

Spectrum Annual Conference 2022

Navigating Diagnostic and Treatment Challenges: Is it Borderline Personality Disorder and/or Complex Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder?

PRESENTER PROFILES — INVITED SPEAKERS

Dr Lois W. Choi-Kain is the Director of the Gunderson Personality Disorders Institute (GPDI). The institute provides training and supervision for numerous proven treatments, including mentalization-based treatment (MBT), dialectical behavioral therapy for post-traumatic stress disorder (DBT-PTSD), transference focused psychotherapy (TFP), and general psychiatric management (GPM). She works nationally and internationally to expand teaching efforts on borderline personality disorder (BPD) and its evidence-based treatments and engages in research to study resources for training clinicians who need direction and patients who need access to informed care. With her mentor, John Gunderson, Dr. Choi-Kain developed a training program for GPM and has been expanding its applications.

Her aim as a researcher is to expand the scope and reach of effective interventions for BPD as a regular fixture of routine mental health care, to allow earlier intervention and facilitation of recovery before the burdens of illness too greatly diminish developmental opportunities critical to fostering healthy personality functioning.

Associate Professor Josephine Beatson is a Consultant Psychiatrist and Psychoanalytic Psychotherapist who has worked in the field of personality disorders over many years. She is experienced in Mentalization Based Therapy, Common Factors Treatment for BPD, and particularly interested in the impact of childhood trauma on the phenomenology of BPD. Assoc Prof Beatson has extensive experience in both public and private psychiatry. She has supervised, taught and published widely, and is regarded as one of Australia's foremost authorities in the field. She was the recipient of a College Citation from the RANZCP in 2020.

Dr Nitin Dharwadkar is a Forensic Psychiatrist (Civil Law) and the Principal at MedLegalMD. He is also an Adjunct Senior Lecturer, at Monash University, an Accredited Psychiatrist at The Melbourne Clinic and a Foundation Member of the Faculty Forensic Psychiatry, RANZCP. Dr Dharwadkar is an Independent Medical Examiner (IME) and Impairment Assessor for Worksafe Victoria, WorkCover Authority of NSW, SIRA-NSW and WorkCover Tasmania and an Impairment Assessor for Comcare, in the Australian Government. He was the founder and director of the TMS (Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation) centre at The Melbourne Clinic in 2013. He has a keen interest in building educational programs for the legal personnel to improve their understanding of complex trauma and personality disorders, facilitating access to Medico Legal experts and advocacy, for people suffering from these conditions.

Associate Professor Loyola McLean is a Consultation-Liaison Psychiatrist and Psychotherapist in public, private and academic practice, with interests in the relational bodymind interface, stress system disorders, attachment, trauma, psychotherapy and integrated trauma-informed care (TIC). Her Adult Attachment Interview Coder and Trainer experience influences her work, as does her family's Stolen story and her lived experience as a carer and a child of parents with mental illness. She is part of the Westmead Psychotherapy Program, designing and delivering the new online Masters of Trauma-Informed Psychotherapy, and part of the MMed Psychiatry/FEC team at the Brain and Mind Centre, The University of Sydney.

PRESENTER PROFILES — SPECTRUM SPEAKERS

Associate Professor Sathya Rao is a psychiatrist and the Executive Clinical Director of Spectrum Personality Disorder Service. He is the Vice President of the Australian BPD Foundation. He is also an adjunct clinical associate professor at Monash University. Dr Rao is involved in clinical research and has published research papers, contributed chapters and co-authored books on borderline personality disorder. He was a member of the NHMRC Clinical Practice Guidelines development committee, 2012. He has taught clinicians across Australia and was the head of psychiatry training program of Victoria for the RANZCP previously. He is involved in treating complex personality disorder patients and provides second opinions and secondary consultations for complex clinical conditions associated with personality disorders. He was the recipient of the 2020 Meritorious Award of the Victorian Branch of RANZCP. In recognition of his contributions to psychiatry he received the award of the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) (General Division) in June 2022.

Dr Lukas Cheney is the Deputy Clinical Director at Spectrum. He has training in Dialectal Behaviour Therapy and Mentalization Based Therapy and has a keen interest in research to improve our understanding of personality and associated disorders. In his work at Spectrum, Dr Cheney is involved in the most complex cases of personality disorder from across Victoria and to mental health services seeking consultation around Australia. Dr Cheney is a strong believer in a stepped care model of treatment for personality disorder and the idea that, with the right knowledge, any mental health clinician can engage therapeutically with a person living with personality disorder.

Sarah Wallace is a Senior Clinician and Clinical Psychologist at Spectrum who brings over a decade of experience from a variety of practice settings, including; local area mental health, private practice as well as various non-government, trauma-informed organisations. She works in the Complex Care Service providing individual therapy and secondary consultation as well as in Spectrum's Dialectical Behaviour Therapy clinic providing individual therapy, facilitating DBT skills groups, and providing adjunctive therapies for trauma and family work.