

# BAYCREST BULLETIN

*A snapshot of Baycrest news and events / December 2022 - January 2023*

## IN THIS ISSUE

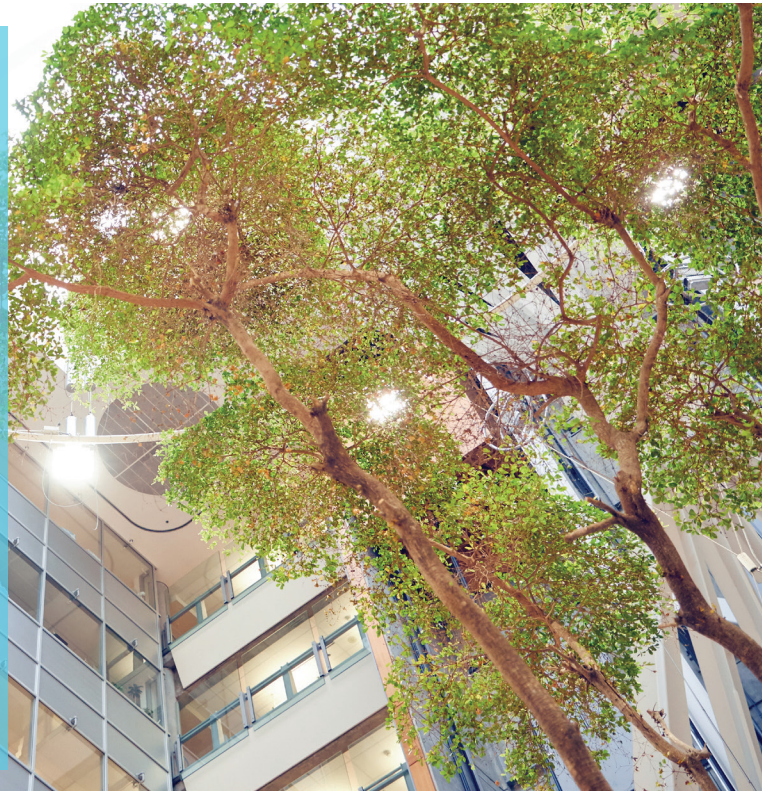
**ADAPTIVE LANGUAGE-LEARNING SOFTWARE HELPS STROKE SURVIVORS REGAIN CRITICAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS**

**BAYCREST'S CANADA RESEARCH CHAIR IN INTERVENTIONAL COGNITIVE NEUROSCIENCE IS ADVANCING CRITICAL TREATMENTS FOR BRAIN HEALTH**

**EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT: GLORIA LIPSKI**

**HOW TO WEAR A MASK**

**INNOVATION UPDATES**



## Adaptive Language-Learning Software Helps Stroke Survivors Regain Critical Communication Skills



Many stroke survivors experience aphasia, a speech and language processing disorder that can have serious, negative impacts on numerous aspects of daily life. According to a new Baycrest study, using adaptive language-learning software is extremely beneficial in helping these individuals regain their language skills.

Current treatment approaches for aphasia typically require a specialized therapist, whose time is both scarce and expensive; and the therapy is usually conducted in a clinical setting. In contrast, individuals can use language-learning software when and where they choose.

"These results are highly encouraging and suggest that the use of adaptive language-learning software should be considered for widespread adoption in treating aphasia," says Dr. Jed Meltzer, Baycrest's Canada Research Chair in Interventional Cognitive Neuroscience, senior scientist at Baycrest's Rotman Research Institute and senior author of this study.

The study, published recently in *Neuropsychological Rehabilitation*, looked at 28 subjects who were recruited from aphasia support programs and aphasia-related groups on social media. Each participant began by completing an evaluation with a researcher, where they were shown pictures and asked to name them - for example, "umbrella" or "squirrel."

*Continued on the next page*



Next, participants used an online program to practice identifying images they could not name during their initial evaluation. Each picture included two hints and the answer. Participants were asked to use this program 30 minutes a day for two weeks.

The researchers found that participants successfully relearned the majority of the trained items using the software.

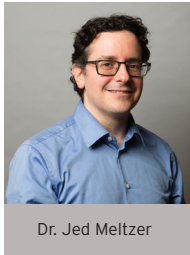
“Our research suggests that stroke survivors and others living with aphasia can improve their language skills using apps over several months, and can potentially relearn hundreds of words

if they practice enough,” says Dr. Meltzer.

This research was supported by the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada and the Canada Research Chairs program.

In a follow-up study, the researchers will evaluate the benefit of app-based practice for general skills, such as short-term memory and attention, in addition to training on relearning specific words, to maximize the degree of recovery possible using adaptive software.

## Baycrest's Canada Research Chair in Interventional Cognitive Neuroscience Is Advancing Critical Treatments for Brain Health



Dr. Jed Meltzer

Baycrest is pleased to announce that Dr. Jed Meltzer has been named the Canada Research Chair in Interventional Cognitive Neuroscience for a second consecutive term. A senior scientist at Baycrest's Rotman Research Institute (RRI), Dr. Meltzer is a trailblazer in the use of individualized brain stimulation to treat symptoms of brain disorders such as dementia and stroke.

While there is currently no cure for dementia, its symptoms can be treated to help improve quality of life for those living with the condition. Among the most promising symptomatic treatments is brain stimulation, which involves passing a mild current of electricity through the brain while the patient is awake.

During his second term as a Canada Research Chair, Dr. Meltzer and his team will continue their innovative use of behavioural studies and brain imaging technology, such as using magnetoencephalography (MEG) to test the effectiveness of brain stimulation treatments for neurological disorders and to better understand the brain.

“With my research, I aim to help optimize the treatment of different brain disorders, such as stroke and dementia, for

people living with these disorders in Canada and around the world,” says Dr. Meltzer.

As part of his research program, Dr. Meltzer and his team are interested in the brain's processing speed, and whether it can be improved. With age, adults become slower at naming pictures correctly – for example, seeing a picture of a toothbrush and identifying it as “toothbrush.” In an ongoing study, the research team is training study participants aged 18 to 90 to name images faster. The researchers are also using brain imaging techniques to determine whether increases in naming speed are reflected in changes in the brain's cells. This research could ultimately help improve treatments for individuals living with language disorders such as aphasia, which can have serious, negative impacts on numerous aspects of daily life.

“We are thrilled that the Canada Research Chair program has once again recognized Dr. Meltzer's work to advance the treatment of neurological disorders,” says Dr. Allison Sekuler, President and Chief Scientist of the Baycrest Academy for Research and Education, and the Sandra A. Rotman Chair in Cognitive Neuroscience at the RRI. “In line with our vision of predictive neuroscience for precision aging, his research will help improve the lives of older adults everywhere.”



# Employee Spotlight: Gloria Lipski



The Baycrest Bulletin is shining a light on our employees, who are helping create a world where every older adult enjoys a life of purpose, inspiration, and fulfilment. In this edition, meet Gloria Lipski, a Certified Music Therapist in the Culture and Arts Department.

Gloria joined Baycrest after completing her Master's in Music Therapy at Concordia University in 2017, along with a 1,500-hour internship and certification process required to practice. She is a familiar face to many in the Apotex Centre. For the past five years and still to this day, she visits every floor of the Apotex four days a week.

"It's been an honour to be there for Apotex residents, in person and even during times of enhanced safety measures," she says.

Music therapy sessions in the Apotex are either one-on-one or small-group sessions that take place weekly for several months. Sessions include as much participation as possible and consist of playing and listening to live music, using instruments, singing, moving to music, writing songs and engaging in discussion, specific to each person's needs and strengths.

Gloria's motivation includes positively impacting residents in any way that she can. "I love getting to know each person and seeing how they can uniquely connect through music, how music can amplify positive outcomes, and how it can offer relief from symptoms. Music therapy is especially useful for people who need individualized support."

Baycrest appreciates our music therapists and other therapeutic recreationist staff for their tremendous work in supporting our residents.



**Thank you  
Team  
Baycrest**

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## How to Wear a Mask

For the safety of everyone, please wear your mask properly.



Make sure your mask covers your nose, mouth and chin.



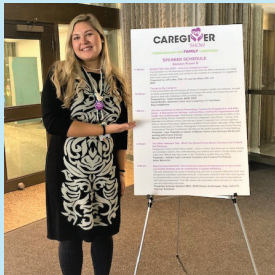
## Updates, Questions and Comments

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. If you have questions or comments, please email [covidquestions@baycrest.org](mailto:covidquestions@baycrest.org)

# Innovation Updates

Using technology and innovation, Baycrest staff continue to seek ways to provide better care and better opportunities for the aging population, developing tools and technologies to meet changing needs. Below are a few exciting ways staff have been innovating across the organization.



**Learn to Care With Confidence: Caregiver Education With Baycrest@Home's Yuliya Goloida**  
Join Social Worker, Dementia Coach and Caregiving 101 Facilitator Yuliya Goloida to learn the fundamentals of caring for someone living with dementia. Designed for spouses and adult children of older adults experiencing cognitive changes, participants of this course have the opportunity to share and connect with others in similar situations. This course provides tailored recommendations and resources, as well as clinical guidance to support their own unique experiences. The next four-week, eight-session course runs from January 10 - February 2, 2023. **For more information, visit [www.baycrestathome.ca/member-plans/#caregiving-101](http://www.baycrestathome.ca/member-plans/#caregiving-101)**



**Inviting Caregivers to an 8-Week Art-Making Group With Baycrest@Home and Making Art Making Change (MAMC)** "Shared Expressions: A Conversation Amongst Caregivers" is an opportunity for caregivers of older adults to explore their creative side through the making of an art book in a supportive space, guided by professional artists. No art background is needed, just your imagination and curiosity.

Sessions take place online each Wednesday from January 11 to March 1, 2023.

Visit <https://baycrestathome.ca/event/shared-expressions/> to inquire about your eligibility for this free workshop.

**Making Art Making Change** is a non-profit organization committed to giving voice to communities using visual arts and storytelling. Its aim is to enrich individual lives, break isolation, and strengthen connections within diverse communities through the creation of distinctive, group art-making projects.



**Baycrest@Home Is Making Staying Connected Easier Than You Think With the Uniper Platform**

Staying connected can be challenging, particularly for older adults who may not be familiar with mobile devices or computers, posing a greater risk of loneliness and social isolation. Understanding this unique need and challenge, Baycrest@Home (B@H) has introduced the Uniper platform designed specifically for seniors. A simple click of a button allows users to switch from their favourite TV shows to accessing live B@H programs, group activities, or video-calling a loved one.

Visit the Baycrest Innovation Office (BIO), found on the second floor of the Hospital building, to see and try it out in person. To stay up-to-date on Baycrest@Home programs, visit <https://bit.ly/BaycrestAtHome>.

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