

# Guaranteeing Mental Health Treatment

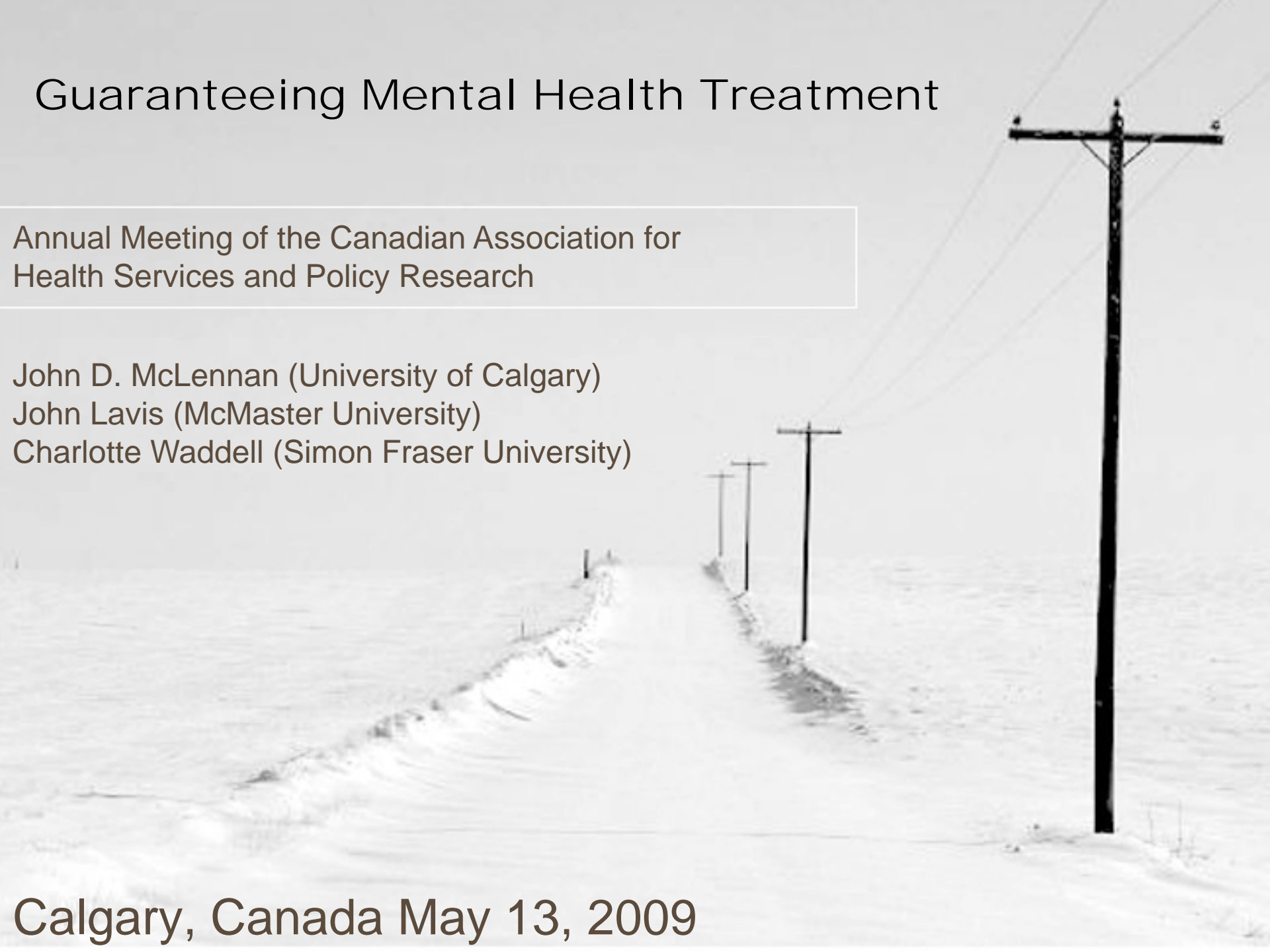
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  - <http://www.bringinghealthhome.com/team/>



# Treatment Guarantees

- Wait-time guarantees will be “the single most significant change to the dynamics of the health care system in the next few years” (p.67)

Kirby M (2006) The only two options for funding the wait-time guarantee. *Policy Options* 2006, July-Aug 66-73.



# Treatment guarantees

- The guarantee of access to a specific type of treatment (e.g., surgery) for some specific condition (e.g., cataracts) within some parameters (e.g., a certain wait time period) with some consequence if guarantee not met (e.g., otherwise coverage to be provide in private sector).



# Examples of treatment guarantees in Canada

- Federal-Provincial Patient Wait Times Guarantee Pilot Project Fund
  - 10 projects in 8 provinces
  - Manitoba: streamline referrals from GPs to specialists in 7 areas (e.g., cancer services, orthopaedics, ophthalmology, **mental health**)
  - “Guaranteed time frames for referral to specialists will be established...and alternative options will be offered to patients involved in the project who may exceed these timelines”

[http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/media/nr-cp/\\_2008/2008\\_42-eng.php](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/media/nr-cp/_2008/2008_42-eng.php)



# Another Example

- Saskatchewan and Coronary Artery Bypass Graft (CABG)
- Use of an existing benchmark
  - Level 1 patients within 2 weeks
  - Level II patients within 6 weeks
  - Level III patients within 26 weeks
- Or...patient has opportunity to access surgery at another public health care institution in another region or Canadian jurisdiction.

MOU, 2007



# Where to begin in mental health treatment?

- Canadian Psychiatric Association's wait-time benchmarks for patients with serious psychiatric illnesses

	Severity		
	Emergent	Urgent	Scheduled
Access to family practitioner	As per triage	24 hours	1 week
Access to psychiatrist after referral by family practitioner			
Major Depression	24 hours	2 weeks	4 weeks

CPA Policy Paper, 2006



# Where to begin in mental health treatment?

- Alternatively start with an evidence-based intervention
  - Hip arthroplasty in surgery
  - Radiation therapy for certain types of cancer
- E.g., in mental health could be cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT).



# What is CBT?

- A psychotherapy developed by Aaron Beck
- Based on theory that affect and behaviour are in part determined by cognitions informed by underlying assumptions
- Therapy aims at challenging cognitive distortions
- Structured, short-term therapy employing a variety of techniques



# What is the evidence?

- CBT & depression – meta-analysis

- 48 high quality trials (non-psychotic depressions)
- CBT significantly better than waitlists and a group of miscellaneous therapies (but equal to behavioural therapy)

Gloaguen et al (1998) A meta-analysis of the effect of cognitive therapy in depressed patients. *Journal of Affective Disorders* 49:52-72

- CBT & anxiety- meta-analysis

- 27 RCT with placebo controls (various anxiety disorders)
- Pooled effect size of 0.73 [0.88-1.65] (Hedges' g) for continuous anxiety severity measure

Hofmann & Smits (2008) Cognitive-behavioral therapy for adult anxiety disorders: a meta-analysis of randomized placebo-controlled trials. *Journal of Clinical Psychiatry* 69(4):621-632



# Why CBT?

- Extensive evidence-base
- Useful for common and impairing disorders
  - E.g., major depression, obsessive-compulsive disorder
- More quantifiable treatments
  - # of session
  - manualization



# So what might a treatment guarantee look like...

- E.g.,
  - A patient diagnosed with a major depression with a certain degree of severity (e.g., moderate) should have access to CBT within a certain time period (e.g., 2 weeks) within the public sector otherwise the patient would have access to this therapy through another system (e.g., private psychologist)



# Thinking through some of the steps

- Contrast with a “classical” example from surgery
  - hip arthroplasty



# Domains

1. Problem recognition
2. First contact with system
3. First contact to accurate diagnosis
4. Diagnosis to effective treatment



# Problem Recognition

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Arthroplasty for arthritic hip</b>	<b>CBT for depression</b>
Variability in disease presentation	Limited -pain -reduced mobility	Wide-ranging -change in mood -anhedonia -somatic symptoms
Rapidity of self-identification of problem	Variable	Variable
Fit with medical model	Strong	Mixed



# First Contact

Issue	Arthroplasty for arthritic hip	CBT for depression
Clarity as to where to seek care	Clear -health services	Unclear -health services -mental health services -spiritual services
Entry points to care	Single -primary care physician	Multiple -many types of mental health providers
Factors delaying entry to care	Service availability, tolerance of disease state, denial of treatment need	Similar + <u>stigma</u>



# First contact to accurate diagnosis

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Arthroplasty for arthritic hip</b>	<b>CBT for depression</b>
Within primary care	Possible for definitive diagnosis	similar
Diagnostic clarity	Typically high	Typically mixed
Referral pathways	Clear and sometimes centralized	Mixed with some centralization for mental health generally but not specifically depression



# Diagnosis to effective treatment

Issue	Arthroplasty for arthritic hip	CBT for depression
Treatment provider	Specialist surgeon	Typically a psychologist or other non-medical provider who many not be covered by provincial health insurance plan
Delivery site	Single -acute care hospital -free-standing surgical facilities?	Multiple -hospital -outpatient clinics -community agencies -private office
Intervention quality	-Surgeon skill -Quality of prosthesis	-Therapist skill -treatment intensity (e.g., # of sessions)



# In Conclusion

- It is possible to construct treatment guarantees in mental health....
  - however, multiple details on the pathway to evidence-based mental health treatments would need to be worked out
- Be careful what you wish for....
  - there is need for evidence of positive impacts of treatment guarantees



# Discussion

