



The Department of Psychiatry at Rutgers New Jersey Medical School presents the:

# Twelfth Annual Conference on **Urban** mental health

Friday, March 28, 2025



**RUTGERS HEALTH**  
New Jersey Medical School  
Department of Psychiatry

## AGENDA

- 8:00 am Continental Breakfast and Registration
- 8:45 am Welcome and Opening Remarks
- 9:00 am **Using New Advances in Genetics to Prevent and Treat Alcohol Use Disorders**  
Danielle Dick, PhD
- 9:45 am **Opioid Use Disorder: Recent Advances**  
Mariam Chishty, MD and Aitaz Munir, MD
- 10:30 am Morning Snack Break and Networking
- 11:00 am **Street Stimulants from Caffeine to Flakka**  
Petros Levounis, MD, MA
- 11:45 am **Medical Updates Panel**  
Clement Chen, PharmD, Emily Gordon, MD, and Benjamin Simmons, MD
- 12:30 pm Lunch and Residents' Research Symposium
- 1:15 pm **Tobacco, Vaping, and Cannabis Use**  
Mannet Dhaliwal, MD and Leila M. Vaezazizi, MD
- 2:00 pm **Identifying and Treating Social Media Addiction in 2025**  
James Sherer, MD
- 2:45 pm Closing Remarks



## SPEAKERS



**Danielle Dick, PhD**, is the director of the Rutgers Addiction Research Center, author of *The Child Code*, and co-founder of Thrive Genetics. She has led over 25 grants from the National Institutes of Health, with grant funding totaling >\$5 million dollars and >450 publications. She is passionate about translating research into advances in human health. Her team recently built the Comprehensive Addiction Risk Evaluation System (CARES; addictionriek.com), integrating new advances in genomics and epidemiology to help empower individuals to support healthier outcomes.



**Mariam Chishty, MD**, is a PGY-3 resident at Rutgers New Jersey Medical School. She was born in Ireland, raised in Carlow, and moved to Manchester, UK, at 13, which she considers home. After completing high school, A-levels, and medical school in the UK, she worked as a junior doctor for the National Health Service. She moved to the U.S. with her husband to pursue psychiatry, a field that values treating patients holistically. She enjoys nature walks, family time, and traveling and has visited 27 countries so far!



**Clement Chen, PharmD**, is the academic detailer and clinical pharmacist specialist at the Northern NJ Medication-Assisted Treatment Center of Excellence at Rutgers New Jersey Medical School. He offers consultative support on substance use disorders to healthcare professionals through mentoring and education, conducts needs assessments, and develops strategies to improve providers' knowledge and implementation of evidence-based care. He also contributes to research and quality improvement initiatives to enhance healthcare quality across New Jersey.



**Emily Gordon, MD**, is board certified in internal medicine. She earned her medical degree from Rutgers New Jersey Medical School (NJMS) and completed her residency at Montefiore Medical Center. She joined NJMS faculty in 2012, providing primary care at University Hospital and precepting internal medicine residents. Dr. Gordon is the Urban Health Track director within the residency program and program director for the Addiction Medicine Fellowship Program. Her interests include integrating addiction medicine into primary care and wellness for physicians and trainees.



**Benjamin Simmons, MD**, was born and raised in Queens, New York. He attended medical school at Georgetown University and completed his internal medicine residency at Rutgers New Jersey Medical School, where he later served as chief resident. Passionate about fitness and nutrition, he uses social media to inspire healthier lifestyles. Ben believes in treating everyone with equity and compassion, meeting individuals where they are in life. He envisions a career integrating addiction medicine with his interest in cardiovascular health.



**Mannet Dhaliwal, MD**, is a PGY-1 resident at Rutgers New Jersey Medical School. Born and raised in South Brunswick, NJ, she attended Rutgers New Brunswick and majored in cultural anthropology, where she developed a passion for social justice and indigenous cultures. This inspired her interest in healthcare for disenfranchised populations, leading her to medical school at the University of Virginia. During clinical rotations at Inova Hospital, she found psychiatry aligned with her goal of caring for vulnerable, stigmatized individuals.



**Leila M. Vaezazizi, MD**, is a board-certified addiction psychiatrist who earned her medical degree from Harvard Medical School, completed her psychiatry residency at New York University (NYU), and her fellowship in addiction psychiatry at Columbia University. She is the medical director of the Substance Abuse Recovery Program at the Manhattan VA Medical Center and a clinical assistant professor at NYU. Dr. Vaezazizi's academic work includes peer-reviewed articles and book chapters on addiction and mental health.



**James Sherer, MD**, is board-certified in psychiatry and addiction psychiatry. He completed his residency at Rutgers New Jersey Medical School and his fellowship at NYU. He serves as the deputy chief medical officer at Carrier Clinic, addiction medical director at Blake Recovery Center, medical director for Hackensack Meridian Network Addiction Services, and chief clinical officer of "Noctos". Dr. Sherer maintains a private practice and co-edited "Technological Addictions" and "Internet Gaming Disorder: A Strategy Guide for Players, Parents, and Providers."

## CONFERENCE DIRECTORS



**Petros Levounis, MD, MA**, serves as professor and chair of the Department of Psychiatry and associate dean at Rutgers New Jersey Medical School. He is also the 150th president of the American Psychiatric Association and an honorary member of the World Psychiatric Association. Dr. Levounis has published sixteen books including the textbook of "Substance Dependence and Co-Occurring Psychiatric Disorders" and the self-help paperback "Sober Siblings: How to Help Your Alcoholic Brother or Sister—and Not Lose Yourself." His books have been translated into French, German, Hungarian, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, and Spanish.



**Aitaz Munir, MD**, is an assistant professor of psychiatry at Rutgers New Jersey Medical School (NJMS) and associate program director for the Addiction Medicine Fellowship Program. Originally from Pakistan, he graduated from FMH College of Medicine in Lahore and completed his psychiatry residency at Rutgers NJMS in 2022. Dr. Munir finished an Addiction Psychiatry Fellowship at New York University Grossman School of Medicine in 2023. He is a member of the American Psychiatric Association and the American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry and specializes in chemical and behavioral addictions, supporting dual-diagnosis patients and fostering recovery. He enjoys traveling with his family.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- 1) Examine the current state of genetic research and its implications for the study of alcohol use disorder.
- 2) Outline new diagnostic and treatment options for opioid use disorder.
- 3) Describe the fundamental neurobiology of stimulants and effective treatments.
- 4) Discuss the effects of tobacco, vaping, and cannabis use in different populations.
- 5) Identify the symptoms of social media addiction and learn appropriate screening techniques.
- 6) Summarize medical updates on the assessment and treatment of addiction

### QUESTIONS?

If a participant or potential participant has a question or concern about their experience with this continuing education activity, they may e-mail the UBNC Center for Continuing Education at [cee@ubnc.rutgers.edu](mailto:cee@ubnc.rutgers.edu). For additional program information or if you require special arrangements to attend this activity please contact Lisette Nazario at 973-972-9917.