

Foreword

Exciting Times



Jack Ende, MD, MACP
Consulting Editor

Primary care physicians and other practitioners hardly need to be convinced of the importance of psychiatry in their practices. Psychiatric disorders are common in primary care. These disorders may underlie or contribute to the problems patients bring to their internists and family physicians. Many patients are reluctant to be referred to a mental health professional, or as our Guest Editor, Leo Sher, points out in his Preface, mental health professionals may not be available. Not surprisingly, therefore, knowledge of psychiatric disorders and treatment of the same have come to be considered core knowledge for internists and family physicians. Psychiatric topics are included in continuing medical education programs for office-based and hospital-based physicians. They are part of the curriculum and requirements for internal medicine and family medicine residency training. At long last, we are finally moving away from the silo model of illness being either somatic or psychiatric. Oftentimes it is both. All this means is that primary care providers need to be able to recognize psychiatric disorders in their practice and, in many cases, manage these disorders, and certainly, they need to know when to refer.

The current issue of *Medical Clinics of North America*, "Management of Psychiatric Disorders and Suicidal Behavior in the Twenty-First Century," is a wonderful resource for primary care providers. Not only does it provide up-to-date information about some of the most important psychiatric disorders we see in our practices but also it provides information about intriguing new discoveries in psychiatry, such as the role of inflammation in depression, the importance of the microbiome in affective disorders, and the promising role that NMDA receptors play in psychiatric disorders and how that may lead to pharmacologic strategies for autism and perhaps also dementia.

Psychiatry in the twenty-first century is as exciting as any field in medicine. I trust this issue will further your knowledge of psychiatry and its importance in primary care practice.

Jack Ende, MD, MACP
Perelman School of Medicine of the
University of Pennsylvania
5033 West Gates Pavilion
3400 Spruce Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104, USA

E-mail address:
jack.ende@penmedicine.upenn.edu