

# BAYCREST BULLETIN

*A snapshot of Baycrest news and events / August-September 2022*

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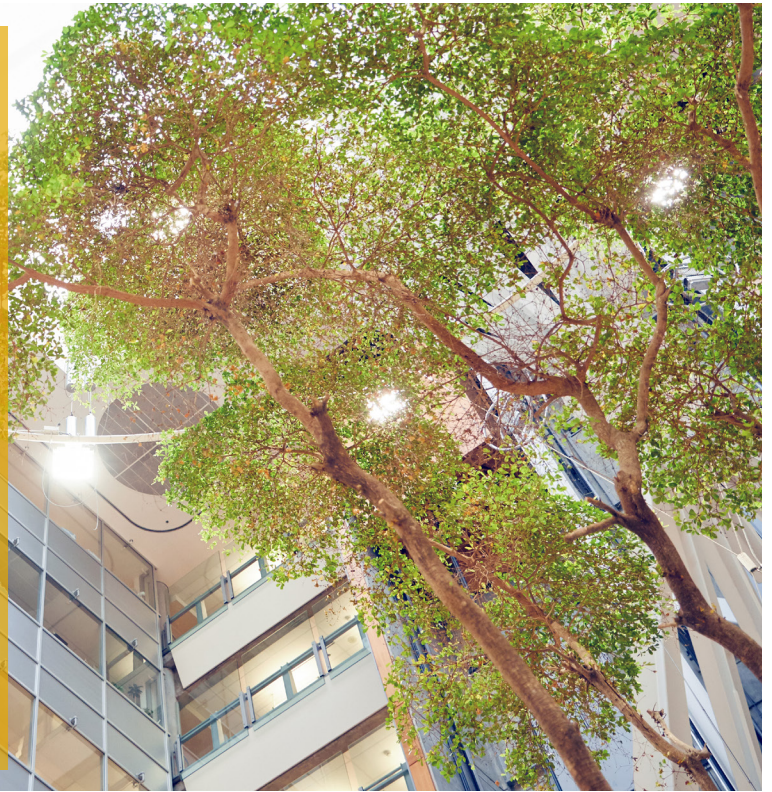
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## Baycrest Study Reveals Lifestyle May Be More Important Than Age in Determining Dementia Risk

Individuals with no dementia risk factors, such as smoking, diabetes or hearing loss, have similar brain health as people who are 10 to 20 years younger than them, according to a new Baycrest study. The study found that a single dementia risk factor could reduce cognition by the equivalent of up to three years of aging.

“This is crucial as it means risk factors can and should be addressed as early as possible,” says Dr. Nicole Anderson, Senior Scientist at Baycrest’s Rotman Research Institute (RRI), Associate Scientific Director of Baycrest’s Kimel Family Centre for Brain Health and Wellness, and senior author of this study.

The study looked at data from more than 22,000 people aged 18 to 89 who completed the Cogniciti Brain Health Assessment, developed by Baycrest. Participants took the test in their own homes by going to [cogniciti.com](https://cogniciti.com). The test takes around 20 minutes to complete and consists of a background questionnaire and four cognitive tasks.



The researchers looked at participants’ performance on memory and attention tests, and how this was impacted by eight modifiable risk factors for dementia: low education, hearing loss, traumatic brain injury, alcohol or substance abuse, hypertension, smoking, diabetes and depression.

*Continued on the next page*

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Each factor led to a decrease in cognitive performance by as much as three years of aging, with each additional factor contributing the same amount of decline. For example, having three risk factors could lead to a decrease in cognitive performance equivalent to as much as nine years of aging.

“You have the power to decrease your risk of cognitive decline and dementia,” says Dr. Annalise LaPlume, Postdoctoral Fellow at the RRI and lead author of the study. “Start addressing any risk factors you have now, whether you’re 18 or 90, and you’ll support your brain health to help yourself age fearlessly.”

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## Baycrest Physician-Educators Receive Teaching Awards

Several Baycrest physician-educators recently received awards for their teaching efforts. On July 18, the University of Toronto Division of Geriatric Medicine announced that Dr. Terumi Izukawa had received the 2022 Barry J. Goldlist Teacher of the Year Award, as selected by the division's geriatric medicine residents. Additionally, Drs. Shelley Veinish and Matthew Robillard were each awarded the Baycrest 2022 Medical Education Award, and Dr. Catalina Lopez de Lara received the Baycrest 2022 New and Emerging Teacher Award.

“Baycrest is an academic health sciences centre fully affiliated with the University of Toronto. In that capacity, the physicians at Baycrest have an obligation and passion for training and

mentoring the next generation of clinicians who will care for our aging population,” says Dr. Gary Naglie, Vice President, Medical Affairs and Chief of Staff at Baycrest. “Our physician teachers and educators are major contributors to Baycrest’s reputation as a world-leading seniors’ care organization. These prestigious awards recognize the excellence of their teaching and mentorship.”

Congratulations to the winners on their exceptional achievements in teaching and mentoring residents and medical students.

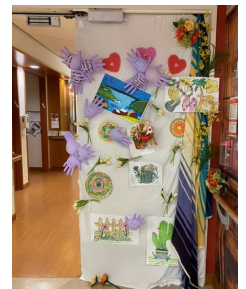
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## The Fun Squad Door Decorating Contest

The Apotex Fun Squad recently organized an exciting activity that brought joy and laughter into the Apotex Centre, Jewish Home for the Aged. Many participants came together for a door-decorating contest, where prizes were awarded for the most stunning decorations.

The event was such a hit that there was a tie for both first place and second place.

We thank our outstanding Fun Squad and the Apotex staff for their continued hard work and dedication to providing our residents with the best care and most meaningful experiences.



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## Be Part of the 2022 A Walk for the Ages at Canada's Wonderland



Come walk with us on Sunday, September 11, when the Baycrest Foundation hosts the second annual *A Walk for the Ages* in support of Baycrest. This event will bring the community together to raise funds for Baycrest’s most urgent needs by asking participants to walk through Canada’s Wonderland.

Staff are invited to register for free using Promo Code FREE4STAFF on the event’s registration page. All participants will be expected to fundraise a minimum amount prior to the walk. For more information or to register, visit [www.awalkfortheages.ca](http://www.awalkfortheages.ca) or contact [jslessor@baycrest.org](mailto:jslessor@baycrest.org)



# Your Wellness Matters Newsletter

Baycrest participates as a partner of the North York Toronto Health Partners Ontario Health Team (NYTHP-OHT). As part of coordinated efforts to provide employee wellness resources across the community, the NYTHP-OHT has launched the "Your Wellness Matters" newsletter.

In this monthly newsletter, the NYTHP-OHT will share tools and resources related to mindfulness, physical activity,

nutrition and psychological support. The newsletter will also include upcoming wellness events, challenges and activities. Staff are invited to subscribe to the newsletter to gain access to this valuable information. To subscribe to the "Your Wellness Matters" newsletter and access past webinars and other resources, visit [www.northyorktorontohealthpartners.ca/](http://www.northyorktorontohealthpartners.ca/)



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## New Baycrest Study Examines Memory in Expert Birdwatchers

According to a new Baycrest study that examined memory in expert birdwatchers, having expert knowledge in a subject helps us memorize new information. This is because, while forgetting often happens when similar memories interfere with each other, expert knowledge provides a mental organizational structure, or scaffolding, that helps us keep new items that we want to learn distinct from each other. This reduces confusion between similar items - in this case, similar-looking birds.

To study the effects of expertise on memory, the scientists recruited local bird experts from community organizations such as the Toronto Ornithological Club and Toronto Field Naturalists. For comparison, they also recruited experts in gardening, fishing, hiking and other outdoor activities as a control group.

To identify how knowledge changes mental organization, both groups of participants were shown sets of bird images and asked to arrange them visually on the screen according to perceived similarity. Next, the researchers tested the participants' memories. They first showed each participant a series of bird photographs. Then, they showed them a second series, containing both new and old birds, and asked the participants to indicate whether or not they had already seen each bird in the first series of photographs.

Participants who grouped birds based on specific features performed better in the memory task than those who grouped birds based on colour. This difference was seen not only between experts and non-experts but also between the



experts themselves, as those who grouped birds superficially based on colour had worse memory than those who did not. High similarity between items often hinders memory, but having well-established mental organization helps to avoid this problem. These findings suggest that a higher degree of expertise and knowledge organization supports memory.

In the long term, this research could help determine how to optimally harness expertise to mitigate age-related memory decline, improving quality of life for older adults everywhere.

This work was supported in part by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) and the Centre for Aging + Brain Health Innovation (CABHI), powered by Baycrest.

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## Updates, Questions and Comments

The health and well-being of everyone at Baycrest is our priority, and we are doing everything we can to serve the needs of our residents and patients during this time. Baycrest is committed to communicating with you about COVID-19.

For the most up-to-date information, please visit the intranet or [www.baycrest.org](http://www.baycrest.org) and sign up to get email notifications

when there are COVID-19 updates. Please also refer to the list of Frequently Asked Questions, which we continue to update. If you have questions or comments, please email [covidquestions@baycrest.org](mailto:covidquestions@baycrest.org)

# Innovation Updates

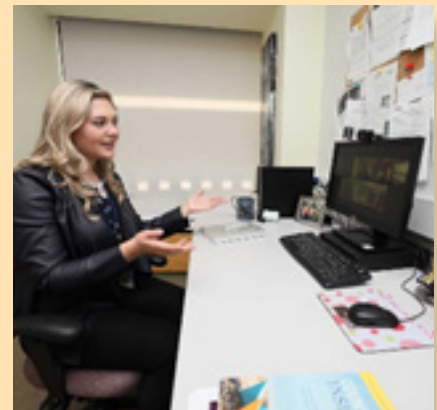


## Baycrest's TEA Program at the Terraces

The Baycrest Innovation Office (BIO) recently concluded the Technology Enablement for Older Adults (TEA) program at the Baycrest Terraces. This was the first TEA offering delivered in person, following a delayed start due to the pandemic. The program was delivered over eight sessions to a class of 10 individuals. While this cohort of learners had a wide array of digital literacy levels, the instructors were able to address their needs through small group tutoring delivered each week while sticking to a central topic, such as email basics and safety, and virtual communication. Key to the program's success was the volunteer work of Adele Ostfield, who was also involved in the virtual TEA pilot at 2 Neptune, and Fern Fabrizi from the

## Registration Is Now Open for Caregiving 101

Caregiving 101 is a virtual education series for new and veteran caregivers facilitated by social workers and occupational therapists. Join Baycrest@Home social worker and dementia coach Yuliya Goloida for eight interactive sessions over the course of one month covering the fundamentals of dementia caregiving. Understand dementia and learn more about home safety, activities of daily living, planning for the future, navigating the healthcare system, challenging behaviours and caregiver supports and resources. To see details and inquire about upcoming start dates this September through December 2022, visit <https://baycrestathome.ca/member-plans/#caregiving-101>



## Bubby's Blooms Drive-thru Pickup, Flower Sale

Sunday, September 25, 2022 | 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
Kimel Entrance, Baycrest

Pre-order a large, beautiful bouquet by Friday, September 23 for \$18 and/or donate any amount at [baycrestfoundation.org/bubbysblooms](https://baycrestfoundation.org/bubbysblooms)

100% of all proceeds support Baycrest programs

BUBBY'S  
BLOOMS

FEAR NO AGE Baycrest

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with the University of Toronto

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