

BAYCREST BULLETIN

A snapshot of Baycrest news and events / April - May 2024

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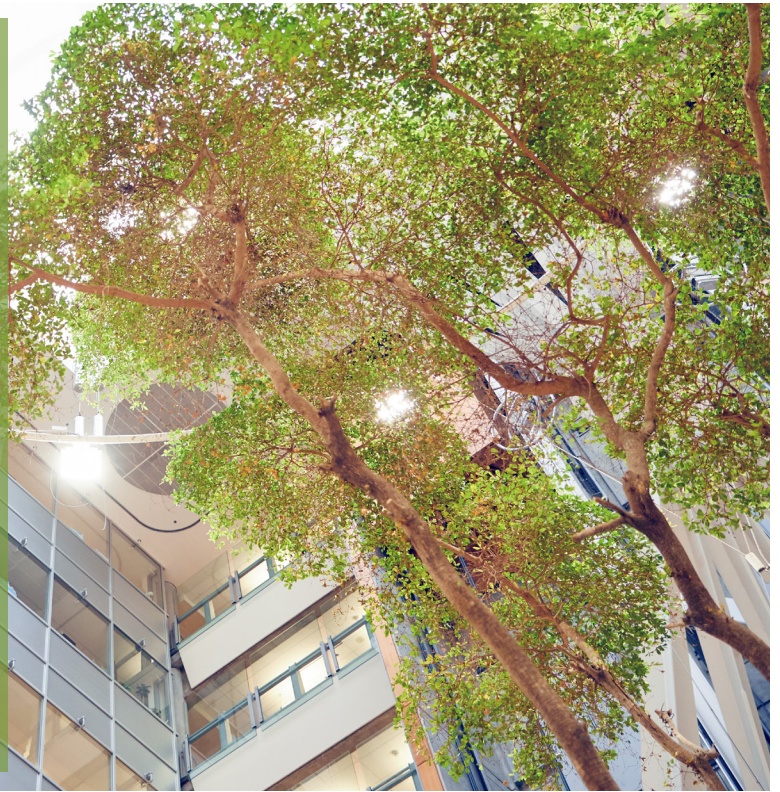
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Clinical Guidelines on Social Isolation and Loneliness in Older Adults



The first-of-their-kind clinical guidelines surrounding social isolation and loneliness in older adults have been developed and released by the Canadian Coalition for Seniors' Mental Health (CCSMH) with the leadership of Dr. David Conn, Executive

Vice President and Chief Academic Officer, Baycrest Academy for Research & Education. The guidelines address Canada's loneliness epidemic with resources for health care and social service professionals, older adults and care partners nationwide.

It is critical that the growing rates of loneliness and social isolation are addressed as they can impact both physical and mental well-being. In fact, the increased risk of death associated with social isolation and loneliness is comparable to that of smoking 15 cigarettes per day. They are also associated with an increased risk of diseases such as stroke and heart disease and a greater risk of anxiety, depression and dementia.

The Canadian Clinical Guidelines on Social Isolation and Loneliness in Older Adults provides health care

and social service professionals with 17 evidence-based recommendations that should be considered including prevention, screening and assessment for older adults. These tools will help professionals in supporting older adults who may be at risk of, or are already experiencing, social isolation and loneliness.

These newly released clinical guidelines address the growing loneliness epidemic. While Canadians of all ages are affected, older adults are particularly at risk due to circumstances and changes associated with aging, such as lack of energy, often living alone and living with physical limitations. Contributing factors that are associated with aging include transitional life events such as retirement, the death of family or friends or changes in living arrangements.

However, these are not an inevitable part of aging and the health impacts of social isolation and loneliness require a comprehensive approach involving the older adults themselves, healthcare providers, community organizations and policymakers. We can work together to address the risk older adults experience disproportionately by strengthening social connections, which has been linked to decreased

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disability and premature death.

The good news is that even small increases in social connection have been linked to improvements in physical and mental health. Released along with the clinical guidelines are new resources to support older adults and care partners nationwide.

These guidelines were developed and researched by an interdisciplinary working group consisting of leading subject matter experts in the study of social isolation and loneliness among older adults from coast to coast. Over the course of a year and a half, group members offered their clinical, research and professional expertise, evaluating research evidence, voting on recommendations and writing the guidelines, which can be found at [CCSMH.ca](https://www.ccsmh.ca).

National Volunteer Week - April 14 to 20, 2024

The week of April 14 is National Volunteer Week. Volunteerism is woven throughout the fabric of Baycrest, and we would like to acknowledge and thank our volunteers for their ongoing support and commitment to Baycrest. This year's theme is Every Moment Matters. It highlights the importance of every volunteer and each contribution they make when we need support more than ever.

At Baycrest, volunteers are involved in virtually every area across campus and are essential to Baycrest's ability to deliver excellence in care, education, innovation and research. Their roles are diverse and meaningful, as they donate their time to socialize with clients, provide eating assistance, escort clients to programs, participate in art, music and recreational activities, participate in research projects, and much more

Please take a moment to thank the volunteers working within each of your areas for all that they do. During the week, please send volunteers notes of appreciation and thank them in person. We appreciate all of our volunteers during National Volunteer Week and every other week of the year. Let's celebrate every moment.



If you're interested in becoming a volunteer with Baycrest, please visit [baycrest.org/volunteer](https://www.baycrest.org/volunteer).

The Connection Between Mental Illness and Dementia



Free public talk on the link between mental illness and dementia

Health Talks | April 18, 2024

Baycrest

In this Health Talks session, Dr. Nasreen Khatri, Clinical Psychologist, Gerontologist and Researcher at Baycrest's Rotman Research Institute, will discuss the connection between dementia risk and mental health disorders, such as depression. She will cover the latest research showing how experiencing depression in adulthood may double your risk of developing dementia later in life. Dr. Khatri will provide practical tips on how to manage your mental health today to optimize future cognitive health. A Q&A session will follow.

Throughout this session, Dr. Khatri will refer to the article "Mental illness, especially later in life, can increase the risk of dementia," published by The New York Times in November 2023. Join us on Thursday, April 18, from 11 a.m. to noon, both in-person at Baycrest's Centre for Health Information and virtually. For all details, please visit www.baycrest.org/healthtalks. The Ada Starkman Community Lecture Series Endowment Fund sponsors the Health Talks series.

Employee Spotlight – Rachel Gavendo



Rachel Gavendo is a dedicated Therapeutic Recreation Specialist who works in the Apotex Centre, Jewish Home for the Aged. Rachel's journey into the world of therapeutic recreation is not just a career choice but a heartfelt calling inspired by early childhood experiences and a deep family connection to Baycrest.

From a young age, Rachel was drawn to the noble pursuit of supporting older adults, inspired by visits to her grandmother at the Apotex. These visits exposed her to the impactful work of therapeutic recreationists, sparking a lifelong passion. Pursuing studies at the University of Waterloo, Rachel immersed herself in the Therapeutic Recreation program, discovering the profession's depth and potential. She emphasizes, "It's more than just making people happy; it's about helping people realize their strengths and their potential. It's about focusing on what you can do versus what you can't."

Baycrest holds a special place in Rachel's heart, not just as a workplace but as a familial legacy. With a mother who served in the Pharmacy Department for 38 years, Rachel's connection to Baycrest spans three generations. This

deep-rooted connection has imbued her with a holistic and interdisciplinary approach to care, reflecting the institution's person-centred ethos. Rachel fondly recalls the sense of community and respect that permeates every aspect of Baycrest, from the pet therapy dogs to the communal worship during Jewish holidays.

Over the years, Rachel has witnessed Baycrest's evolution, embracing innovation, research and technology while maintaining its warmth and focus on compassionate care. She has had the privilege of pioneering the use of new technologies like the Obie projector and social robots, enriching the residents' lives with innovative activities.

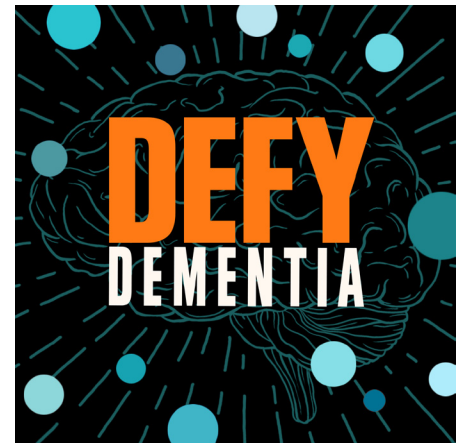
What Rachel finds most rewarding about her work is the everyday moments of connection and joy she facilitates among residents, caregivers, staff, volunteers and students. Whether it's through music, art or special events, Rachel's work is about creating a sense of community and belonging. Her story is a testament to the power of therapeutic recreation in enhancing the quality of life for older adults and the enduring impact of a career devoted to care and compassion.

New Defy Dementia Podcast Episodes on Stress and Caregiving

We are excited to announce the release of two impactful episodes from the Defy Dementia podcast, now available for our Baycrest staff community. These episodes delve into the critical topics of stress, caregiving and their effects on brain health.

Episode 10: Reduce Your Stress for Brain Health

This two-part special begins with an exploration of how stress can adversely impact our brain health. Hosts Jay and Allison engage with "Zoe", who shares her experience with post-traumatic stress disorder following a traumatic incident, and Dr. William Malarkey from Ohio State University, an expert on stress and its effects on the brain. The conversation then shifts to the specific stresses faced by caregivers and how these pressures can elevate dementia risk. The episode offers practical advice for protecting your brain health amid life's stresses.



Episode 11: Take Good Care - Brain Health for Caregivers

Continuing the focus on stress and caregiving, Episode 11 addresses the significant impact of caregiving on brain health. With the likelihood of becoming a caregiver quite high in Canada, this episode brings to light the factors that may increase dementia risk for caregivers. Dr. Ho Yu from the University of Toronto and Katie Brandt, who cared for her husband and father with dementia, provide insights and advice for both current and future caregivers. This episode is a must-listen for anyone navigating the caregiving journey, offering essential tips and encouragement for defying dementia. Wherever you are in your brain health journey, don't miss these empowering new episodes to help you defy dementia. Tune in at defydementia.org or anywhere you get your podcasts.

Congratulations to Paul Nicholson on Top 10 Under 40 Achievement



We're proud to share that Paul Nicholson, our esteemed Program Director of Security and Emergency Preparedness at Baycrest, has earned a spot among Canadian Security's prestigious **Top 10 Under 40**. Paul's dedication to shaping positive change through every interaction in the dynamic field of security and emergency preparedness is truly inspiring. "It's the opportunity to influence attitudes, behaviours and understanding that stands as a constant in our profession," says Paul.

Innovation Updates

Bringing Language Translation Services to the Bedside



Over the past month, with the support of Corporate Support Services, Quality Improvement (QI) and the Innovation Office (BIO), Baycrest has been rolling out a new translation platform for staff, called Voyce, which is an on-demand, virtual professional language interpretation service that can be easily accessed by a tablet, smartphone, web browser or phone. Staff and clients now have live access to over 240 language interpreters 24/7.

Integrating innovative platforms such as Voyce will help advance our commitment to language-concordant care. In addition, it will help ensure our clients' needs are being understood by making health services more accessible for clients and families who face language barriers.

For questions about Voyce, contact BIO at innovation@baycrest.org

Take Charge of Your Digital Skills with Our Free, Weekly Program



To help older adults take control of their digital literacy, Baycrest's Patient, Family and Consumer Education (PFCE) team has started a weekly drop-in session called Technology Support for Older Adults.

Every Wednesday from 2 to 3 p.m., a technology expert is on hand to address inquiries regarding digital technology at Baycrest's Centre for Health Information, situated on the first floor of the Apotex Centre. All are welcome, and registration is not necessary. For further details, please contact Suzanne Pede, Project Coordinator, Patient, Family and Consumer Education, at spede@baycrest.org.

BUBBY'S BLOOMS

Passover Drive-thru Pick Up Flower Sale

Monday, April 22, 2024 | 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Kimel Entrance, Baycrest

100% of all proceeds support Baycrest programs
baycrestfoundation.org/bubbysblossoms

Pre-order a beautiful bouquet for \$20.
Please place your order by Friday, April 19.
For more information, contact
Joanne Gittens at 416-785-2500 ext. 2023
or JGittens@baycrest.org.

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