

Jefferson Team Wins Finalist Ribbon, Philadelphia, PA – JAN 11, 2011

An interprofessional team from Thomas Jefferson University won a finalist ribbon for their research poster presentation, “Costs of a Community Support Program for Depression: Preliminary Results from the Beat the Blues (BTB) Trial,” at the International Society for Pharmacoeconomics and Outcomes Research (ISPOR) 13th European Congress, Prague, Czech Republic, November 9, 2010. Study team members include Eric Jutkowitz, BA, Project Manager, Jefferson School of Population Health (JSPH) and Laura T. Pizzi, PharmD, MPH, Associate Professor at Thomas Jefferson University’s School of Pharmacy (JSP), both of whom attended the conference. Laura Gitlin, PhD, Director Jefferson Center for Applied Research on Aging and Health (CARAH), is the Principal Investigator on the grant which was funded by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH).

Beat the Blues (BTB) is a home support program for depressed African Americans 55 years of age or older. The poster primarily covers early program cost data, since BTB is a current trial within CARAH. Out of approximately 1500 entries at ISPOR, there were 118 finalists ribbons awarded. The majority of winners were Europeans.

The poster is the result of a longstanding successful collaboration of Jefferson researchers from a variety of disciplines, primarily the triad of CARAH, JSP and JSPH. The poster shows data collected thus far from the BTB trial of all the cost categories to deliver this home support program. Cost categories include interventionists going to patients’ homes, providing counseling or coaching sessions, training and supervising interventionists, travel and other costs associated with this treatment. Pizzi says that the program was recognized because it is unique and “few economic analyses have evaluated the costs of home support programs in homebound elders. We don’t really know what it costs the system or what it costs the individual or the family.” She believes they are laying the groundwork by looking at the economics of these support care programs for the aging. “We hope to show decision makers the value and importance at the societal level for families to get supported by having these programs offered,” she said. The award also “emphasizes the power of working together across Jefferson to answer relevant scientific and policy questions.”

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