Late-Career Nursing Initiative participants lead the way in bringing best practices to the bedside

Eight registered nurses (RNs) and registered practical nurses (RPNs) in the hospital and the Apotex are putting the knowledge and experience they’ve gained over many years in the field to good use on projects that will advance the practice of nursing.

The nurses are the first at Baycrest to participate in the Late Career Nursing Initiative, funded by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. The program gives late-career nurses the opportunity to step away from bedside care one day a week for 12 weeks to work on projects like mentoring, evaluation or quality improvement.

“As seasoned nurses we have a lot of gold nuggets we can share, knowledge that’s not possible to put into books,” says Lucie Holynaty, a registered nurse on the 3 West rehabilitation unit. Holynaty is one of the participants in the program and has been a nurse for 39 years. “Nothing beats experience,” she says.

At Baycrest, the Late Career Nursing Initiative has been aligned with the Best Practice Spotlight Organization (BPSO) initiative, a three-year quality improvement project that will see six of the Registered Nursing Association of Ontatario’s Best Practice Guidelines implemented on units in the hospital and the Apotex.

Anne Marie Shin, director, Nursing, says getting late-career nurses involved in the project is a win-win situation for the nurses and for Baycrest. “These nurses are...continued on page 8
Baycrest study finds some languages prime the brain for musical training

Non-musicians who speak tonal languages may have a better ear for learning musical notes, according to a new study by scientists at Baycrest’s Rotman Research Institute (RRI).

Tonal languages are found mainly in Asia, Africa and South America. They have an abundance of high and low pitch patterns as part of speech. Vietnamese, for example, has eleven different vowel sounds and six different tones. Cantonese also has a six-tone system, while English has no tones.

The study, led by Dr. Gavin Bidelman during his post-doctoral fellowship at RRI has found the strongest evidence yet that speaking a tonal language may improve how the brain hears music.

The benefits of music training for speech and language are already well documented (showing positive influences on speech perception and recognition, auditory working memory, aspects of verbal intelligence, and awareness of the sound structure of spoken words). The reverse – the benefits of language experience for learning music – has largely been unexplored until now.

“For those who speak tonal languages, we believe their brain’s auditory system is already enhanced to allow them to hear musical notes better and detect minute changes in pitch,” said Dr. Bidelman, now an assistant professor with the Institute for Intelligent Systems and School of Communication Science & Disorders at the University of Memphis.

Dr. Bidelman and his colleagues conducted their study with groups of English-speaking musicians and English-speaking and Cantonese-speaking non-musicians. They tested the participants’ aptitude for discriminating complex musical notes and other auditory abilities.

While the musicians demonstrated superior performance on all auditory measures, the Cantonese-speaking non-musicians showed similar performance to musicians on music and cognitive behavioural tasks, testing 15 to 20 per cent higher than that of the English-speaking non-musicians.

According to Dr. Bidelman this evidence offers exciting possibilities for devising new approaches to rehabilitation for people with speech and language deficits.

“If music and language are so intimately coupled, we may be able to design rehabilitation treatments that use musical training to help individuals improve speech-related functions that have been impaired due to age, aphasia or stroke,” he said.

Bidelman’s research team included Sylvain Moreno, senior scientist with Baycrest’s RRI and lead scientist with the Baycrest Centre for Brain Fitness; and Stefanie Hutka, an RRI graduate student and PhD student in the Department of Psychology, University of Toronto. The study received funding from the GRAMMY Foundation and is published online in PLOS ONE, an international, peer-reviewed open-access science journal.
New Medical Services online re-credentialing system is more efficient, saves trees

Baycrest’s eHealth Informatics and Medical Services teams have collaborated to make the process of physician re-credentialing simpler and greener for physicians and administrative staff alike.

Baycrest’s new Online Re-credentialing System launched April 3, replacing an outdated manual paper process. Each year, all physicians who work in hospitals and long-term care facilities in Ontario must undergo re-credentialing, a process that verifies their professional qualifications.

The average physician credentialing paper file is approximately 250 pages and there are approximately 130 physicians at Baycrest. By implementing an electronic re-credentialing system, Medical Services estimates a savings of approximately 40 trees in the first year alone.

“We are very excited about the launch of our own online re-credentialing system for physicians. It will improve the efficiency and accuracy of this important administrative task. We are looking forward to this tremendous advance, which is being made possible through an innovative use of technology,” says Dr. Gary Naglie, chief of Medicine.

Residents and families celebrate Passover in the Winter Garden

Monty Mazin, a resident of Baycrest’s Reuben Cipin Healthy Living Community and his wife Blema (centre), a resident of the Apotex, raised a glass at the Apotex Family Dinner and Passover Program held in the Winter Garden on March 28. The couple celebrated along with clients and families from the Apotex and the hospital. The evening’s festivities included a Seder program led by Rabbi Lori Cohen and songs led by students from Tanenbaum CHAT.
Here at Baycrest, we spend a lot of time as healthcare providers, educators and researchers trying to find better ways to help people age. Our innovative approach has made us a world leader in aging and brain health, growing our reputation from a local long-term care home for seniors to a community-based academic healthcare organization and research institute that has far-reaching global influence.

And our focus on innovation, technology and next practice helps set Baycrest apart from other senior care organizations. But the intangibles are what truly brand Baycrest as special in the minds of our clients and their families. For them, it’s not the buildings, or the technologies, or the published research papers that matter most. For them, it’s the day-to-day experience that counts. It’s about how Baycrest improves their quality of life, even in the midst of cognitive decline or physical limitations.

A resident in the Apotex published an article in Canadian Jewish News last week that provides a very poignant perspective on life at Baycrest—and serves as an important reminder of why we do what we do each day.

This 90-something resident lives here with his wife, who he still affectionately calls “his Baby.” In his article, he writes about the benefits of living at Baycrest—delicious food, concerts in the Winter Garden, floors that are clean enough to eat from, and the caring and personal attention they get from our staff.

But his account of the difficulties of getting old is particularly vivid when described through his eyes here at Baycrest. The loss of independence. The dwindling circle of friends. Sleeping apart from his wife, and dealing with the knowledge that she no longer knows what he’s saying to her.

I think his article gives us a witty, humorous and, at times, melancholy account of what many of our residents may feel about growing old and living in a long-term care facility. As caregivers, we need these occasional reminders to remain empathetic to their feelings; to truly understand their lived experiences with us. We may not be able to stop aging or remove the losses that getting older may entail, but we can surely aspire to create a new version of old age that is viewed as a positive, enriching stage of life still full of opportunity, despite our physical or cognitive limitations. By combining a high degree of empathy with the extremely positive client experience this resident described, we are well on our way to achieving that aspiration. And while we will continue to seek innovations and technologies to support a new paradigm of aging, we cannot lose sight of the small things that have such tremendous daily impact on the quality of life of our clients and their families. Like our resident and his Baby, the two go together hand in hand.
**Annual Recognition Awards**

Award winners say sharing learning with staff, students and families is a rewarding experience

This year’s Annual recognition awards celebrated achievements by staff in 2012. The awards are sponsored by Baycrest and the Anna and Frank Schipper Endowment Fund. In this, the second in our monthly series, we’re profiling the winners of the Excellence in Sharing Learning award.

“Everyone is a learner,” says Mary McDiarmid, manager of Library Services. In her job overseeing both the Staff Library and the Anne and Louis Pritzker Wellness Library, she helps facilitate learning for virtually everyone at Baycrest, from students and staff in all areas of the organization to clients, families and visitors.

McDiarmid says her mission is “making sure everyone has access to the best quality information out there.”

This means helping clinicians and staff in administration find information for research papers and reports; teaching nurses to look up medications in an online database; presenting workshops to staff members about copyright issues; and making sure the Wellness Library is user-friendly and accessible to residents, families, volunteers and members of the general public.

According to Faith Boutcher, director, Academic Education, Dr. David Conn, vice president, Education and Lisa Sokoloff, specialist, International Relations and Interprofessional Education and professional practice chief, Speech-Language Pathology, who nominated her for the award, McDiarmid is doing a tremendous job. Under her leadership, the Wellness Library has partnered with the Toronto Public Library to bring health information sessions led by Baycrest experts to a larger audience of consumers. McDiarmid is also working to expand the reach of the library through a tool that will enable library patrons to search the catalogue online and borrow books by mail.

McDiarmid says one of the most rewarding aspects of her job is seeing the information she gathers put to use to develop new programs and services. “I don’t always realize that something I’ve worked on becomes a living, breathing wonderful thing,” she says. “It’s great to be a part of that.”

“Teaching is part of our professional responsibility,” she says. “In the field of psychology we learn from each other.”

On being recognized for Excellence in Sharing Learning at this year’s Annual Recognition Awards, Dr. Angela Troyer, professional practice chief, Psychology and program director, Neuropsychology and Cognitive Health, said she couldn’t think of any award she’d rather receive.

“This exchange of knowledge and sharing learning is also something Dr. Troyer says she loves about her job.

“It’s very rewarding watching students and trainees grow and evolve as professionals,” she says. “I have always loved learning, whether in the classroom or in my job, and I’m happy to know I’ve played a positive role in the learning of others.”

According to the group of colleagues and students who nominated her, Dr. Troyer has played a major role in sharing learning with many students and staff: in the classroom environment at the University of Toronto where she is an associate professor; as a clinical supervisor to junior staff members; and by sharing her expertise and promoting a collaborative, supportive environment in her department.

Dr. Troyer doesn’t take all the credit for the learning environment in her department, however. “Baycrest provides a very supportive environment for both learning and teaching,” she says. “It’s wonderful to be a part of that.”

**Nominate a co-worker**

Nominations for Baycrest’s Annual Recognition Awards are open year-round. If you know someone who’s made an outstanding contribution at Baycrest, submit a nomination. For more information, visit the Recognition and Rewards section of the intranet or contact Don Colangelo, coordinator, Organizational Effectiveness at ext. 2365 or dcolangelo@baycrest.org.
Baycrest Matters
A bi-weekly update for Baycrest staff, families, clients and volunteers

Yom HaShoah ceremony commemorates the Holocaust

The Baycrest community gathered in the Winter Garden on April 7 to mark Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day.

The program included songs, poems, prayers and a candle-lighting ceremony. Survivors, child survivors and children of survivors participated in the lighting of six candles honouring the memory of the six million who perished in the Holocaust.

“This day holds great meaning for Jews worldwide. The overwhelming theme that runs through all observances is the importance of remembering — recalling the victims of the Holocaust, and ensuring that such a tragedy never happens again,” says Bianca Stern, director, Culture, Arts and Innovation.

Group from Baycrest to attend National Holocaust Remembrance Day

A group of Baycrest staff, child survivors, children of survivors, and volunteers, accompanied by Dr. Bill Reichman, president and CEO and Garry Foster, chair of the Baycrest Board of Directors, will be travelling to Ottawa to attend this year’s National Holocaust Remembrance Day Ceremony on April 23 at the Canadian War Museum.

The theme for this year’s ceremony is “From Tragedy to Triumph.” It will pay special tribute to Holocaust survivors, presenting their stories before an expected 500 guests, including families, students, and members of Canada’s political, legislative and community sectors.

Special Presentation: Why Remember?

All Baycrest staff, clients, families and volunteers are invited to attend a special pre-trip talk entitled Why Remember? on April 17 from 3 to 4 p.m. in Wortsman Hall. Shoshana Yaakobi, social worker and coordinator of the Holocaust Resource Program and Bianca Stern, director, Culture, Arts and Innovation will present.

Sculpted Seder plates connect Passover and the environment

Avishal, a Grade 6 student at the Toronto Heschel School shows Elisabeth Michnick, a resident of the Terraces of Baycrest, a ceramic Seder plate he sculpted and glazed. Students at the Jewish day school and residents of the Terraces worked together to create the plates in an intergenerational learning project. The students and seniors explored the themes of Passover and how they can be connected to eco-friendly values and environmental stewardship. The artists exhibited their works and shared their ideas at a reception at the Terraces on April 5.
Jacob Family Theatre opens at Baycrest

On March 14, Ellis Jacob, president and CEO of Cineplex Entertainment and 180 of his family, friends and colleagues gathered at Baycrest to celebrate the grand opening of the Jacob Family Theatre in the Abe Posluns Auditorium.

The theatre is a tribute to family members who have a long history with Baycrest and a deep love of film. While his mother was a resident here, Jacob arranged for her to be taken to the movies once – often twice – a week. After her passing in 2010, the family decided to honour her memory by building a cinema for residents, clients, families and caregivers to enjoy on the Baycrest campus.

“Movies provide entertainment and escapism,” says Jacob. “I know how much it meant to my mother to go to the movies while she was hospitalized. With the Jacob Family Theatre everyone can experience the magic that movies provide. Additionally, we are forever grateful to all the sponsors and contributors who helped make this dream a reality.”

In addition to being used to screen films, “the theatre will position Baycrest as a global hub in tele-health and tele-education,” says Dr. Bill Reichman, president and CEO, Baycrest. “It will change the experience of aging by enabling distance care to clients in remote locations, while providing a forum for dialogue between healthcare professionals in aging brain health – on our campus and worldwide.”

To find out more about the Baycrest Foundation or to make a gift, call 416-785-2875 or e-mail donations@baycrest.org.

Magazine recognizes innovative Baycrest tool as one of Canada’s top radical ideas

Canadian Business magazine recently released a list of the “top radical ideas to kick-start Canada’s economy” and Cogniciti, Baycrest’s joint venture with MaRS innovation centre made the list for its online cognitive assessment tool. The application, now in the final stages of development is designed to help adults better manage their brain health by helping them answer the question “Is my memory normal or should I see my doctor?”

Canadian Business noted that while many companies offer online cognitive fitness training programs, assessment is one area that’s “virtually untapped.”
important stakeholders in this initiative and what better way to develop techniques and tools for enhancing best practice care than by harnessing their knowledge and experience?” she says.

The nurses in the late career program have just finished their 12-week projects developing tools and resources that will be used to implement the best practice guidelines in two area of focus: falls prevention and assessment and management of pressure ulcers.

Sheila Brandford, an RPN on the 5 West Complex Continuing Care Unit says when she saw that falls prevention would be one of the areas of focus, she thought “this is an area where I could give some of my knowledge, being a more experienced nurse.” She and the other nurses who worked on the falls prevention guideline have developed a falls risk assessment sheet to be completed with families and clients on admission, as well as a neurological assessment checklist card that nurses can carry with them for reminders on best practice in assessing clients after a fall and documenting the incident.

Ola Ayodele, RN, 3 East, says she was motivated to apply for the program for the opportunity to contribute and have an impact in what she sees as an important issue. “Pressure ulcers are challenging for clients and for healthcare providers, especially in the elderly,” she says.” Ayodele and her colleagues organized the recent Baycrest Bed Fair, which educated staff on the role of therapeutic mattresses in preventing pressure ulcers. They also developed a manual containing information on proper wound care and a guide on assessing pressure ulcers and determining when a client needs a therapeutic mattress.

Both groups’ work will be used to implement the best practice guidelines on all units at Baycrest and Brandford says knowing she’s contributed to this effort gives her a great sense of satisfaction. “I’m looking forward to seeing it all rolled out,” she says.