

Bringing Research to LIFE

Upcoming Events

CIHR Café Scientifique

Antibiotics: How the bugs are fighting back

Tuesday, May 24, 2011
at 7:00 p.m.

McNally Robinson Booksellers
1120 Grant Avenue

To assist us in planning seating,
RSVP to: (204) 474-9020

HLHP Research Institute Seminar Series

The Failure of Canada to Manage Lifestyle-based Disease: Challenges and Opportunities.

with Robert Ross, PhD

Wednesday, May 18, 2011
at 1:30 p.m.

136 Frank Kennedy Centre

Dr. Ross is recognized internationally as a leader in the area of obesity, physical activity and metabolism and has published extensively in these and related areas. He is a Past-President of the Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology, a Fellow of the American College of Sports Medicine, and was recently awarded a Research Chair at Queen's. He is currently the Director of the Center for Obesity Research and Education at Queen's.

The Third Canadian Quality Congress

University of Manitoba,
Winnipeg, Canada
June 27-29, 2011

Top-notch scholars, experts, quality management and professionals from 25 countries will be in attendance

Early bird deadline to register is
May 15, 2011

Register online at:
www.canadianqualitycongress.com

Dialogue on Aging

BY JOHN RYMON



Photo by Daniel Gwozdz

Left to right: Sylvia Rothney (CEO, Alzheimer Society, Manitoba); Verena Menec, Director Centre on Aging; Zaid Ali Aboud, Recipient, Alzheimer Society Graduate Student Fellowship; Christine Henriksen, Recipient, Esther and Samuel Milmot Scholarship; Julie Erickson, Recipient, Centre on Aging Betty Havens Memorial Graduate Fellowship; Kristina Zawaly, Recipient, Jack MacDonnell Scholarship for Research in Aging; Janice Ristock, associate vice-president (research); Christopher Fries, Recipient, Centre on Aging Research Fellowship; Mary Shariff, Recipient, Centre on Aging Research Fellowship

Healthy Living Minister Jim Rondeau opened the Centre on Aging's 28th Annual Spring Research Symposium on May 2. In welcoming the over 400 attendees and congratulating the centre for its work to date, he said, "The Centre on Aging continues to be a vital partner in the age-friendly initiative," referring to the initiative led by the Seniors and Healthy Aging Secretariat supporting seniors in leading active, socially engaged and independent lives.

Established in 1982 as a focal point for University of Manitoba researchers studying the experiences of aging individuals and the dynamics of an aging society, the centre has since developed a national and international reputation for excellence in research.

Janice Ristock, associate vice-president (research), extended greetings from the University of Manitoba, also congratulating the centre and its promotion of open dialogue, the theme of this year's symposium.



The Honourable Jim Rondeau greets attendees at the Centre on Aging's Spring Research Symposium.

"Our intent is to bring university researchers together with community, which is why we've called it 'Dialogue on Aging,'" said Verena Menec, director of the Centre on Aging. "There are many age-related issues that we need to highlight."

Some of those issues were brought to light during the morning's opening plenary by three University of Manitoba researchers.

Christopher Fries, assistant professor in the department of sociology, presented some of his research on complementary and alternative therapies. According to Fries, up to 20 per cent of Canadians use some form of alternative healthcare as opposed to the "formal" healthcare system of hospital-based services, which is a factor in overall population health. This is influenced by culture, socioeconomic status, age, gender, and the 'marketing of ethnicity'."

Ethnicity was highlighted by Yuewen Gong, professor and associate dean (research) in the Faculty of Pharmacy, in his research into aging from the view of traditional Chinese medicine. Gong briefly explained some of the concepts found in Chinese medicine including the opposition and interdependence of Yin and Yang, the five elements of the organ system (wood, fire, water, earth and metal), and the connection between various organs and body parts found in the Zang-Fu System. He reiterated the importance of culture and how it influences beliefs and practices specific to ethnicities.

Finally, Chris Siow, professor in the department of pharmacology spoke on evidence-based agri-food – food containing bioactive components known to have physiological benefits beyond their basic nutritional value. Many seniors' eating habits decline with age putting their health at risk, and

Siow used loss of taste as an example. Adding salt to increase flavour also increases the risk of hypertension, while adding sugar as a sweetener can put a person at risk for diabetes. Loss of taste can also lead to a decreased enjoyment and motivation to eat and consequently poor nutrition, illustrating the need for foods with higher concentrations of nutrients. Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada anticipates a growing market demand for food with health promoting qualities, especially foods that promote cognitive performance, joint health and digestive health.

Concurrent sessions rounded out the morning, with topics as diverse as the ethical issues raised by how we drug the elderly to how age and the elderly were perceived during the Middle Ages.

Faculty fellowship and student scholarship awards were also presented, along with memorial tributes to the centre's former director, Barbara Payne who passed away in September, and Evelyn Shapiro, responsible for implementing the first province-wide home care program in Canada.

In addition to researchers and university representatives, the symposium offered a promotional opportunity for over 20 not-for-profit organizations and community agencies aimed at seniors. The Manitoba Society of Seniors Inc., Alzheimer Society and The Arthritis Society were among those with exhibitor booths in the Brodie Atrium.

The impressive attendance at the Centre on Aging's symposium underlines the impact and importance of its research and events. Manitoba's population is seeing an ever increasing percentage of seniors. In 2006, a total of 161,885 Manitobans were aged 65 and over, representing over 14 per cent of the province's total population and an increase of 3.5 per cent since 2001.