

BAYCREST BULLETIN

A snapshot of Baycrest news and events - July 2021

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Ontario Invests in Baycrest-Developed Goal Management Training®

Research has found that COVID-19 can have damaging longer-term effects on our brains, resulting in symptoms such as lack of concentration and memory problems. These cognitive challenges can affect anyone, but are more substantial for older adults.

To support the growing population of individuals living with COVID-19 related cognitive difficulties, Dr. Brian Levine and his team have received funding from the Government of Ontario's Ontario Together Fund to enhance access to their evidence-based, cognitive intervention, Goal Management Training® (GMT). This will make it available for use in clinics, hospitals and the community through the development of new, easy-to-access online resources.

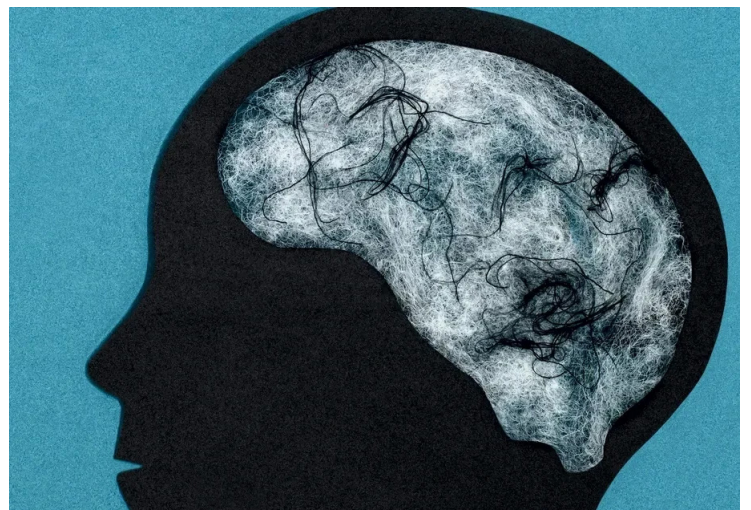
"With access to this highly effective treatment along with other supports, we can help those suffering with the longer-term effects of COVID-19 recover and return to their normal lives faster," says Dr. Levine, Senior Scientist at the Rotman Research Institute and the primary developer of GMT.

Previously only available in-person with a trained therapist, the expanded program includes the following:

- A newly developed online platform to train therapists to run GMT through telemedicine.

- A central hub for therapists which includes user outreach, membership, GMT training and community engagement.
- Online patient-focused resources, including interactive complex tasks and activities, as well as a digital GMT workbook.

Parallel resources will be available in hard copy, recognizing that comfort with and access to computers may vary.



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Beyond COVID-19, a variety of conditions are associated with cognitive impairment, such as traumatic brain injury, stroke, multiple sclerosis and mild cognitive impairment, a preclinical stage of dementia. The expanded GMT could have

a profound impact on people around the world living with these conditions, improving their quality of life and well-being.

COVID-19 Vaccine Champions



Arleen Geraldo

"Right when I saw in the news that they came out with a COVID-19 vaccine, I told my husband that we need to get it," says Arleen Geraldo, a Baycrest personal support worker, who received two doses of Pfizer in December 2020.

Her urgency came from her long-term care position and desire to protect her husband and two daughters, with whom she lives. She was also more at-risk due to high blood pressure.

"At first I was nervous, of course," she says, "because we were the first batch. But as soon as I saw all the (other) people at Sunnybrook Hospital, I was much more confident."

Arleen's favourite part about being vaccinated is the ability to enjoy interactions without virus transmission worries. Her newfound security came at the price of temporary arm soreness, which she considers "not a big deal." When asked how it feels to have been one of Canada's first COVID-19 vaccine recipients, Arleen beams, replying, "Proud."



Dr. Adelaida Neata

Dr. Neata, a long-term care physician at Baycrest, was on maternity leave and couldn't get vaccinated until January.

"Pfizer was what (Scarborough Centenary Hospital) had so I took it," she reports, clarifying that she didn't have a preference. She had anticipated mild side effects, which proved accurate with the sore arm she experienced after her first dose and tiredness that lasted for a day after her second.

Her household, consisting of her husband, two kids and parents, who visit frequently, was important to her vaccination decision. "I wanted to protect myself and my family," she says, "and hopefully pass on some antibodies to my breastfed baby." On post-vaccination, she reports that it made her more comfortable with working and seeing patients, and secure in the knowledge that she wouldn't be bringing COVID home.

"The vaccine has been received by millions of people," says Dr. Neata, "and I'm confident that what happens to you if you get COVID is much worse than any side effects associated with the vaccine."

New discharge process supports patients with dementia transitioning to long-term care

Linh Tran* survived the Vietnam War by escaping to Canada, fled an abusive marriage and raised four children as a single mother. The traumas she endured impacted her mental health but they didn't explain the memory issues, poor judgement and disinhibited behaviour she started to exhibit in her late 50s. Family tried their best to care for her at home but it was extremely challenging. She became aggressive, delusional and paranoid.

At age 61, Linh was diagnosed with frontotemporal dementia, an uncommon, degenerative brain disorder that often begins between ages 40 and 65, and is characterized by dramatic changes in personality and behaviour. When she was admitted to an acute care hospital for help, she required 24-hour care

and supervision, and a security guard had to be posted in front of her room to keep her from trying to leave.

That's when Linh was referred to the Behavioural Neurology Unit at Baycrest for its expertise in assessing and treating complex neurological diseases and associated behaviours.

It took many months on this short-term, inpatient unit to clarify her diagnosis, and find the right medications and interventions to stabilize Linh's behaviours to the point that she could finally be accepted to a behavioural support unit in a long-term care facility.

Understandably, Linh's children were worried about moving their mother to an unfamiliar environment when she was doing so well at Baycrest. "I was pretty nervous about how the transition would go because Baycrest was like a home to my mother, but the team was very reassuring and supportive," says Linh's 28-year-old daughter, Annie.* "They explained that the staff at the long-term care home would be fully aware of how to care for her, and that no one had ever had to come back after being discharged."

Staff at Baycrest and at Cummer Lodge, where Linh now lives, say the transition was a success due to a new integrative discharge support process involving Baycrest's Virtual Behavioural Medicine (VBM) Program and Behavioural Supports Services.

The new process begins with a virtual meeting between Baycrest staff, local Behaviour Support clinicians and staff from the long-term care home to discuss in detail the patient's unique history, care plan, triggers for behavioural issues, strategies to manage behavioural issues, daily routines, abilities, preferences, etc. This meeting also provides an opportunity for the new staff to ask questions of Baycrest staff.

In addition, the patient and the care team at the long-term care home have access to virtual, follow-up visits with Behavioural Neurologist Dr. Morris Freedman or other physician specialists through the VBM Program - a collaboration between the Sam and Ida Ross Memory Clinic at Baycrest and the Toronto Central Behavioural Support for Seniors Program (TC-BSSP), which assesses and treats people with challenging behaviours caused by dementia and related cognitive disorders.

"That virtual, rapid access to a specialist is very helpful for the staff in the long-term care home," says Adrienne Lee, Clinical Navigator in the Behaviour Supports Coordinating Office at Baycrest. She explains that some long-term care homes are hesitant to accept new residents with challenging behaviours or to accept them back after they've been on an inpatient behavioural neurology unit. This new integrative process with post-discharge supports was created to help alleviate their concerns.

Theresa Jin, the charge nurse on the Behavioural Support Unit at Cummer Lodge, says her team appreciated this new transition process and found it very helpful.

"It wasn't easy for this resident to settle into a new environment with new people, but because Baycrest gave us a detailed care plan and we were aware of her behaviours, we could apply a number of strategies to calm her and she's doing so well," Jin explains. "It took a couple of weeks for her to become familiar with the staff and her surroundings, but now she's eating well, following instructions, communicating with staff and even helping other residents."

"The opportunity to have a virtual, follow-up visit with Baycrest and the potential for support if needed is very helpful to our team," says Dr. Elizabeth Johnston, Medical Director at Cummer Lodge. "In this case, the resident settled in quite well and no additional support was required, but it was nice for our team to get kudos from the Baycrest staff when they heard how well the resident was doing."

Dr. Johnston has used the VBM Program for virtual consults with other residents who would otherwise have been unable to attend a meeting in person. "It's beneficial for our residents and for our staff."

News and Resources from the Ontario Centres for Learning, Research and Innovation in Long-Term Care

Registration is now open for the Ontario Centres for Learning, Research and Innovation (CLRI) Specialized Educator Certificate - Level 1

Ontario CLRI at Baycrest is offering a free, evidence-based program for those who coordinate or deliver training in long-term care (LTC). The program features adult education best practices and innovative educational approaches specific to the LTC sector. Level 1 starts September 13, with a focus on best practices in LTC education. Apply by July 16. **Visit clri-ltc.ca/upcoming-events to learn more.**

Introducing infection prevention and control (IPAC) eLearning Courses for LTC

The Ontario CLRI at the Research Institute for Aging (RIA) has released eLearning courses on IPAC for LTC developed with experts from the IPAC community in Canada. Courses can be used to train LTC staff, volunteers and essential care partners on IPAC core concepts with real-world application to caring for residents, including mealtime support and travelling to and from an LTC home. **You can find these and other IPAC resources on clri-ltc.ca/IPAC.**



Innovation Updates - Upcoming Webinars



NEW! Visit the Cognition & COVID-19 Resource Hub

You can now access Baycrest's Cognition & COVID-19 resource hub. Learn about executive function impairment and the COVID-19 virus' impact on cognitive function, and explore available treatments and resources for individuals seeking cognitive rehabilitation. **To access the hub, go to www.baycrest.org/Baycrest/Research-Innovation/Services-Resources/Cognition-and-Covid-19-Resource-Hub/**



Power of Attorneys, Capacity and Decision-Making in Older Adults - Wednesday, June 23, 2021

Sign up for Baycrest@Home's upcoming "Ask the Expert" event. Led by the Baycrest@Home social work team, this one-hour event will cover a variety of topics and will allow members of the public to get their questions answered on all things related to aging and caregiving. Participants are also encouraged to raise any concerns they may have as a caregiver.

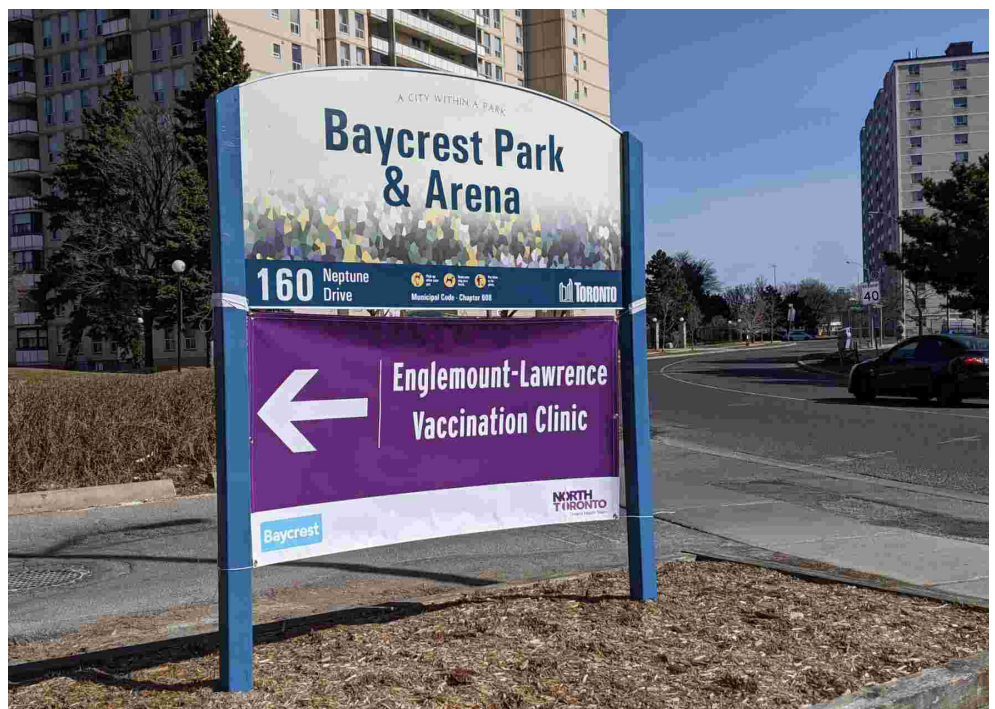
This event will be held Wednesday, July 21, 2021 from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m.

To register, visit bit.ly/BaycrestAsktheExpertJuly

COVID-19 Community Vaccination Clinic

As part of the North Toronto Ontario Health Team, Baycrest is providing operational support and leadership to a COVID-19 vaccination community clinic. Please visit elvaccineclinic.ca to learn about eligibility and clinic details.

Please note that Baycrest has no involvement in the scheduling of appointments or prioritization of groups to be vaccinated. Prioritization of vaccination appointments will be determined by the government's framework.



Baycrest



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