

# Baycrest Matters

A bi-weekly update for Baycrest staff, families and clients

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Email submissions to:  
Joan Mortimer, Editor,  
mortimerj@baycrest.org  
or call 416-785-2500,  
ext. 2952

[www.baycrest.org](http://www.baycrest.org)

Baycrest is fully affiliated with the University of Toronto.

## Nurses need full attention for medication administration

**A**t Baycrest Hospital, medication administration is a complex and critically important function for nurses. Most Baycrest patients suffer complex conditions and take several prescribed medications. While some units have separate medication rooms or areas, nurses mostly prepare and administer medication for their patients from a portable medication cart, which is pushed from room to room. To help nurses focus on the important job of medication administration there is a new education campaign being launched which includes the implementation of a “no talk zone” at the medication carts to reduce distraction at this time.

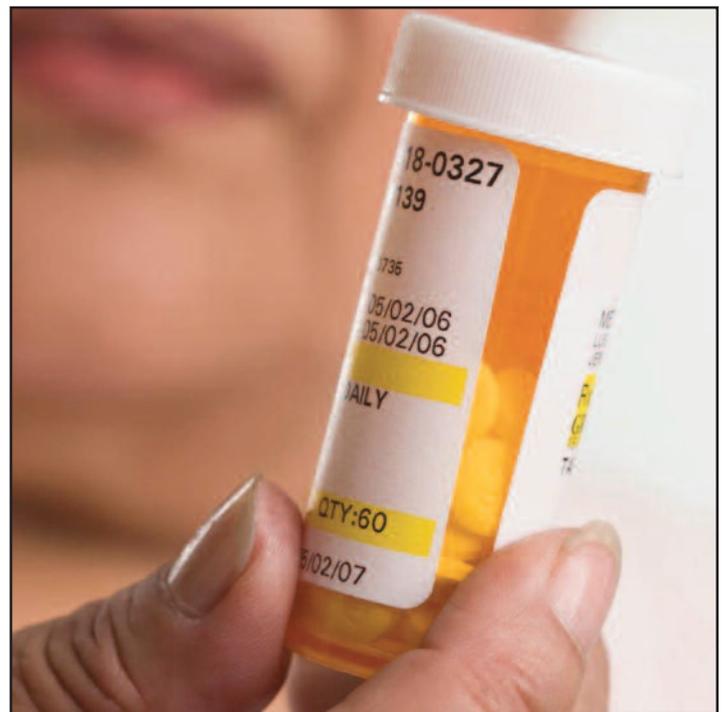
“Interruptions while administering medications can lead to serious errors in medication preparation, which can lead to unexpected adverse events” explains Marilyn El Bestawi, Director, Baycrest Hospital. “We are now planning different strategies, including signage at the medication

carts and on the units, to help patients and their families, volunteers and private companions to understand and respect that even though nurses may not appear busy, medication administration requires their full attention.”

Medication administration requires many steps and nurses need knowledge-based, critical thinking. For

each patient, nurses refer to their Medication Administration Record (MAR), which documents each medication, dosage, time of administration and other critical details. After the medication is taken, the nurse must sign the MAR. Nurses need to double check with the physician or

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# Moving on after stroke... by remote

**S**uffering a stroke can severely alter life for individuals and their families, and recovery usually includes months of hospital stay and rehabilitation. Upon returning home, people with stroke often work with a team of health care professionals to help conquer the physical, cognitive and psychosocial challenges they may now face in their new reality. For people living in larger communities, this support is often close by, but for individuals in remote areas of Northwestern Ontario, the nearest medical facility may be more than 15 hours away and only accessible by air. With the aid of videoconferencing technology, MOST (Moving on After Stroke) – a self management program developed at Baycrest – is improving the lives of people with

stroke well beyond the Greater Toronto Area.

Designed by **Dr. Maria Huijbregts**, director, Quality, Risk and Patient Safety, in collaboration with a strong inter-professional team, MOST is a secondary stroke prevention program that gives people the tools, information and peer support they need to make healthy lifestyle choices and teaches participants about exercise, goal setting, coping strategies, medications, activities, pain management, nutrition, and community resources.

Supported by a Heart and Stroke Foundation research grant, MOST has been adapted for videoconferencing to bring self-management and health promotion expertise to distant communities where resources are scarce and opportunities for group



Tony, one of the MOST participants from Sandy Lake First Nation Reserve.

support are few. With the help of St. Joseph's Care Group in Thunder Bay and the Ontario  
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## Nurses need full attention...continued from page 1

pharmacist when in doubt and any medication errors are recorded on Safety Event Reporting System (SERS).

"SERS is one reporting tool that helps to identify the issues surrounding medication safety, and the data helps us develop best practices to diminish these issues," says **Eileen Chang**, Patient Safety and Risk Specialist. "Improving medication administration practices is just one of Baycrest's initiatives that leads to increased patient safety."

Marilyn explains that although medication administration at Baycrest follows the same processes as acute care facilities, caring for the geriatric population comes with additional challenges.

"Many of our patients suffer from cognitive impairment and may not be able to identify themselves, so the very first issue that nurses are faced with is to ensure that they have the right patient. Also, many of these patients cannot express what is going on, so our nurses need to have a high level of understanding of the patients' medical histories, lab results, what medications can be mixed, and be extremely aware of any complications that can arise," she says. "Even the assessment of pain is more time consuming in this population, and since a number of patients have swallowing difficulties as well, the solution is much more complicated than just swallowing a pill with a glass of water."

At the medication cart, distractions and interruptions can contribute to patient safety issues. "We know some situations are critical for the nurse to stop what he or she is doing and tend to the patient, but certain things can wait or be directed elsewhere," says Marilyn. "We are looking at ways to communicate the appropriate times to approach the nurse at the cart, and the implementation of a no-talk zone will help deter avoidable disruptions."  
**BM**

## Moving on after stroke...continued from page 2

Telemedicine Network, MOST brings together program facilitators and participants at nearly 10 sites including, among others, Kenora, Sioux Lookout, Marathon and Dryden.

The program is also delivered to participants from Sandy Lake – a First Nations community with a population of just over 2,000. A need was identified by these participants for locally provided, culturally appropriate stroke education for the residents of the Sandy Lake, but Dr. Huijbregts still had to obtain permission from the chief and Band Council to implement the program. “The community is caught between a traditional and modern lifestyle, but there is still a lack of resources which can support a family who is struck by an illness like stroke, and many feel nothing can be done,” she explains. “Taking the MOST program up north allows us to share our wealth of knowledge across the province, and reach people unable to access these services otherwise.”

Together with Denise Taylor, a physiotherapist and coordinator for the MOST Telehealth Remote program who works at St. Joseph’s, Dr. Huijbregts traveled to Northwestern Ontario to conduct eleven focus groups to evaluate the impact of the program last month. Although she had been to Thunder Bay before, it was the first time she traveled to some of the more rural areas, including Sandy Lake.

Dr. Huijbregts saw first hand some of the unique challenges of this community that makes them more vulnerable to chronic diseases, including a sense of isolation, a higher incident of stroke, the occurrence of stroke at a younger age, a higher risk of heart disease for native women, and psycho-social issues like

unemployment, high school drop out rate, and high suicide rates. Since the cost of living is very high and the only community centre was recently destroyed in a fire, there is also limited access to healthy foods and physical activities which promote well-being. Although the Sandy Lake Nursing Station is staffed by nurse practitioners, there is also a physician on a part-time basis.

Participation by people of Sandy Lake in MOST has led to ongoing collaboration by the Sandy Lake First Nation community, Baycrest and St. Joseph’s Care Group for a new project to increase community awareness of stroke, its effects, and strategies to reduce the risk of stroke. The project is led by Ms. Taylor in collaboration with **Dr. Alan Chan**, a psychology postdoctoral fellow at Baycrest.

Dr. Huijbregts and Ms. Taylor were welcomed by the community, and the program participants were

eager to speak of the MOST program. “It was so enlightening to meet some of the people with stroke and their care partners or family members, and to get their feedback face to face,” says Dr. Huijbregts. While data is still being collected and analyzed, preliminary results of the focus groups indicate increased social support for participants, improved ability to cope, and a decrease in their perceived loneliness and sense of isolation when they are able to share with others in a similar situation even if in a different community.

“There was one woman I met whose husband’s personality was so changed by the stroke,” she adds. “The MOST program gave them both an opportunity to learn from other stroke survivors, but most importantly it made them feel that they were not alone.”

**BM**



Sandy Lake Nursing Station is one of the many remote medical facilities that brings the MOST program to the community via videoconferencing technology.

# Brain noise is a good thing

**L**ike the wavy lines and snowy static that dance across old TV screens, your brain generates noise. Instead of thinking of this as interference to the goings-on in your head, scientists at Baycrest have shown that a noisy brain is a healthy brain.

“Brain noise” is a term that has been used by neuroscientists to describe random brain activity that is not important to mental function. Neuroscientists once thought that this brain noise, detectable by researchers using high-tech gear, wasn’t important, and also suspected that this noise would decline with age as children

grew up and their mental processes became more efficient. But a new research study conducted by the Rotman Research Institute at Baycrest, published in the July 4, 2008 issue of the **Public Library of Science - Computational Biology**, overturns this notion.

In the study, 79 participants representing two main age groups - children (eight to 15 years of age) and young adults (20 to 33 years of age) - completed a series of face memory tasks to measure their ability to recall faces with accuracy.

Electroencephalography (EEG) recordings were collected to

measure their brain signal activity while performing the task. EEG is a powerful brain imaging tool that allows for precise measurement of the timing of brain activity in response to external stimuli.

Researchers found that not only did the young adults score better on the face recognition tasks, they showed more stable and accurate cognitive behaviour compared to the children, but the young adults’ brain signal variability actually increased - got noisier.

“What we discovered is that brain maturation not only leads to more stable and accurate

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# Remembering one of our own

**T**oday Baycrest celebrated the life, professionalism and camaraderie of **Fern Alexander**, one of Baycrest’s registered nurses who passed away a few weeks ago. Fellow nurses and staff from other disciplines gathered in the 6 West dining room to share their memories of a nurse who worked in many departments over the years and who touched so many lives.

“Fern was such a lovely person, who really brought a calming presence to the patients she treated,” remarks **Mary Lou Ip**, Program Director, 6 West. “Fern was also a remarkable teacher. Whenever she offered instruction to her fellow nurses,

she would gently guide them rather than lecture or overrule them.”

As part of the memorial service, music therapy intern **Kiki Chang** sang Sarah MacLaughlin’s “I Will Remember You,” while staff exchanged stories of Fern and took the time to mourn the loss a nurse well-known to Baycrest. Mary Lou explains how important the memorial was to Fern’s colleagues, to be able to take time out from their busy schedules to pay tribute to her.

“When we hear of one of our own peers’ passing, it reminds us of our own vulnerability, but the opportunity to grieve together helps affirm that we

are not alone in our grief,” she adds. “It also affirms why we choose to work at Baycrest - we have a network of support in the good times and in bad.”



# Staff Library Needs Assessment Survey

**R**ecently, the Staff Library conducted a needs assessment to identify any existing needs and gaps in library services and resources.

Library clients who had used at least one of the library services in the past two years were invited to participate. Responses were collected from 84 of 199 clients over a 90-day period, representing a 42 percent response rate. Participants were invited to enter a draw for a memory stick as an added incentive.

The library needs assessment benefited the library in multiple ways: it produced important evidence for the library when it addressed the clients' needs in relation to new services, resources and technology; provided verifiable justification for requesting library funding; and assisted informed decisions on the

acquisition of new resources, library instruction design and development and information technological innovation.

"The needs assessment has served as a good start for the ongoing process of library service improvement and for the continuous efforts of maintaining excellent customer satisfaction," comments **Mary McDiarmid**, Manager, Staff Library.

The assessment identified the training needs of library clients and that limited time is problematic in accessing library skills training; helped to identify resources on the Virtual Library that require promotion such as the Library Catalogue and WebLinks; provided direction on where to focus efforts in the re-development of the Virtual Library; and reinforced that access to digital content is important to clients.

Congratulations to **Anne Kirstein**, Pharmacy and Diagnostic Services, who won the memory stick.

To read the survey findings, go to the News Section on the Virtual Library at Baycrest@Work. **BM**




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## Brain noise...continued from page 4

behavior in the performance of a memory task, but correlates with increased brain signal variability. This doesn't mean the brain is working less efficiently. It's showing greater functional variability, which is indicative of enhanced neural complexity," explained lead author and senior scientist **Dr. Randy McIntosh** in recent media interviews. "The brain is kind of exploring what it can do by trying out different possibilities."

Dr. McIntosh and his colleagues are starting to look at the noise levels in the brains of infants and the elderly, to see how they change with age. There is some evidence, he says, that noise levels go down with diseases such as Alzheimer's and go up with disorders such as schizophrenia.

"There's a level at which the noise is optimal, but just what that level is, researchers don't yet know," Dr. McIntosh added.

"These findings suggest that the random activity that we think of as *noise* may actually be a central component of normal brain function."

The study was funded by the James S. McDonnell Foundation. **BM**

# Paula David and her work with the Holocaust Survivors

By Fela Karmiol  
Terraces of Baycrest Resident

**F**ela Karmiol is a resident of the Terraces of Baycrest who has participated in Holocaust Resources programs including Café Europa. She submitted this tribute to **Paula David**, who recently retired from her position as Coordinator, Holocaust Resource Programs, to Baycrest Matters. Paula will be missed by all of Baycrest, but especially by the many Holocaust Survivors whose lives she had touched.

It goes back a few years, when she started to work with us. It was not easy, but she did it. For us, Paula David is an inspiration. She is unique. She opened a new window to the world for people to see us and remember us. She has also made a few books with us and school children about the Holocaust. Her dedication to the Survivors has resulted in funding from the Minister of

Immigration and Citizenship for our Café Europa, and we now meet every two weeks. We enjoy this café very much. Paula has arranged for everything. She organized and planned a special prom for us, and this was a once-in-a-lifetime event for us Survivors. It is hard to express in any language the joy that you feel from this event. No organization has ever done anything like this before.

A special thanks to Paula for everything she has done for us, we will remember what she has done for the Holocaust Survivors for the rest of our lives. To say thank you is not enough, but we would like to say it anyway!

I personally would like to say, Paula you've built a bridge between yourself and the rest of us. This bridge is going to be very solid and strong and will serve as an example for generations to come.



**Paula David**, senior social worker and coordinator, Holocaust Resource Programs, was given the royal treatment last week at her retirement party. Paula is leaving Baycrest after more than 20 years to join the Social Work faculty at the University of Toronto.

## A time of mourning

From Sunday, July 20 (the 17th day of the Hebrew month of Tammuz) to Sunday, August 10 (Tisha B'Av - the ninth day of the Hebrew month of Av), Jews around the world enter a time of mourning and reflection known as "the Three Weeks". During this period, Jews focus on disasters that befell their people throughout history.

Tisha B'av has historically been days of misfortune and calamity for the Jewish people. During this time, both the First

and Second Temples of Jerusalem - the spiritual centre - were destroyed. Today, Jews reflect on the meaning of the Temple in Jewish life, read the book of laments of Tisha B'av and hope and pray for the rebuilding of the Jerusalem and the Temple, its spiritual centre. The period of mourning concludes on August 10 after a 24-hour fast.

In commemoration of this period and in respect of Baycrest clients, joy and

entertainment are minimized while therapeutic activities are permitted and encouraged. Therapeutic music and song will continue along with other public displays such as concerts will feature events appropriate to this season.

For more information please call **Bobbie Cohen**, Culture and Heritage Coordinator, at ext. 2546.

# Farewell to David Streiner

**D**r. David Streiner, Assistant Vice President, Research and Director of the Kunitz-Lunenfeld Applied Research Unit (KLARU), will retire from his leadership and administrative responsibilities effective September 19, 2008.

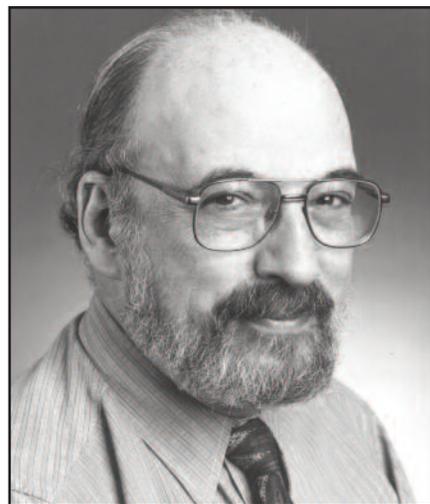
Dr. Streiner's illustrious career began in New York as a clinical psychologist at Syracuse University and he has made significant contributions to the field of psychology, epidemiology and statistics both nationally and internationally. Dr. Streiner came to Canada 40 years ago to join the Department of Psychiatry at McMaster University and became Chief Psychologist at the McMaster University Medical Centre. While at McMaster, Dr. Streiner's expertise in the areas of epidemiology and statistics were recognized with his appointment as a member (and deputy Chair for two years) of the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics.

Dr. Streiner joined Baycrest in 1998 and also served as a Professor in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Toronto. He has been instrumental in moving forward KLARU's research agenda: During his tenure there has been a growing interest and awareness of the importance of the application of research to Baycrest's clinical units, and most recently in the inclusion the research component in the development of program management in the Apotex Centre.

Aside from being a psychologist, scientist, and administrator, Dr. Streiner published four books and over 270 articles. He is the co-editor of the *Evidence-Based Mental Health*, the co-editor of Statistical Developments and Applications section of the *Journal of Personality Assessment*; and is on the editorial board of a number of different journal publications.

While he will decrease some of his commitments, retirement will enable Dr. Streiner to pursue his main

research interests and outside interests which include woodworking and spending time with his seven grandchildren.



Dr. David Streiner

# Farewell to Joe Medeiros

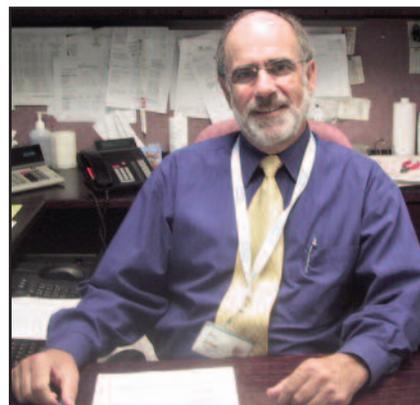
**A**fter more than 28 years at Baycrest, **Joe Medeiros**, Director, Environmental Services, announced his plans to retire effective October 31<sup>st</sup> of this year.

Joe is a dedicated leader and has consistently made significant contributions to Baycrest over the years. At the end of our recent Accreditation Canada review, the surveyors commented with favourable praise on the quality and appearance of our buildings and infrastructure. Much of that credit

goes to Joe as he has effectively lead a team of dedicated staff who work hard every day to make Baycrest a pleasant place to live and work.

Over the next three months, Joe will help with the transitioning process, including helping to select his replacement.

We wish you all the best.



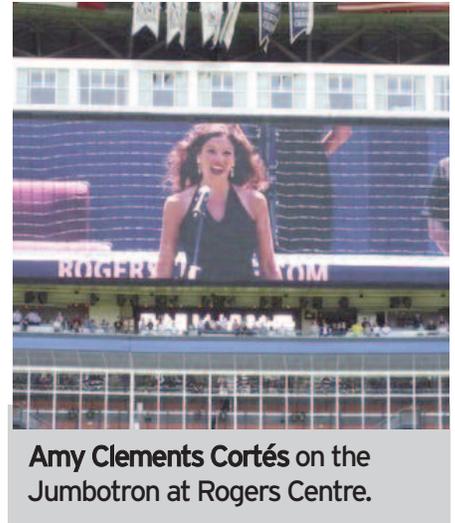
Joe Medeiros, Director, Environmental Services

## Take me out to the ball game

If she was nervous you would never know it – Baycrest music therapist **Amy Clements Cortés** did not even bat an eyelash when she sang the Canadian and American anthems in front of over 43,000 spectators at the Rogers Centre last week. After hearing her sing at a staff barbeque a few years ago, Baycrest board member Paul Godfrey and Toronto Blue Jays president and CEO invited

Amy to sing at a baseball game, and since then she has returned every summer.

Amy has been at Baycrest for over 11 years and will present a project piloted in palliative care later this month at the World Congress of Music Therapy in Buenos Aires. “As a music therapist, I really see the value that families place on music not only for its healing qualities but also how it ties clients back to their cultures and communities, whether it is helping a patient to write a song for his family or performing at an afternoon concert,” Amy explains.



**Amy Clements Cortés** on the Jumbotron at Rogers Centre.

## Announcements

Congratulations to **Dr. Morris Freedman**, Medical Program Director for Behavioural Neurology (4 West Hospital) and Medical Director of the Sam and Ida Ross Memory Clinic in the Brain Health Centre, who has received the Colin R. Woolf Award from the Department of Medicine of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Toronto..

Baycrest Foundation welcomes **Marilyn Maierovitz**, Senior Development Officer and liaison for the Women’s Auxiliary. Marilyn comes to Baycrest from UJA Federation and brings a wealth of event planning experience and community organization skills.

Please welcome **Geoff Owen** to the position of Human Resources Coordinator beginning on Monday, July 14. With two years experience in a variety of Human Resources functions, in both the private and the public

sector, Geoff comes to Baycrest after completing a two-year contract assignment at Bloorview Kids Rehab, in the role of Compensation, Benefits & Metrics Assistant. Geoff is currently pursuing his Certified Human Resources Professional (CHRP) designation through the Human Resources Professional Association of Ontario.

Geoff replaces **Eric McCallum**, who will be leaving Baycrest in August to pursue further education at Queen’s University.

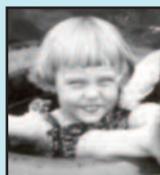


## Blast from the past!

This handsome young man has been a volunteer at Baycrest for several years and now resides at the Terraces.

Send your guesses to **Joan Mortimer** at [mortimerj@baycrest.org](mailto:mortimerj@baycrest.org) or call her at ext. 2952. If there is more than one correct guess

then a name will be drawn for the winner. If you would like to reveal what you once looked like (as an adorable baby, dressed in bell bottoms or a mini skirt, 30 pounds thinner or with hair), then dust off those old photos and send them to Joan



This adorable water baby is none other than **Sheila Smyth**, Director, Terraces of Baycrest. Since no one guessed correctly Sheila will be awarded a Baycrest travel mug.