

Baycrest Matters

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

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Celebrating excellence at Baycrest



▲ Staff at Baycrest came together on March 6 to celebrate excellence in research, innovation, teamwork, interprofessional collaboration and leadership at the Annual Staff Recognition Awards. The awards are sponsored by the Anna and Frank Schipper Endowment Fund.

The team from Baycrest's Centre for Learning, Research and Innovation in Long Term Care, part of Baycrest's Centre for Education and Knowledge Exchange in Aging, was awarded the *Excellence in Sharing Learning* award (left).

Danjela Gvero (right) and the entire physiotherapy team won for *Excellence Through Teamwork*.

For a complete list of award winners and more photos, check out the Baycrest blog on the intranet.

Audiology embarks on cutting-edge research

Can treating hearing loss in people with dementia improve the quality of their lives and the lives of their family members and caregivers? Baycrest's Audiology department aims to find out in a ground-breaking research study.

"Research has shown a link between hearing loss and dementia," says Dr. Kate Dupuis, postdoctoral fellow in Audiology. "For instance, seniors with greater

degrees of hearing loss are significantly more likely to develop dementia than those with better hearing. In addition, our own research has suggested that seniors with hearing loss, on average, score lower on standard cognitive assessments than their peers without hearing loss."

Unfortunately, Dupuis says, there is little research on the benefits of using hearing aids to treat hearing loss in seniors

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Baycrest is an academic
health sciences centre
fully affiliated with the
University of Toronto

Baycrest

www.baycrest.org

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diagnosed with dementia. “It’s exciting to pursue this new area of research,” she says. “Our study has the potential to contribute new knowledge to audiologic rehabilitation and cognitive science. More importantly, we

hope to improve the lives of our clients with hearing loss and cognitive decline, and help their family members during this difficult time. In particular, family members may benefit from improved communication with their loved ones.”

The study is funded by Phonak, a leading international hearing aid manufacturer. Along with Dr. Dupuis, the lead investigators are Kathleen Pichora-Fuller, professor of Psychology at the University of Toronto and Marilyn Reed, practice advisor in Audiology at Baycrest. Collaborators

include Dr. Sid Feldman, chief, Department of Family and Community Medicine at Baycrest, Dr. Kelly Murphy in Baycrest Neuropsychology and Cognitive Health, and Dr. Ulrike Lemke, senior scientist at Phonak AG.

Do you know the symptoms of hearing loss?

If you or a loved one:

- Often need people to repeat themselves
- Have difficulty hearing when there is background noise
- Turn the volume up very high on the TV or stereo

These could be signs of hearing loss.

Baycrest’s Audiology Department can help

Hearing assessments, hearing aids, and other assistive devices and communication strategies are available.

Drop by or call Baycrest Audiology, ground floor, hospital 416-785-2500 ext. 2377



RRI conference marks 25th year

Some of the world’s brightest scientific minds gathered in Toronto for the annual Rotman Research Institute (RRI) Conference, March 9 to 11, marking its 25th year. Those attending the RRI conference were especially reflective given the recent passing of Joseph Rotman, a driving force in the RRI’s creation. Dr. Donald Stuss, RRI’s founding director, shared how Rotman was proud of the way RRI had evolved over the last 25 years.

“The institute is now regarded as among the best in the world for the study of aging and the brain,” says Fergus Craik, conference co-chair and RRI scientist.

This year’s program included talks on early diagnosis and treatment of dementia; impact of lifestyle factors and cognitive reserve on healthy brain aging; as well as more controversial topics, including rewriting traumatic memory and treating depression with deep brain stimulation.

With the population living longer, the incidence of dementia is also increasing dramatically. “The scientific work done here is crucial to the discovery of new forms of diagnosis and treatment. We’re looking forward to the next 25 years of work in this important field,” says Randy McIntosh, director, Rotman Research Institute.





Reaching new heights in excellence, together.

Accreditation update

Supporting a healthy work environment

Anna Grunin, a physiotherapist on the hospital 3W rehabilitation team is enhancing her ability to communicate with clients and adding a new skill to her resume. Grunin recently received tuition assistance from the Organizational Effectiveness department, supported by the Baycrest Foundation, to study Italian.

“It was important for me to be able to communicate with our diverse clients in the language they understand,” said Grunin. “I often hear people say they feel very isolated when they cannot communicate even their basic needs. Now I see a client’s relief when I speak their language. Baycrest’s investment in my learning has paid off for our clients and I am grateful for this opportunity, as it brought personal and professional growth.”

When the Accreditation surveyors visit us in June, they will ask about how Baycrest supports a healthy work environment through programs like tuition assistance.

“At Baycrest, we are committed to creating and sustaining a great work environment and maintain

an unwavering focus on being a workplace of choice,” said Joel Borgida, manager, Organizational Effectiveness. “Providing opportunities for learning and development, recognizing staff through our annual awards and our CARE values programs, and asking for feedback through our employee engagement survey are all examples of organizational practices that promote a healthy work environment where staff can achieve their personal best.”

Accreditation tips:

1. Baycrest has made being a “workplace of choice” a strategic focus in the 2013-18 strategic plan.
2. Visit the “Employee Corner” Section of the intranet for information on learning and development opportunities and our recognition programs.
3. Baycrest offers staff free access to an on-site fitness centre, equipped with weight machines, cardio equipment and an exercise floor.
4. The employee assistance program (EAP), available to all employees, provides: confidential counselling, financial information and resources, work-life solutions and health and wellness resources in a confidential, accessible format. More info is available on the intranet.

Chag Sameach!



Passover or *Pesach* is one of the most widely observed Jewish holidays. It commemorates God’s liberation of the Jewish People over 3,300 years ago from slavery in ancient Egypt and their freedom as a nation under the leadership of Moses.

In the narrative of the Exodus, the Torah tells that God helped the Children of Israel escape from slavery in Egypt by inflicting ten plagues upon the ancient Egyptians. When the

Pharaoh freed the Israelites, it is said that they left in such a hurry that they could not wait for bread dough to rise (leaven).

The rituals unique to the Passover celebrations commence with the Passover Seder. For the duration of the seven-day festival (eight days in the diaspora) no leavened bread is eaten, for which reason Passover was called the feast of unleavened bread in the Torah. Instead, matzah (flat unleavened bread) is eaten during Passover and it is a tradition of the holy day. This year, Passover begins the evening of Friday, April 3 and ends the evening of Saturday, April 11.

See a list of Passover events on page 4

Staff announcements

Congratulations to Dawna Thomas, ultrasound supervisor and clinical coordinator at Baycrest, on receiving a Values in Action Award from the Michener Institute. Dawna was recognized for excellence in teaching Michener students about working with elderly patients during their clinical site visit to Baycrest. Read more about Dawna’s passion for teaching on the intranet or the Baycrest Facebook page.

Passover at Baycrest



Passover Concert and Program

Rabbi Geoffrey Haber and musician Mark Youhanan
 Thursday, April 2
 3 to 4 p.m. Winter Garden Court

Traditional Services in Wortsman Hall

Saturday, April 4 at 9 a.m.
 Sunday, April 5 at 9 a.m.
 Friday, April 10 at 9 a.m.
 Saturday, April 11 at 9 a.m.

Liberal Services: Winter Garden Court

Saturday, April 4 at 1:30 p.m.
 Saturday, April 11 at 1:30 p.m.

Check with Therapeutic Recreation staff for information about special Seder programs.



▲ Bev and 9-month-old alpaca, Nikko, who is halter training for the upcoming show season.

The people around us: A staff feature Bev Vanhanen

Meet Bev Vanhanen, one of the friendly faces of Baycrest. As an administrative coordinator at the Terraces/Wagman Centre, no two days are alike for Bev. She coordinates the Lifeline program, compiles monthly activity schedules and creates the newsletter for the Joseph E. and Minnie Wagman Centre.

Bev has worked at Baycrest since 2002. She drives in from Uxbridge every day and says, “I love my job, or I wouldn’t drive 150 km a day just to be here!” Bev and her family live on a farm

with two guard dogs and 121 alpacas. The alpacas receive a lot of love and attention from Bev, her family, and the community. “We have an annual open house and last year, hosted nearly 700 visitors to the farm,” she says. The Vanhanens show alpacas at competitions and even sell socks, scarves and rugs made from their fleece. Where to find her: Say hello to Bev when she’s out and about at the Terraces of Baycrest and Wagman Centre.