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CONTACT

Julie Totten

Phone: (781) 890-0220

Email: north@familyaware.org

**Expert Task Force Evaluates Use of SSRIs in Depressed Youth and Adults
Ongoing Monitoring of Patients Treated with Antidepressants a Must**

An American College of Neuropsychopharmacology (ACNP) Task Force recently released a comprehensive report evaluating the efficacy and safety of selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) in depressed youths under the age of 18 and in adults. The Task Force found fluoxetine (Prozac) to be effective in treating depression in youths and SSRIs in general to be effective in treating depression in adults, and recommends that those being treated with these medications or talk therapy be monitored. The Task Force highlighted that the seriousness of depression in youth underscores the importance of making effective treatments available to those who need it.

Families for Depression Awareness, www.familyaware.org, a national nonprofit organization, also believes that treatment of depression is of utmost importance and urges families to help clinicians in monitoring patients for reaction to medications and progress in treatment. To help in that effort, the organization has created three Depression Monitoring Guides to make it easier for families to do so. Designed for those diagnosed with depression, the guides contain educational text with daily and weekly tools, including diaries and worksheets. There is one guide for adults, one for parents of teens and children with depression, and one for teens with depression.

“These guides help families work together to monitor treatment and get well,” said Julie Totten, President of Families for Depression Awareness. “Patients can be taking medication, in talk therapy, or both.”

Families can sign up for the pilot and receive the guides by visiting www.familyaware.org.

The ACNP report, which appears in the most recent issue of the peer-reviewed journal, *Psychopharmacology*, and can be accessed at www.acnp.org, recommended that only fluoxetine (Prozac) be used as an effective treatment of depression in youths and determined more research is needed to determine whether other SSRIs have a positive risk-benefit for use in children and teens.

The Task Force also reviewed and analyzed adult databases and concluded that SSRIs are effective in treating adult depression. They also stated that their calculations “reinforced the Task Force's confidence in the conclusion that SSRIs are not associated with suicide attempts or suicides in adults, and reinforces the need for larger studies in children and adolescents to determine the safety of individual antidepressants.”

About Families for Depression Awareness

Families for Depression Awareness is a national nonprofit organization helping families recognize and cope with depressive disorders. The organization provides education, outreach and

advocacy to support families and is comprised of families who have lost a family member to suicide or have watched a loved one suffer with depression, with little knowledge about how to help. For more information please go to www.familyaware.org.

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