Cities and the mental health of populations

For well over 150 years, public health priorities in cities have been the eradication of infectious diseases through immunization efforts, safer food practices, public health education and promotion, improved sanitation, water purification, and a host of other population-based initiatives. Although this has resulted in on-going improvement in health and life expectancy it has limited the ability of public health authorities to address other highly prevalent and insidious but non-fatal disorders, including mental illnesses. This talk will address the relation between cities and the mental health of populations and how changing features of the urban environment may result in substantial population improvement in mental health.

Sandro Galea, MD, DrPH, is a physician and an epidemiologist. He is the Anna Cheskis Gelman and Murray Charles Gelman Professor and Chair of the Department of Epidemiology at the Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health. His primary research has been on the causes of mental disorders, particularly common mood-anxiety disorders and substance abuse, and on the role of traumatic events in shaping population health. In particular, his work seeks to uncover how determinants at multiple levels of influence—including policies, features of the social environment, molecular, and genetic factors—jointly produce the health of urban populations. Dr Galea has published more than 250 scientific journal articles, 50 chapters and commentaries, and five books. Several media outlets including The New York Times, NPR, and NBC have featured Dr Galea’s work. He was named one of TIME magazine’s epidemiology innovators in 2006.

This event is free and open to the public. Registration is not necessary. Contact Aileen Ochoa at a.ochoa@neu.edu for more information.