



RESEARCH - Olivia Okereke, MD



Dr. Olivia I. Okereke graduated cum laude from Harvard University and earned her medical degree from Yale University School of Medicine. She did her residency training in psychiatry at Massachusetts General/McLean Hospital. She then completed a post-residency fellowship in Geriatric Psychiatry at McLean and also earned a Master of Science degree in epidemiology from the Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health. She is Associate Professor of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and Associate Professor of Epidemiology at the Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health. Dr. Okereke serves as Director of Geriatric Psychiatry and Geriatric Psychiatry Research at the Massachusetts General Hospital.

Dr. Okereke is one of the leading researchers in the field of geriatric psychiatry. Her research seeks to identify modifiable risk factors involved in adverse mental aging and to translate and apply that knowledge to developing strategies for prevention of late-life depression and cognitive decline. Her current research foci include: evaluating the role of dietary factors on the risk of late-life cognitive decline and depression; testing the effects of various nutritional interventions on late-life mood; and exploring the relationship between late-life depression and anxiety and molecular markers of biological aging, with attention to their potential contribution to health disparities. Dr. Okereke's research has been supported by grants from the National Institute of Mental Health, the National Institute on Aging, Harvard University and the Massachusetts Alzheimer's Disease Research Center. She is also a Faculty or Steering Committee member for two NIH-funded R25 training programs in geriatric mental health. She is the author or coauthor of more than 100 peer reviewed scientific publications.

In addition to her research activities, Dr. Okereke is a frequent lecturer across a broad range of clinical and research topics in geriatric psychiatry. In addition to teaching residents and fellows, she gives public talks on aging of the healthy brain to the community, at senior centers, and at Councils on Aging around Massachusetts. She serves on the Board of Directors and the Medical and Scientific Advisory Committee of the MA/NH Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association.

Dr. Okereke has been named a Scholar in the NIMH Advanced Research Institute in Geriatric Mental Health. She has received an award for Okereke excellence for her work as an early career investigator in psychiatric epidemiology from Columbia University. She is a distinguished fellow of the American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry (AAGP) where she serves on the Board of Directors and as Vice Chair of the Research Committee.

In recognition of her work in expanding the knowledge-base in geriatric psychiatry and in helping train the next generation of researchers and clinicians in the field, the Massachusetts Psychiatric Society is please to recognize Dr. Olivia I. Okereke with its 2020 Outstanding Psychiatrist Award in Research.