

Dr. Katherine Wisner

Professional Profile:

Katherine L. Wisner, M.D., M.S., has been involved in clinical work and research since the mid-1980's. Prior to her medical training, she achieved a Master's Degree in Nutrition. Dr. Wisner did a pediatrics internship, is board-certified in both adult and child psychiatry, and completed a 3-year postdoctoral training program (NIAAA-funded) in epidemiology. Her early faculty work focused on the development of a clinical research program in infant mental health. Dr. Wisner's research has been NIMH funded since she completed her post-doctoral training in 1988. She served on NIMH grant review sections continuously from 1994 to the present. Additionally, Dr. Wisner completed an applied ethics fellowship and was a founding member of the NIMH Data Safety and Monitoring Board. Dr. Wisner is only the second American to be elected President of the Marce International Society for the study of Childbearing Related Disorders.

Her major interest area is women's health across the life cycle with a particular focus on childbearing. She is a pioneer in the development of strategies to distinguish the effects (during pregnancy) of mental illness from medications used to treat it (Wisner et al, JAMA 282:1264-1269, 1999; MHR01-60335, Antidepressant Use During Pregnancy). She has described methods for evaluating serum levels of drugs and metabolites in breastfed infants whose mothers take antidepressants. In recognition of her work, she was a participant in activities related to the FDA Committee to Revise Drug Labeling in Pregnancy and Lactation, a committee member for the National Children's Study (Stress in Pregnancy), a consultant to the CDC Safe Motherhood Initiative and the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality Report Perinatal Depression: Prevalence, Screening Accuracy and Screening Outcomes.

Dr. Wisner was elected to membership in the American College of Neuropsychopharmacology in 2005. She received the Dr. Robert L. Thompson Award for Community Service from Healthy Start, Inc., of Pittsburgh in 2006 and the Pennsylvania Perinatal Partnership Service Award in 2007 from the State of Pennsylvania. Additional career highlights include:

Dr. Wisner was the first American psychiatrist to collect serum from mothers and their breastfed infants for antidepressant quantitation as a technique to monitor possible infant toxicity.

She published the only two placebo-controlled randomized drug trials for the prevention of recurrent postpartum depression and showed that a serotonin selective reuptake inhibitor was efficacious.

With her leadership of a subcommittee of the American Psychiatric Committee on Research on Psychiatric Treatments, the first comprehensive model of risk-benefit evaluation for treatment of depression during pregnancy and breastfeeding was published (Wisner KL et al, Am J Psych 157:1933-1940, 2000).

Dr. Wisner is a strong advocate for development of somatic non-drug treatment options for depression during childbearing to increase the choices available to women, such as omega-3 fatty acids, other nutrients, and bright light therapy.

She performed the first comparative drug study for postpartum depression, which was funded by NIMH and published in Journal of Clinical Psychopharmacology.

She is the senior author of the first chapter on psychiatric illness to be published in any major American obstetrical text, Obstetrics: Normal and Problem Pregnancies, 2007, edited by Steve Gabbe and colleagues.

Dr. Wisner's activities in health services/public health have resulted in the first comprehensive NIMH funded demonstration project for screening for postpartum depression (10,000 deliveries/year in Pittsburgh, PA).

In January 2011, Dr. Wisner was chosen as the recipient of AMWA's **Women in Science Award** for the year 2011.

Immediate Past President's Duties:

The Past President will remain on the Executive Committee for two years.