McLean launched the BPD Training Institute in 2013, thanks to philanthropic support. The institute teaches GPM and mentalization-based treatment (MBT), which focuses on helping people to differentiate and separate their own thoughts and feelings from those around them. During the past three years, about 30 McLean-sponsored GPM workshops have been conducted for clinicians and residents at different hospitals and universities throughout the country. Workshops provide interactive training exercises as well as a wide range of materials that clinicians and residents can bring back to their organizations.

Lois W. Choi-Kain, MEd, MD, director of McLean Gunderson, an intensive, specialized residential program for adult women with severe personality disorders named after its founder, directs GPM training programs. Choi-Kain said that the most common response from clinicians who attend the workshops is that they are “more hopeful and clearer about what they can do at the entry level.”



# Fiction

“Part of the stigma is that clinicians would treat people with BPD with methods that worked for other disorders, and when those treatments didn’t work they blamed the patient and called the patient untreatable,” said Choi-Kain. “A more general approach like GPM teaches us that the first step is identifying BPD as something that is diagnosable. GPM is an organizational framework with which clinicians can approach these very complex patients.”

This year, Gunderson and his colleagues will conduct GPM workshops to train clinician-educators at Northwestern University in Chicago and Sheppard Pratt Hospital in Baltimore. Plans are underway for such a workshop to be given in 2017 at UCLA. All of these trainings are available free of charge to participants.

“An increasing number of institutions are showing interest in GPM and learning how to better address and treat this disorder, which we hope will raise more awareness and increase much-needed resources in addressing BPD,” said Choi-Kain, pointing out that Maine Medical Center is currently adopting the GPM framework into its teaching curriculum and establishing it as a standard of care across its affiliated mental health clinics. The BPD Training Institute is also working with clinicians in primary care and college mental health settings to implement the GPM framework and teach free courses throughout communities in Greater Boston, New York City, and the Northeast.



## Ranked #1 for More Than a Decade

McLean Hospital, the largest psychiatric affiliate of Harvard Medical School, is proud to be ranked the #1 freestanding psychiatric hospital in the United States by *U.S. News & World Report*.

In their own words, our patients **tell you** why we have earned this honor annually for more than a decade.

*“As a military veteran and helping professional (social worker) also coping with the aftermath of work-related trauma, I was treated with compassion, respect, and dignity not only for my worth as a patient, but my level of awareness as a clinician. I found that the programs offer clients a unique vantage point by which to access specialized care. I was honored to partake in the process and count the experience among many I will always treasure.”*

– Patient treated for two weeks at the Hill Center for Women

*“My family appreciates all of the kind, caring attention [of the staff], their exceptional devotion, and their staunch support of our dear and precious daughter during a tremendously and extremely stressful and difficult time. It’s not an exaggeration that the McLean staff literally saved her life.”*

– Parent of a patient treated for several weeks at McLean 3East, an adolescent DBT program

*“The care that my aunt received could not have been better. The staff was caring and compassionate and I trusted that, no matter what, they were going to try everything possible to bring my aunt out of her deep depression. After 15 days, [my aunt] was acting more like herself—she had her color back, vibrancy in her step, and most of all: her smile had returned. Since coming home, she has continued to do well and credits the amazing staff at McLean for giving her her life back. McLean saved her life.”*

– A family member of a patient treated for several weeks in McLean’s geriatric psychiatry program

in their words

M C L E A N   A N N U A L   G A L A

# McLean Announces \$100 Million Campaign and Honors Former Congressman Patrick J. Kennedy



***“McLean is the number one facility in the world for delivering mental health and substance use disorder care, and it is because it has the best people in positions of leadership that attract the best clinicians and the best scientists.”***

During the McLean annual dinner held in October 2015, the hospital publicly announced its \$100 million Campaign for McLean Hospital. The largest and most ambitious in the hospital’s history, this comprehensive fundraising effort will advance the hospital’s mission to improve the lives of individuals and families affected by psychiatric illness.

According to Campaign Co-Chair and former Chair of McLean’s Board of Trustees Kathleen Feldstein, PhD, the hospital has been in the leadership phase of the campaign since 2012, building momentum by engaging McLean’s closest supporters.

“The response has been phenomenal,” said Feldstein. “As of October 23, the Campaign for McLean Hospital is more than 80 percent of the way to its goal, having raised \$85 million.”\*

The campaign is currently making strategic investments in the future of McLean. The primary thrust of the effort has been to establish seven Centers of Excellence:

- Psychotic Disorders
- Depression and Anxiety Disorders
- Substance Use Disorders
- Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
- Geriatric Psychiatry
- Women’s Mental Health
- Basic Neuroscience

In addition, the Campaign for McLean Hospital seeks resources to attract and support world-class leaders, to advance research, and to optimize patient outcomes.

“We are encouraged by the extraordinary success of this campaign,” said McLean President and Psychiatrist in Chief Scott L. Rauch, MD. “Thanks to our generous community of donors, we have launched all seven of our Centers of Excellence, welcomed outstanding new talent, seeded new clinical programs, supported novel research, and made tremendous strides in our strategic direction. The campaign goal is within reach and meeting it will enable us to more fully realize our vision of improved access to care and accelerated discovery leading, one day, to prevention and cures.”

The gala event also marked the presentation of the prestigious McLean Award to former Rhode Island Congressman Patrick J. Kennedy. Recognized for his ardent advocacy for mental health parity, Kennedy spoke with both great candor and humility about his own struggles with addiction and mental illness before graciously accepting the award. He thanked the staff and leadership of McLean for all that they do for the cause and spoke with enthusiasm about the progress of the Campaign for McLean Hospital.



# #MHSuperheroes

“McLean is the number one facility in the world for delivering mental health and substance use disorder care, and it is because it has the best people in positions of leadership that attract the best clinicians and the best scientists,” Kennedy said. “The notion that you’ve been able to raise \$85 million, that’s a lot of money anyway, but in mental health?! What a testament to changing times that you are now approaching \$100 million for this campaign.”

A pioneer in mental health policy and advocacy, Kennedy served Rhode Island’s First Congressional District for 16 years. During his time on Capitol Hill, Kennedy was the author and chief sponsor of the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act—groundbreaking legislation that guaranteed, for the first time in history, equal access to mental health and addiction services.

Upon leaving Congress in 2011, Kennedy helped form two innovative organizations: One Mind for Research and The Kennedy Forum on Community Mental Health.

“From Capitol Hill and beyond, Patrick Kennedy has truly dedicated himself to the important issues of mental health and addiction,” said Rauch. “During his tenure in Congress, Patrick was able to affect real change in increasing access to mental health services, and since leaving Congress he has kept his promise to continue advocating for mental health and pushing for investment in brain research. We are very proud to present him with the McLean Award.”

## Mental Health Superheroes Reach Thousands

Eliminating the stigma associated with mental illness, which often leads to prejudice and discrimination from society, family members, friends, and employers, is a cornerstone of McLean’s mission. The hospital’s recent social media campaign made great strides in combating stigma by educating the public, engaging individuals in conversation, and advocating on behalf of individuals and families affected by psychiatric illness.

McLean’s Mental Health Superhero campaign, which ran from October 31 until November 20, 2015, engaged the public via Facebook and Twitter, asking them to answer the question ‘How are you a mental health superhero?’ Sharing photos of real life mental health superheroes along with their stories, and using the hashtag ‘MHSuperhero’ to create social media buzz, McLean’s posts reached an impressive audience of nearly 100,000 people per week.

“Social media is helping to amplify our advocacy efforts by allowing us to reach more people, in more places, in more creative ways, and more quickly than ever before,” explained Director of Public Affairs and Communications Adriana Bobinchock. “The success of this campaign hinged on the willingness of others to freely share their own experiences with mental illness towards the goal of reducing stigma. By taking a risk and sharing their stories, everyone who participated in our campaign has paved the way for others to feel more comfortable starting a conversation about their own mental health struggles. Hopefully we’ve shown that stigma should never stand in the way of people asking for help or seeking the treatment that they need.”

McLean is already working on additional high-profile campaigns for 2016. To learn more, follow the hospital on Facebook and Twitter.



\* As this issue of Perspectives was going to press, the hospital announced that since the annual dinner, the Campaign for McLean Hospital continued to build momentum with \$94 million contributed as of December 31, 2015.

# Global Reach

## New Series of Webinars Provides Greater Access to McLean Experts

Thanks to an anonymous gift, McLean Hospital launched the Borderline Personality Disorder Patient and Family Education Initiative in 2015, providing interactive and on-demand resources to support individuals and families affected by borderline personality disorder (BPD).

“A family who desired additional information about how they could be more helpful in their daughter’s treatment and recovery gave McLean a generous gift with the hope that we would be able to offer our expertise to families and patients in managing common problems and challenges,” said Christopher M. Palmer, MD, director of Postgraduate and Continuing Education.

The series, which began in October, consists of original, clinician-led webinars that provide information specific to living with and helping someone with BPD. The first webinar, “Common Questions About BPD,” was presented by Lois W. Choi-Kain, MEd, MD, director of McLean Gunderson, an intensive, residential treatment program for adult women living with BPD.

The second webinar, “The Application of Mindfulness and the Treatment of BPD,” was presented in November by Blaise Aguirre, MD, medical director of the dialectical behavior therapy (DBT) program for adolescents and young adults known as McLean 3East. The presentation was viewed by people from around the world including participants from as far away as Australia.



“The participant list continues to grow each month, with people from all over the world signing up to be notified of future webinars,” noted Dawn Sugarman, PhD, associate director of the initiative. “They’re free and available to the public, so anybody can participate in a live webinar. Users may also view past presentations archived on the McLean website.”

Palmer added that his staff continues to circulate information about the webinars to mental health providers and organizations, as well as to continuing education conferences.

“We’re trying to reach as many people as we can and hope to start an electronic newsletter over the next several months that will provide updates about future webinars and helpful information,” he said. “It’s another way to continue the engagement and provide an additional, important resource for patients and families.”

**To learn more about the initiative, register for future webinars, and view archived sessions, visit [mcleanhospital.org/bpdinitiative](http://mcleanhospital.org/bpdinitiative).**

## Crossing Borders: McLean and the Chinese Society of Psychiatry Forge Collaboration

In October 2015, researchers from McLean Hospital, Harvard Medical School, and the Chinese Society of Psychiatry convened on McLean’s Belmont campus, marking the first meeting of the new McLean Hospital-Chinese Society of Psychiatry Initiative in Psychiatry (MCIP). Established to foster collaborations among clinician-investigators specializing in major psychotic and mood disorders and the neurodevelopmental aspects of mental illness, this initial conference focused specifically on and included presentations regarding bipolar and psychotic disorders as well as child and adolescent psychiatry.



## Our Mission

McLean Hospital is dedicated to improving the lives of people and families affected by psychiatric illness.

McLean pursues this mission by:

- Providing the highest quality compassionate, specialized and effective clinical care, in partnership with those whom we serve;
- Conducting state-of-the-art scientific investigation to maximize discovery and accelerate translation of findings towards achieving prevention and cures;
- Training the next generation of leaders in psychiatry, mental health and neuroscience;
- Providing public education to facilitate enlightened policy and eliminate stigma.

[mcleanhospital.org](http://mcleanhospital.org)



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McLean Hospital



McLean Hospital

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## Innovative Research (CONTINUED FROM COVER)

William Carlezon, PhD, chief of McLean's Division of Basic Neuroscience and the director of the Behavioral Genetics Laboratory, pointed out that putting more emphasis on how the brain works rather than studying how drugs work has led to major breakthroughs in our comprehension of psychiatric illness.

"We now have a better understanding of how experience affects the brain, being able to see how the brain of an animal that has been exposed to stress differs from that of one that has not," said Carlezon. "This approach provides an idea of what's actually wrong in the brain, allowing us to then work on developing fixes for the condition. Eventually, we want to be able to focus our research on preventing these illnesses altogether."

Carlezon's laboratory, which focuses on the neurobiology of depression and addiction, was the first to report that a class of drugs called kappa-opioid receptor (KOR) antagonists has antidepressant, anti-anxiety, and anti-stress effects in behavioral tests. This discovery, which has now been confirmed and extended by his lab and many others, led to the filing of a patent and advanced clinical trials. Being able to put this knowledge to use, said Carlezon, is one example of the translational research being done at McLean that he hopes will someday have a worldwide impact in treating mental illness.

Just down the hall from Carlezon, Christopher Cowan, PhD, directs the Integrative Neurobiology Laboratory, which is focused on understanding neuropsychiatric and neurodevelopmental disorders such as autism, drug addiction, and mood disorders. This lab uses cutting-edge approaches to study the genes and neurons that underlie mental illness-associated behaviors.

"Scientists are also increasingly looking at how environment and early life experiences play a role in mental illness," said Cowan, "While genetics can contribute to the risk of developing a disorder, so can epigenetics, which is another form of cell biology that regulates a gene by modifying the surrounding genomic landscape and making those genes more or less active. These epigenetic changes can be long-lasting, and in some cases, passed on to the individual's offspring."

"Our findings and the progress in our understanding of the brain is leading to increased optimism in the field," said Ressler.

***"McLean is at the forefront of building new treatments and interventions based on our new biological understanding of the brain."***

## On the Road

McLean Hospital clinicians and staff participate in more than 50 conferences each year and look forward to networking and connecting with colleagues from around the country. This year, members of the hospital staff will travel from Massachusetts to California and many places in between. If you plan to attend any of the same conferences, please be sure to stop by the exhibit hall and say hello.

**New York Society of Addiction Medicine**

February 5-6, 2016  
Crowne Plaza-Times Square  
New York City, NY

**Healing Together Conference**

February 5-7, 2016  
Wyndham Lake Buena Vista  
Orlando, FL

**Nevada Psychiatric Association  
19th Annual Psychopharmacology Update**

February 10-13, 2016  
Bally's Las Vegas Hotel & Casino  
Las Vegas, NV

**Georgia Psychiatric Physicians Association**

February 12-13, 2016  
The Ritz-Carlton, Buckhead  
Atlanta, GA

**Federation for Children with  
Special Needs: Visions of  
Community**

March 5, 2016  
Seaport World Trade Center  
Boston, MA

**National Association of  
Psychiatric Health Systems**

March 14-16, 2016  
Mandarin Oriental  
Washington, DC

**Anxiety and Depression  
Association of America**

March 31-April 3, 2016  
Philadelphia Marriott Downtown  
Philadelphia, PA

**International Society for the Study of  
Trauma and Dissociation Annual Meeting**

April 2-4, 2016  
Parc 55 Hotel  
San Francisco, CA

**Florida Psychiatric Society**

April 8-10, 2016  
Wyndham Grand Orlando Resort  
Orlando, FL

**American Society of Addiction Medicine**

April 14-17, 2016  
Hilton Baltimore  
Baltimore, MD

**North American Society for the Study  
of Personality Disorders**

April 16-17, 2016  
New York Academy of Sciences  
New York City, NY

**ICED International Conference on Eating  
Disorders: The Academy for Eating  
Disorders**

May 5-7, 2016  
Hyatt Regency  
San Francisco, CA

**McLean Hospital Addictions 2016**

May 6-7, 2016  
Boston Marriott Cambridge Hotel  
Cambridge, MA

**MEDA's Annual National Conference:  
Multi-Service Eating Disorders Association**

May 13-14, 2016  
Boston Marriott Newton  
Newton, MA

**National Association of Addiction  
Treatment Providers**

May 15-17, 2016  
Marriott Harbor Beach  
Fort Lauderdale, FL

**McLean Hospital Psychiatry in 2016**

June 2-4, 2016  
Fairmont Copley Plaza  
Boston, MA

**West Coast Symposium on  
Addictive Disorders**

June 2-5, 2016  
La Quinta Resort and Club  
La Quinta, CA

**CORE Conference: Clinical Overview  
of the Recovery Experience**

July 10-11, 2016  
Omni Amelia Island  
Amelia Island, FL

**Robb Report Health and  
Wellness Summit**

July 21-24, 2016  
Montage Deer Valley Resort & Spa  
Deer Valley, UT

