***The Impossible Dream:  Treatment Approaches for the Most Challenging Suicidal Adolescents***

**Anthony Spirito, PhD, ABPP and Jennifer Wolff, PhD**

**Alpert Medical School of Brown University**

**Christianne Esposito-Smythers, PhD**

**George Mason University**

Adolescents who require psychiatric hospitalization due to suicidal ideation or behavior represent some of the most high-risk patients treated in child psychiatry. Treatment trials with this population are limited in number and no treatment approach has emerged to date as the best practice option for recently hospitalized, acutely or chronically suicidal, adolescents. In this presentation, results from two trials conducted between 1997 and 2001, and between 2004 and 2007, will be briefly summarized. Then, a recently completed RCT comparing an integrated intensive treatment protocol to standard care will be presented. Preliminary results indicate comparable results across groups at one year follow-up with respect to repeat suicide attempts and re-hospitalizations, but differences in degree of lethality of attempts. Discussion will be centered around the increasing symptom acuity of these cohorts overtime; subgroups who benefit from intensive treatment versus subgroups for whom intensive treatment may not be beneficial; the potential role of social media and re-hospitalization in perpetuating symptoms of suicidal and nonsuicidal self-injury; the effects of monitoring suicidality during treatment on the reporting of suicidal ideation and behavior at follow-up assessments; the potential negative effects of discontinuing intensive treatment at the end of a clinical trial on a subset of patients and the need to consider chronic care models for these families; and when, in the course of traditional psychotherapy/psychopharmacologic treatment, to consider adjunctive or alternative approaches to care.