



# How to Win Interest and Influence Students

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### I. Abstract

#### Background

The Psychiatry Student Interest Group Network (PsychSIGN) is a national organization comprised of individual psychiatry interest groups at medical schools across the country. Our primary aims are education, career, service, and wellness. In service of these aims, we hope to work with ADMSEP members to foster interest groups at their home institutions and to provide activity ideas and resources to make planning group events easier.

#### Summary

We maintain a list of event ideas, which range from psychiatry speed-dating to movie nights, lobbying to mentoring programs. A primary focus this year has been encouraging psychiatry interest groups to co-sponsor talks with other specialty groups to broaden student exposure to mental health issues. We also have worked to promote National Depression Screening Day events at every single medical school, and have created a toolkit to provide all of the necessary materials for such events.

#### Conclusion

PsychSIGN is a valuable resource for medical students pursuing a career in psychiatry, and provides excellent resources for faculty members interested in attracting students to psychiatry interest groups. A wide variety of interest group activities are recommended to appeal to the largest number of students.

#### Objectives

- To plan innovative activities in order to engage medical students in their psychiatry student interest group.
- To appeal to a broader range of medical students, including those not planning to pursue a career in psychiatry, in order to increase awareness and understanding of the impact of mental health issues on various fields in medicine.
- To become familiar with and utilize the resources available through the Psychiatry Student Interest Group Network.

### II. Appealing to the Masses

Subspecialty Interest Group	Topics of Interest
pediatrics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>autism and vaccines</li> <li>ADHD diagnosis and meds</li> <li>antidepressants in teens</li> </ul>
obstetrics/gynecology or women's health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>postpartum depression and psychosis</li> <li>domestic abuse</li> </ul>
primary care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>depression and substance abuse in the community</li> <li>mental health screening</li> </ul>
surgery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>transplant psychiatry</li> </ul>
oncology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>palliative care</li> <li>end of life issues</li> </ul>
integrative medicine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>alternative treatments for depression and anxiety</li> </ul>
rural medicine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>telepsychiatry</li> </ul>
internal medicine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>depression and cardiovascular disease</li> <li>chronic pain</li> </ul>
service to the underserved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>mental healthcare disparities</li> <li>cultural competence</li> </ul>
geriatrics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>dementia and delirium</li> </ul>
GLBT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>history of homosexuality and the DSM</li> <li>trans mental health</li> </ul>

### III. Education

- national
  - ADMSEP consensus statement on clerkship length endorsed 2008
  - psychiatry quick reference cards
  - resources on fellowships, scholarships, and externships
- your interest group
  - psych movie night
  - shadowing program for first- and second-years
  - field trips
    - inpatient psychiatric facilities, dementia units
  - include speakers with mental illness in preclerkship course
  - workshops: interviewing, motivational interviewing, giving bad news, screening, suicide assessment, MSE
  - journal club or book club
  - student attendance at Psychiatry Grand Rounds
  - case conferences

### IV. Career

- national
  - career corner
    - video interviews, anecdotes, biographies
  - online resident mentoring program
  - reduced membership fees for many subspecialty organizations
    - free medical student membership: AACAP, AACP
  - annual subspecialty dinner
- your interest group
  - Speed-Dating with the Psychiatric Subspecialties
  - clinical shadowing and research project lists
  - resident Big Sib program
  - community psychiatry dinner at psychiatrist's home
  - post-match panel with fourth years matched into psychiatry
  - application/interview Dos and Don'ts with program director

### V. Service

- national
  - participate in lobbying day with APA and other subspecialty organizations
  - national conference service activity
- your interest group
  - student discussions regarding stigma
  - community mental health screening events
  - volunteer at group homes, rehab centers, nursing homes, homeless shelters
  - visit local schools to present about mental health topics
  - NAMI Walk-a-thon
  - student-run psychiatry clinic
  - conduct workshops on mental health for non-profit organizations

### VI. Wellness

- national
  - website resources
  - frequent regional conference topic
- your interest group
  - discussion with faculty member, resident, or student about personal experience with mental illness
  - Balint groups
  - provide lists of mental health resources, both within and outside of the university system
  - workshops: stress reduction techniques, healthy relationships, basic CBT skills, meditation
  - wellness website

### VII. National Depression Screening Day

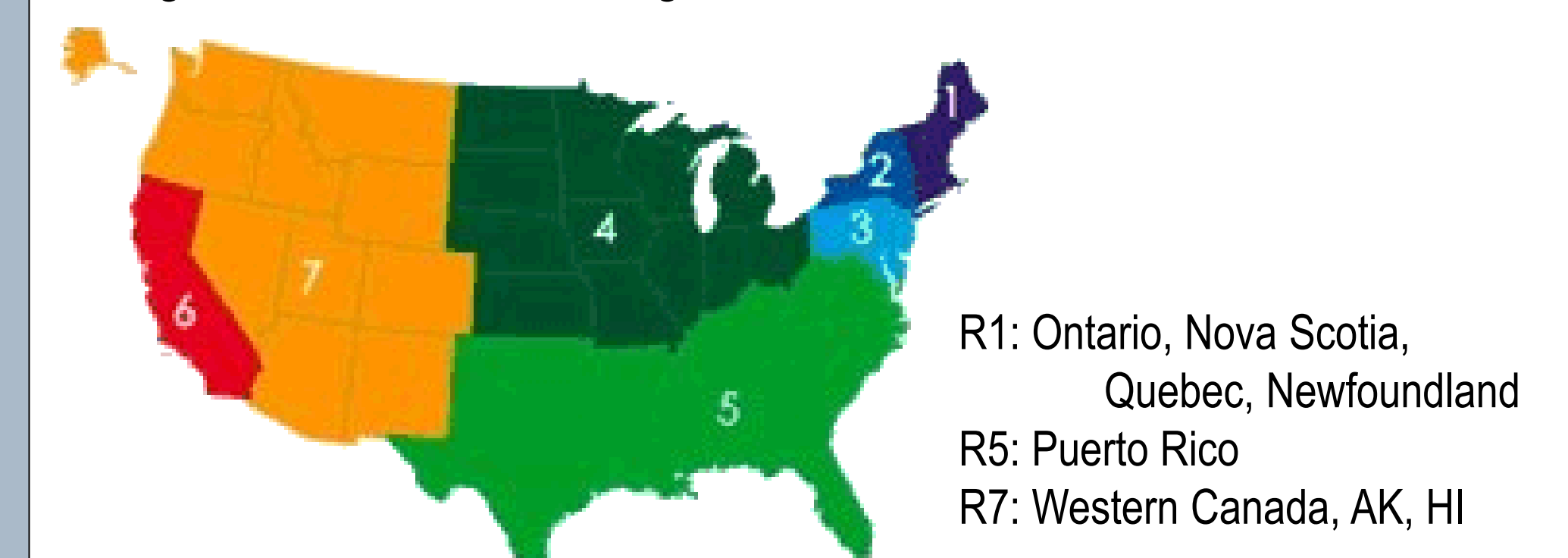
- up to 46.5% of medical students screen positive for depression
  - 25.1% have considered suicide
- only 22% of depressed medical students receive treatment
- 11.3% of practicing physicians report moderate to severe depression
  - male physicians 1.4 times as likely to commit suicide as general population
  - female physicians 2.3 times as likely
- stigma surrounding mental illness is a huge barrier to care
- PsychSIGN National Depression Screening Day events a major focus of 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 boards



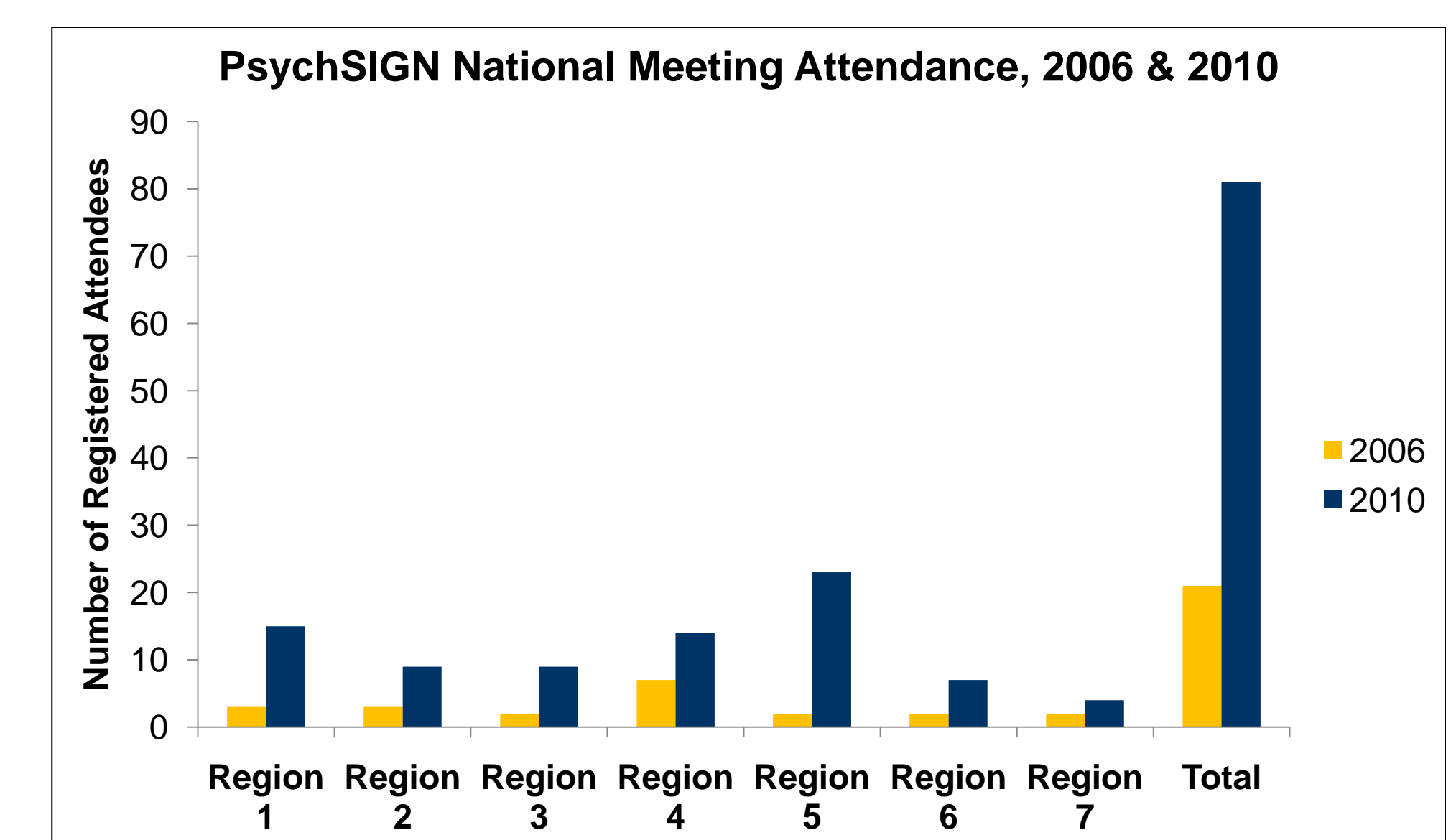
- NDSD toolkit available on website
  - screening instruments from Screening for Mental Health
  - personal narratives from medical student and attendings
  - PowerPoint on depression in medicine
  - journal articles
  - links to resources for information and support

### VIII. PsychSIGN National

- 7 regions based on APA regions



- one national and seven regional conferences each year
- 2010 National Conference: New Orleans, LA, May 21-23
  - plenary speakers
    - David Lewis, MD: Translational Neuroscience: Strategies for Developing Novel Treatments in Psychiatry
    - Paul McHugh, MD & William Narrow, MD MPH: Rethinking the DSM-V
  - new additions: poster session, community service opportunity



### Contact information

[www.psychsign.org](http://www.psychsign.org)

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