



VCU
School of Medicine

Department of Psychiatry Grand Rounds

Every Friday 12:00pm– 1 pm

October 2026

October 2nd, 2026

NICU Psychology: Supporting Infants, Parents, and the Parent-Infant Relationship

Presenter: Allison Williams, PhD LCP LCP Clinical Psychologist Asst. Professor Divisions of Psychiatry and Neonatal Medicine Affiliate Faculty VCU Institute for Women's Health

Introducer: Robert Findling, MD

Learning Objectives:

At the end of the presentation, participants will be able to:

- Describe the role and scope of practice of psychologists within the NICU and their contributions to interdisciplinary neonatal care.
 - Recognize the unique mental health challenges experienced by NICU mother-infant dyads, including postpartum depression, anxiety, traumatic stress, and PTSD.
 - Identify evidence-based assessment and psychotherapeutic interventions used to support maternal mental health during and after a NICU hospitalization.
 - Discuss the developmental and socioemotional needs of NICU infants and review psychology-informed interventions that promote infant well-being and parent-infant attachment.
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October 9th, 2026

Progress in the discovery of genetic variation of major impact for schizophrenia and bipolar disorder

Presenter: Benjamin Neale, Ph.D. Associate Professor Analytic and Translational Genetics Unit Massachusetts General Hospital

Introducer: Michael Neale, PhD

Learning Objectives:

At the end of the presentation, participants will be able to:

- Describe the contribution of rare, large-effect protein-coding variants to the etiology of schizophrenia and bipolar disorder, in the context of the broader allelic spectrum from common polygenic risk to rare highly penetrant variants.
- Identify the specific genes currently implicated by large-scale exome sequencing studies in schizophrenia (e.g., SETD1A, SRRM2, AKAP11), and compare the extent to which analogous rare coding-variant signals have been established in bipolar disorder.
- Explain the methodological approaches used to detect and validate rare coding variant associations in psychiatric disease — including case-control exome/genome sequencing and large consortium-based meta-analyses (e.g., SCHEMA, PGC) — and the sample size and statistical power challenges specific to rare variant discovery.
- Discuss the clinical and translational implications of rare coding variant findings for risk stratification, and future therapeutic target identification in patients with schizophrenia or bipolar disorder.

October 16th, 2026

Budding Targets in Psychiatry: Cannabinoid Therapeutics and the Endocannabinoid System

Presenter: Aron H. Lichtman, Ph.D. Professor, Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology VCU School of Medicine (SOM)

Introducer: James Levenson, MD

Learning Objectives:

At the end of the presentation, participants will be able to:

- Identify FDA-approved cannabinoid-based medications and their clinical indications.
 - Describe the potential adverse effects of cannabis and cannabinoid-based drugs.
 - Evaluate the potential advantages and disadvantages of cannabinoid-based drugs for therapeutic use.
 - Describe the therapeutic potential of the major components of the endocannabinoid system.
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October 23rd, 2026

That was Then, This is Now: Navigating the Past, Present, and Future of Managing Agitation in Dementia

Presenter: Ericka L. Crouse, PharmD, BCPP, BCGP, FASHP, FASCP, FAAPP

Introducer: Katie Smithwick, Pharm.D., BCPP

Learning Objectives:

At the end of the presentation, participants will be able to:

- 1. Summarize the data behind the black box warning on antipsychotics in dementia-related psychosis
 - 2. Compare guideline recommendations for pharmacotherapy of behavioral disturbances in dementia and when to consider gradual dose reductions or treatment discontinuation
 - 3. Evaluate the evidence leading to FDA drug approvals of brexpiprazole and dextromethorphan/bupropion for agitation in dementia
 - 4. List ongoing drug investigations for agitation or dementia-related psychosis.
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October 30th, 2026

Transforming Refractory Depression Care: Evidence and Launch of Our Esketamine Clinic

Presenter: Jason Burton, MD

Introducer: John Beyer, MD

Learning Objectives:

At the end of the presentation, participants will be able to:

- Mechanism & Evidence: Review esketamine's mechanism of action and efficacy in treatment-resistant depression and acute suicidality.
 - Patient Selection: Apply inclusion, exclusion, and contraindication criteria to identify eligible candidates.
 - Clinic Workflow: Explain the referral process and workflow for our new clinic.
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Please note the important updates about the Fall Semester (2022) Psychiatry Grand Rounds. The Departmental Grand Rounds Program will continue in an **online-only format**, and all presentations will take place via **Zoom web-conferencing**. Due to limits on virtual meeting capacity, each week, the faculty, staff, housestaff, trainees, and students on the Grand Rounds email list will be able to join our web conference for Grand Rounds at the following recurring Zoom link (with password embedded):

Virginia Commonwealth University is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. If special accommodations are needed, please contact Brittany Silk at Brittany.Silk@vcuhealth.org

VCU Health designates this live activity for a maximum of 1.25 **AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™**. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

VCU Health Continuing Education designates this activity for a maximum of 1.25 ANCC contact hours. Nurses should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.



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In support of improving patient care, VCU Health is jointly accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE), and the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), to provide continuing education for the healthcare team.

1.25 CE credits will be awarded for psychologists attending the entire program. Continuing Education (CE) credits for psychologists are provided through the co-sponsorship of the American Psychological Association (APA) Office of Continuing Education in Psychology (CEP). The APA CEP Office maintains responsibly for the content of the programs.



As a Jointly Accredited Organization, VCU Health is approved to offer social work continuing education by the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) Approved Continuing Education (ACE) program. Organizations, not individual courses, are approved under this program. State and provincial regulatory boards have the final authority to determine whether an individual course may be accepted for continuing education credit. VCU Health maintains responsibility for this course.



IPCE CREDIT™

Social workers completing this course receive 1.25 continuing education credits. This activity was planned by and for the healthcare team, and learners will receive 1.25 Interprofessional Continuing Education (IPCE) credit for learning and change.