Psychoneuroimmunology CE Course for Mental Health Professionals Updated at HealthForumOnline

HealthForumOnline (HFO) has recently updated Psychoneuroimmunology (PNI): Implications for Behavioral Health, one of over 80 online CE courses available in HFO’s library of nationally-approved online CE courses for mental health professionals. Described as “mind-body medicine”, this online CE course explores the science of PNI, focusing on the bidirectional relationship with the nervous system, endocrine system, and immune system; clinical applications for PNI; and the implications for PNI within the practice of behavioral medicine.

Philadelphia, PA (PRWEB) August 13, 2013 -- HealthForumOnline (HFO), a nationally-approved (APA, ASWB, NBCC, CA-BBS) provider of online continuing education (CE) for psychologists, social workers, counselors, and other allied healthcare professionals announces recent updates to Psychoneuroimmunology (PNI): Implications for Behavioral Health, a popular online CE course from their extensive online CE resource library.

The study of psychoneuroimmunology (PNI), also sometimes described as “mind-body medicine,” is becoming increasingly popular. Briefly, PNI is the study of the interaction among the nervous, endocrine, and immune systems; how this interaction affects physical and psychological health; and the bidirectional effects of psychosocial stress on these systems.

Until recently, the nervous system, the endocrine system, and the immune system were thought to function independently (e.g., 1). An increasing body of research is discovering that these systems are interactive: each system regulates the others, while also being regulated by the others. For example, a global World Health Organization study found a stronger correlation between physical disability and psychological factors than was found with disease severity (2). Another WHO (2009) report to the International Federation of Psychiatric Epidemiology showed a significant number of mental disorders developed secondary to physical disorders (3). PNI posits that psychological and physical function and dysfunction are inextricably linked (e.g., 3) and provides a model for understanding aspects of the biopsychosocial model of illness by elucidating mechanisms underlying biopsychosocial, as well as psychogenic, illness (e.g., 4).

A direct link between depression and acute illness, such as cardiovascular disease (e.g., 5), as well as chronic illness, such as multiple sclerosis (e.g., 6), diabetes (e.g., 7) and chronic pain (8) has been found. Likewise, Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) encompasses many physical symptoms such as body aches and pains, headaches, and gastrointestinal disturbances, often among the leading complaints of people with MDD or anxiety disorders at their initial visit (9-10).

Mental health providers will encounter patients with both physical and psychological problems and cannot dismiss the fact that all patients are embodied individuals, expressing their physiology and psychology continuously and simultaneously. This online CE course will focus on how the interaction among these three systems affects physical and psychological health, how psychosocial stress affects the action of these systems, and present the clinical implications of this mind-body interaction for use in behavioral treatment protocols.

For more information on this course or a complete listing of titles in our online CE resource library, visit


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