

# WHAT WE CAN OFFER



The Mood Disorders Center has been established as one of up to 20 treatment centers across the United States in which some 5,000 patients will receive treatment by specially trained psychiatrists and clinical specialists. This project is called the Systematic Treatment Enhancement Program for Bipolar Disorder (STEP-BD) and aims to improve treatment for bipolar mood disorder.

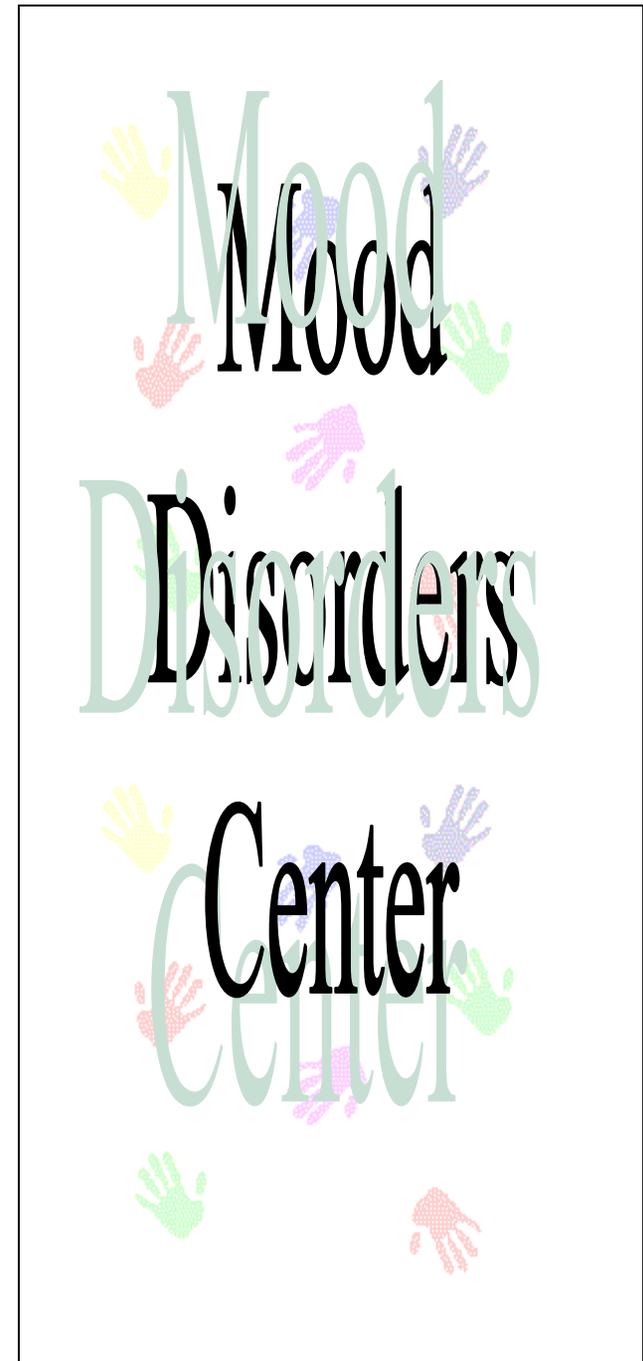
By learning about your experience with bipolar disorder, your treatment response, and your quality of life during treatment, STEP-BD researchers can help you design a plan for managing your illness that works best for you. At the same time, your participation in STEP-BD will help improve treatment standards for the more than 2 million other Americans with bipolar disorder.

If you are interested in participating in a study or for more information about our center, please use the contact phone number or e-mail address listed on the back of this brochure.

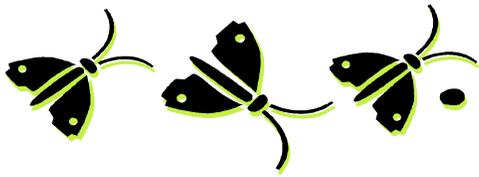


## **Mood Disorders Center**

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A part of the  
Portland VA Medical Center



# WELCOME TO THE MOOD DISORDERS CENTER

Welcome to the Mood Disorders Center at the Portland VA Mental Health Clinic! We have compiled the following information to help you understand who we are, what we are all about, and what we have to offer.

Our facility has contact with numerous patients, and we serve a variety of mental health needs. Our particular interest is in treating patients with mood disorders

## WHAT ARE MOOD DISORDERS?

In 1 year, between 7-10 percent of Americans suffer from mood disorders, a cluster of mental disorders best recognized by depression or mania. Mood disorders are outside the bounds of normal fluctuations from sadness to elation. They have potentially severe consequences for morbidity and mortality.

Mood disorders rank among the top 10 causes of worldwide disability (Murray & Lopez, 1996). Unipolar major depression ranks first, and bipolar disorder ranks in the top 10. Moreover, disability and suffering are not limited to the patient. Spouses, children, parents, siblings, and friends experience frustration, guilt, anger, financial hardship, and, on occasion, physical abuse in their attempts to assuage or cope with the depressed person's suffering.

Mood disorders often coexist, or are *comorbid*, with other mental and somatic disorders. Anxiety commonly coexists with major depression. About one-half of those with a primary diagnosis of major depression also have an anxiety disorder (Barbee, 1998; Regier et al., 1998).

## WHO WE ARE

**Peter Hauser, M.D.**, is the Director of the Portland VAMC Mood Disorders Center for Mental Health. He is also the Clinical Director of the Behavioral Health and Clinical Neurosciences Division and the Chief of Psychiatry Service at the Portland VAMC. His areas of research include mood disorders, ADHD, and psychotic disorders.

**Erick Turner, M.D.**, is the Assistant Director of the Portland VAMC Mood Disorders Center. He has 6 years' experience as a clinical researcher in the intramural program of the

National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). His specialty is in seasonal affective disorder, circadian rhythms, and rapid-cycling bipolar disorder.

**Lori A. Danker, PMHNP**, is the Coordinator of the Mood Disorders Center and has over 5 years of experience as a Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner in Oregon. She is a professional member of The National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI) and The Depressive and Manic Depressive Association, and she has given numerous community presentations about mental illness and psychotropic medications.

**Macy Woodside, LCSW**, is the newest member of our team and serves as a Clinical Specialist and Counselor for our center. She has over 8 years of experience providing psychotherapeutic services to veterans, couples and groups with mood and anxiety disorders, and PTSD.

**Rachel L. Schultz, BS, MS (in progress)**, works as a Research Assistant for our center and is certified as a school counselor. She has provided therapy and case management to individuals with mental illness in community mental health centers and a residential treatment facility. She has served as research team coordinator for several studies conducted at Central Washington University in the field of social psychology.

**Ashlee J. Thornton, BA, MS (in progress)**, is the Mood Disorders Center Administrator. In the past, she has conducted research in the field of bipolar disorder and brain activity. She is also experienced in the treatment of adolescents and adults with mental illnesses.

