

SOUTHWESTERN NEWS

Media Contact: Ione Echeverria
214-648-3404

ione.echeverria@utsouthwestern.edu

DIANNE CASH'S GIFT BENEFITS CLINICAL PSYCHIATRY PROGRAMS AT UT SOUTHWESTERN

DALLAS – Dec. 21, 2001 – Recognizing a need to strengthen programs that combat mental illness, Dianne T. Cash has donated \$100,000 for psychiatric treatment and research programs at UT Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas.

The gift, made through Southwestern Medical Foundation, will be used in part to help fund the computerization of a statewide psychiatric research program based at UT Southwestern that has enabled development and implementation of medication guidelines for treating schizophrenia, bipolar disorders and major depression.

The next goal of the Texas Medication Algorithm Project (TMAP), which involves the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation and four other Texas medical schools, is the computerization of these guidelines to make them easily accessible to physicians throughout the state.

Cash, a Dallasite who has been involved in the Junior League of Dallas and Crystal Charity Ball and also resides in Santa Fe, N.M., said psychiatry is a field that is often overlooked for research support.

"This is unfortunate, since millions of individuals suffer from mental illness and often don't even know where to go for help," she said. "Under Dr. Kenneth Altshuler's directorship, I am certain that this program will help people receive better-designed treatment programs and medications more effectively."

Altshuler, professor and former chairman of psychiatry at UT Southwestern, conceived the idea for TMAP, and Dr. John Rush, vice chairman for research in psychiatry, designed and implemented the treatment protocols.

Altshuler said integrating the algorithms into a computer program will enable doctors to access the software on demand and reduce their tasks. Dr. Madhukar Trivedi, an associate

(MORE)

CASH'S GIFT - 2

professor of psychiatry who was a team leader in TMAP, will lead implementation of the computerized model, called CompTMAP.

“Dianne is an intelligent, warm and kindhearted individual,” Altshuler said. “She was eager to support our computer project, for which we have great hopes in improving the quality of care for many of Texas’ most needy and most long-suffering citizens.”

An algorithm is a systematic method or formula used in problem solving. The TMAP algorithms represent a methodology to decide the most effective use of medication in three disorders by systematizing decisions, steps within decisions and the factors influencing those decisions.

“The TMAP study has created a great deal of interest, and CompTMAP has the potential to vastly improve treatment outcomes for people who suffer from severe and persistent mental illness,” said Altshuler.

###

This news release is available on our World Wide Web home page at
http://www.utsouthwestern.edu/home_pages/news/

To automatically receive news releases from UT Southwestern via e-mail, send a message to
UTSWNEWS-REQUEST@listserv.swmed.edu. Leave the subject line blank and in the text box, type
SUB UTSWNEWS