

## Editor's pick

The journey that culminated in this issue of *wjm* began in 1994 when Henry Chung returned to the Lower East Side of Manhattan to become Deputy Director of Psychiatry at Gouverneur Diagnostic and Treatment Center. A successful outpatient model for treating Asian Americans had been developed at Gouverneur using bilingual and bicultural staff and culturally competent models of care. Despite providing such culturally sensitive primary care, this special focus unit still had the most severely ill patients who were the most likely to be in crisis on initial presentation and have the longest delays in seeking care. Some mental disorders had gone unnoticed or untreated by primary care providers. When the disorders were recognized and a referral made to a mental health specialist, patients rarely followed-up. Patient and community stigma were creating a formidable barrier to seeking early intervention and treatment even when culturally competent service were available.

Henry and Mack Lipkin, Chief of Primary Care Internal Medicine at New York University, discussed the opportunities that existed in primary care settings to help with early diagnosis and treatment of mental disorders. They decided that their primary goal would be to train mental health and primary care providers to practice a new approach to patients and an effective way of working together with them.

When Henry became Medical Director of the Charles B Wang Community Health Center in 1996, he was able to develop such a model with the support of Mack;

Ernesto Ferran, Jr, former Director of Psychiatry at Gouverneur; and many of the contributors to this issue. The group decided to document the lessons learned about the clinical approach to treating behavioral health problems of Asians in the primary care setting. Accomplishing this goal required the expertise of an editor to hone the clinical pearls into a cogent format that was supported as much as possible by evidence while maintaining its cultural relevance. Elizabeth Kramer brought her experience in studying and writing about the needs of immigrant communities in the United States to this role.

Many people helped us along the way. We are grateful to our contributors; the staff of Charles B Wang Community Health Center, especially Fanny Chin, Maggie Wong, Allison Truong, Susan Seto-Yee, Alan Tso, Jane Eng, Fumi Raith, DeYoung Chan, Annette Ramirez, and Jenny Chau Warner, for everything from errands and photographs to their all important emotional support; and to Andrew Delp, Elizabeth Lin, and Albert Yu for reviews of early drafts.

Special thanks to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, especially Paul Tarini, Polly Seitz, and Constance Pechura, for making this issue possible; and to the editorial staff of *wjm* for their support.

We hope that readers find this issue helpful in improving their skills in behavioral health management for Asians and Asian Americans.

Henry Chung, Elizabeth J Kramer, and Mack Lipkin  
Guest editors