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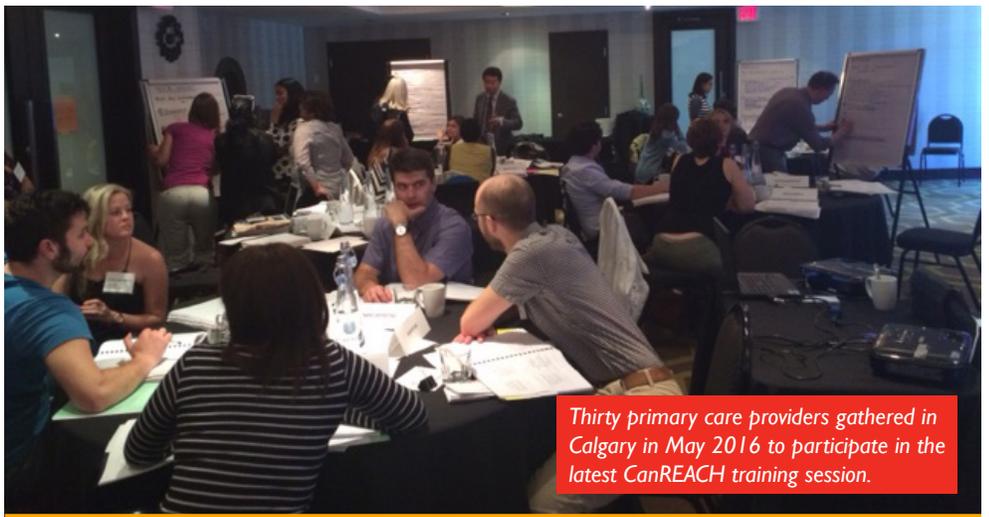


## CanREACH

With only five days of training in pediatric mental health offered during medical school, front-line physicians in Alberta have struggled to adequately provide specialized care for their young patients. Thanks to your generous support, a comprehensive training program is now helping primary care specialists to better support children with mental health problems in the community.

### What is CanREACH?

Since 2006, an American non-profit organization called the REsource for Advancing Children's Health Institute (REACH) has trained more than 1,000 health care professionals through its Fellowship in Primary Pediatric Psychopharmacology (PPP). As the Canadian extension of REACH, CanREACH delivers this mini-fellowship program in Calgary. Two sessions are offered each year - May and November. To date five sessions have been delivered, training a total of 140 primary care providers. The teaching is delivered through a dynamic 3-day (15 hour) course that uses a combination of intensive face-to-face teaching and hands-on practice followed by 6 months of ongoing case-based coaching using distance learning methods (twice-monthly peer-learning conference calls, web support, and tools).



Thirty primary care providers gathered in Calgary in May 2016 to participate in the latest CanREACH training session.

The Sandman Hotel in south Calgary was the site of the latest CanREACH Training session from May 6-8, 2016. A capacity class of 30 gathered to participate in hands-on exercises to increase their knowledge and confidence in caring for and treating children with mental health concerns such as depression, anxiety and ADHD. This session brings to 140 the number of primary care providers who have participated in the CanREACH Primary Pediatric Psychopharmacology Program. Dr. Roxanne Goldade attended the first session in May 2014. As an experienced

pediatrician in the Calgary area, she was hesitant to invest three days of time in a training session, but registered nonetheless. "As it turned out, I was very impressed with the content and the format of the training weekend," says Dr. Goldade who has since become one of the accredited faculty for the program. "Working through the role-playing exercises with colleagues from across a wide-range of expertise was very helpful as I learned different techniques and practices that have made a difference in how I interact and meet with patients and their families".



Feedback shows that this is true for other participants, as well. Attendees are asked to describe how they approach the treatment and management of children's and adolescents' behavioral and emotional difficulties before the training, immediately after, and then again after the six-months of follow-up sessions. Almost universally, participants reported significant shifts in the kinds and amounts of medications prescribed to treat children and youth with mental health concerns.

Participants also show increased confidence and ability to treat their less acute patients in their own practice as opposed to referring them to urgent and emergency services. This improved triage results in less congestion and improved wait times for those who are truly in need of escalated levels of care.

"This kind of training should be made available for every family doctor and resident in our system," says Dr. Goldade. "Beyond the incredible amount of material that is covered over the course of the three days, the follow-up and contact between the cohort for the six months following is equally beneficial."

"The demand is consistently strong for this program," say Program Facilitator, Eden McCaffrey. "We are currently fully subscribed for our November 2016 session with a waiting list started for the May 2017 session. It's wonderful to see the response and know that it is making a difference for those on the front-line and the children and families they care for."



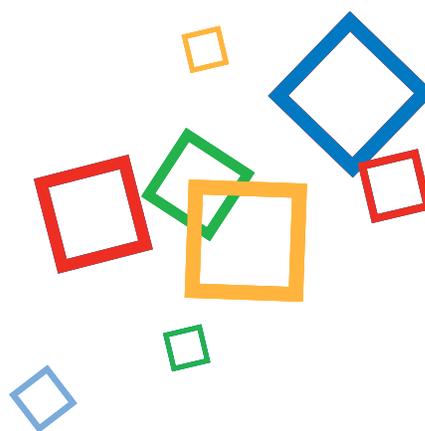
Participants in the May 2016 session take part in role-play exercises to improve their assessment skills.



Dr. Abdul Rahman is one of four faculty accredited by REACH Institute to facilitate the PPP training in Canada.

CanREACH training enables primary care providers to improve their mental health services for children and families by helping them:

- Formulate an accurate and comprehensive mental health diagnosis
- Accurately assess child and family strengths and risks
- Effectively move research into practice settings by providing appropriate evidence-based treatment
- Accurately solicit information from other relevant community professionals (e.g. teachers) when formulating a diagnosis
- Actively mentor and coach the child and family in all aspects of treatment (e.g. the appropriate use of psychopharmaceutical drugs)
- Provide ongoing mental health care tailored to the child and family's individual needs
- Appropriately refer children and youth for further mental health treatment when necessary



## How does your support make a difference?

The approximate cost for this course is \$2,800 per participant. Thanks to your generous support through the Alberta Children's Hospital Foundation, registration fees are reduced to \$500 for practitioners and \$250 for students.



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