



SELENI

## **Dr. Katherine Sharkey of Brown University and Rhode Island Hospital Receives Inaugural Seleni Institute Research Award**

***Leading academic receives grant for vital research into perinatal anxiety***

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**New York, NY, April 7, 2014**—The Seleni Institute, New York, today announced that sleep medicine researcher Dr. Katherine Sharkey, of Brown University and Rhode Island Hospital, is the recipient of the inaugural Seleni Research Award for her proposed research project, ‘Integrated Chronotherapy for Perinatal Anxiety.’

Dr. Sharkey and her team will assess the feasibility, safety, and efficacy of chronotherapy in women with clinical levels of anxiety that are seeking treatment for an anxiety or depressive disorder during the third trimester of pregnancy. The team’s findings could have a major impact on public health given the high prevalence of perinatal anxiety and the role it plays in postpartum depression. Furthermore, this therapy may prove particularly appropriate for women reluctant to take medication during pregnancy or while lactating. Data collected during this study will support the development of a manual for integrated chronotherapy in the treatment of perinatal anxiety.

Nitzia Logothetis, Founder and Executive Chairwoman of the Seleni Institute, said: “We have long believed that patterns and quality of sleep are crucial to perinatal wellness. Seleni has a global mission to improve the depth and breadth of research in this field, and we are proud to support Dr. Sharkey and her team as they apply the necessary academic rigor to further our understanding of this vital aspect of maternal mental health.”

Responding to the announcement of her award, Dr. Katherine Sharkey added: “It has only recently become apparent that sleep patterns during the third trimester of pregnancy impact postpartum mood and affect a new mother’s adaptation to the round-the-clock caregiving demands of her infant. This funding will help us to produce substantial evidence-based research for the global health community as it seeks to improve the wellness of pregnant women and mothers everywhere. It is a very great honor to be the inaugural recipient of this Seleni Institute award.”

Dr. Katherine Wisner, Seleni Research Award selection panel member and renowned expert in the treatment of mood disorders in women, with particular expertise in pregnancy and the postpartum period, commented: “The Seleni Institute must be commended for its support of Katherine Sharkey and her team in promoting further work and study into this intervention which will help us all to understand better the contribution of sleep to perinatal wellness.”

The Seleni Institute Research Award seeks to improve the diagnosis and treatment of reproductive and maternal mental health disorders by supporting innovative research of the highest quality and relevance. In 2014, the Seleni Research Award focuses on projects that advance the understanding and treatment of perinatal anxiety disorders. Awardees receive up to \$30,000 a year for as long as two years.

### **About Dr. Sharkey**

Dr. Katherine Sharkey is an assistant professor at the Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University/Rhode Island Hospital with appointments in the Departments of Internal Medicine and Psychiatry & Human Behavior. Dr. Sharkey practices sleep medicine and her research focuses on sleep and circadian rhythms, particularly as they relate to mood regulation and performance. Dr. Sharkey joined the faculty of Brown University in 2007. She is chairs the Circadian Rhythms Steering Committee of the American Academy of Sleep Medicine and serves on the editorial board of the journal *Behavioral Sleep Medicine*.

### **About the Seleni Institute**

The Seleni Institute is a nonprofit organization that was founded by George and Nitzia Logothetis in 2011 to transform mental health and wellness for the women of the world by increasing the availability and accessibility of mental health and wellness support for women and their families; emotional support for women worldwide, through reasoned and practical online insight and information; and knowledge and understanding of reproductive and maternal mental health through research funding.

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