



Centre on AGING

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Centre on Aging Research Fellowships

The Centre on Aging is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2010-2011 Research Fellowships.

Roisin Cossar, PhD, Associate Professor, Department of History, Faculty of Arts, has a PhD in Medieval History from the University of Toronto. Dr. Cossar is undertaking a study on the experiences of the elderly (aged 60 and over) in the Christian church in Northern Italy during the 14th Century. Her focus will be on the men and women who inhabited Christian institutions: monasteries, cathedral chapters, and parish churches.

What can a study of the elderly in a distant time and place contribute to our understanding of the modern experience of aging? Dr. Cossar



suggests that in a historical study of aging, like our modern society, a single definition

of aging is not feasible. In modern medical texts on geriatrics, authors note that culture influences the aging process and the treatment of older adults. These studies often compare older adults to other age groups. In contrast in her research she will compare older adults then with those who are older now. This will add richness and depth to our understanding of how individuals approach the process of aging. She notes that while the elderly who inhabited the medieval church remained active members of their community, aging members of the church community were granted few accommodations to ease the physical challenges which aging presented.

Jason Peeler, PhD, is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Human Anatomy and Cell Science, Faculty of Medicine. Dr. Peeler is conducting research to determine the effects of body weight supported physical activity on joint pain and physical function in elderly individuals with chronic knee osteoarthritis (OA). He will

use the Alter-G Inc. treadmill (Fremont, CA), a unique technology utilizing a treadmill in a waist high air tight chamber which allows an individual to run or walk at a fraction of their body weight. Small increases in the chamber air pressure produce a lower-body positive pressure (LBPP) create a lifting force approximately at the person's centre of mass. This takes the pressure off the knee joints and allows the person to dial in exactly where the pain stops and movement feels good. It has been suggested that an increase in body weight of only one pound can increase the amount of weight bearing on the knee joints by four pounds.

In individuals with knee OA Dr. Peeler will examine: the degree of knee pain and function associated with full weight bearing treadmill walking;

... continued p. 2



Fellowship (cont'd)

the degree of knee pain and function associated with body weight supported treadmill walking; the percentage of weight unloading required to eliminate knee pain; if physical activity, with and without unloading body weight improves knee pain and overall physical function; and, if training on the Alter-G treadmill increases the number of steps taken per day following each training session compared to pre-training values and non-training days.



Alter-G Inc.'s G-trainer

“GeriNews” by J. W. Crane Library

“GeriNews” is a Twitter site started by J. W. Crane Memorial Library’s Angela Osterreicher on which she scans various news sources and items pertinent to geriatrics, gerontology, and long term care. Angela predominately scans Canadian headline news, but has feeds from around the world. You do not need to join or log-in to Twitter to view this valuable resource. Use the following link to see the latest “GeriNews”!

<https://twitter.com/GeriNews>

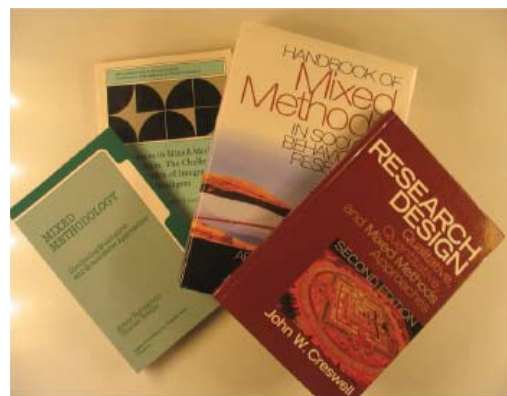
Mixed Methods Research

John W. Creswell, PhD, Professor of Educational Psychology, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and Founding Co-Editor of the *Journal of Mixed Methods Research* was the keynote speaker at the Centre on Aging’s annual Research Forum in March 2010.

According to Dr. Creswell, there are six core characteristics of mixed methods research:

- The collection of both qualitative and quantitative data (open- and closed-ended) in response to research questions;
- The analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data;
- Persuasive and rigorous procedures for the qualitative and quantitative methods;
- The integration of these two data sources (merging, connecting, embedding);

- The use of a specific mixed methods design that involves a concurrent or sequential integration (and equal or unequal emphases); and,
- An approach to research that has a philosophical foundation.



Copies of his presentations, *Mapping the Landscape of Mixed Methods Research* and *How To Write a Mixed Methods Journal Article for Submission* are available on our website www.umanitoba.ca/centres/aging

Manitoba Seniors: Outstanding Contributions

Overall, Manitobans aged 65 and over spent 14 million hours in unpaid volunteer activities in 2007. Over 50% of female volunteers aged 65 and over volunteered with religious organizations while senior male volunteers were more likely to give their time to cultural and recreational organizations.

Also in 2007, 91% of Manitobans aged 65 and over made charitable donations totalling slightly over \$87 million in the 12 month period prior to the *Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering, and Participating* (CSGVP). CSGVP was conducted by Statistics Canada from September to December 2007.

Centre on Aging Spring Research Symposium

The Centre on Aging held its 27th annual Spring Research Symposium on Monday May 3, 2010. Presentations by researchers and community participants are available on the Centre's web site www.umanitoba.ca/centre/aging. Here are a few of the highlights.

Creating Age-Friendly Communities: Challenges and Changes in One Manitoba Community

In November 2008, sixteen individuals came together to talk about age-friendly priorities and issues in Pinawa, Manitoba.

Marsha Sheppard, Chair, Age-Friendly Pinawa Advisory Committee reports the following:

- 49% of Pinawa's population of 1450 are aged 35-64, and an additional 25% are 65 and older
- the town's Vanier Teen Centre has been renovated and a Congregate Meal Program has been established in conjunction with the North Eastman Health Association. This will provide seniors on low fixed income a complete dinner 2 - 3 times a week from 12:00 until 4:00 p.m. when the Centre is turned over to the teens
- a review of street safety is underway



The Older Person in Pain

Pain is a common problem facing many older adults. It is often chronic in nature, and multifactorial in causation. Treatments for pain often have side-effects, and managing pain may require a balance between reducing pain while trying to minimize side-effects.

Philip St. John, MD, MPH, FRCPC, Section of Geriatric Medicine, and



Paul Daeninck, MD, MSC, FRCPC, Internal Medicine and CancerCare Manitoba explained:

- in older adults, pain is under-treated,
- with proper treatment pain can be alleviated without side-effects
- although pain is difficult to assess in those with cognitive impairment it can be assessed through facial expressions, verbalizations/ vocalizations, body movements, changes in interpersonal interactions, changes in activity patterns or routines and mental status changes.

Daniel Sitar, PhD, Professor Emeritus, Internal Medicine (Clinical Pharmacology), Pharmacology and Therapeutics reported:

- when using analgesics to manage modest pain, the faster the drug enters the intestines the more rapid will be the onset of analgesic efficacy
- cold solutions accelerate gastric emptying and absorption with an empty stomach will provide the fastest onset of analgesia
- always take analgesics with 6-8 ounces of cold water.
- the recommended site for information on medications is www.medicine.ox.ac.uk/bandolier/booth/painpag/index2.html

Aging in Place: Issues Facing Manitoba Seniors

Aging in Place allows older adults to continue to live in their own home and when necessary, to receive community based specialized supports/services.

Juliette Cooper, PhD, Professor Emeritus, Occupational Therapy, School of Medical Rehabilitation noted:

- to quote John Howard Payne, ca 1823, 'Mid pleasures and palaces though we may roam, be it ever so humble, there's no place like home...'
- the Public Health Agency of Canada outlines that in the built environment, factors related to housing, indoor air quality, and the design of communities and transportation systems can significantly influence our physical and psychological well-being.
- a familiar dwelling provides comfort, allows older adults a sense of control, independence, and continuity with the past.
- for those with complex health and personal care needs, who do not need to be in a personal care home, other housing options are available in the community. Unfortunately these options can be expensive and out of reach for many older adults.



Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging

Older Drivers

Canadians are living longer!

This we know. Seniors are the fastest growing segment of the Canadian population. These individuals expect to live in good health and be active and independent in their communities.

With this in mind, the Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging (CLSA) is following a cohort of Canadians aged 45 to 85 over the next 20 years. The Tracking Cohort of 20,000 Canadians is underway.

Interviewers are contacting participants through the Centre on Aging's Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) data collection site, one of four sites across the country. The recruitment of an additional 30,000 Canadians who will be involved in the Comprehensive Cohort will begin in 2011. Participants will be contacted every three years to collect detailed information about their health and well-being.

Canadians will benefit from the CLSA through:

- identification of ways to prevent disease and to improve health services;
- new knowledge of the many interrelated biological, medical, psychological and social factors that affect healthy aging;

- a better understanding of the impact of non-medical factors such as economic and social changes on individuals as they age;
- rapid adoption of research into health practice, programs and policies; and,
- a strengthened and more responsive health care system.

The CLSA Tracking Cohort of 20,000 Canadians has begun.

Verena Menec, PhD, Director, Centre on Aging, Professor, Community Health Sciences, Faculty of Medicine,

University of Manitoba, is the Manitoba site Principal Investigator. Audrey Blandford, Centre on Aging Research Coordinator, is the Manitoba CATI Site Manager.



Audrey Blandford (standing) and Brenda Thibeault, interviewer (seated)

For further information on the CLSA please contact:

info@clsa-elcv.ca

Over 100 drivers have already been recruited for a longitudinal (five years long) research study on older drivers. Only a few more are needed to reach the Winnipeg target of 125.

Michelle Porter, PhD, Faculty of Kinesiology and Recreation Management, is one of the co-investigators on the recently-launched Candrive (Canadian Driving Research Initiative for Vehicular Safety) project funded by the CIHR. The main purpose of the study is to determine the best tests that could be used by physicians to assess older driver safety.

“There are a myriad of reasons why people’s driving abilities become compromised as they age. Chief among them: reduced cognitive function, impaired hearing or vision, and slower reaction times, along with various medical conditions and side effects from medications that are part and parcel of getting older,” says Porter.

Men and women, 70 years of age and over, are eligible to participate. Each participant will receive \$10 for the 2 ½ to 3 ½ hour assessments and their overall participation in the study. Parking passes for the University of Manitoba will be provided for visits to the Fort Garry campus. For additional information contact:

Linda Johnson, 474-7085 or johnson6@cc.umanitoba.ca.

Profile of Manitoba Seniors 2010

At the Centre's Spring Research Symposium the *Profile of Manitoba Seniors 2010* was released by The Honourable Jim Rondeau, Minister of Healthy Living, Youth and Seniors and Janice Ristock, PhD, Associate Vice-President (Research), University of Manitoba. The Profile highlights a wide variety of statistical information about the lives of older Manitobans. The Profile was prepared by the Centre on Aging in conjunction with the Manitoba Seniors and Healthy Aging Secretariat.

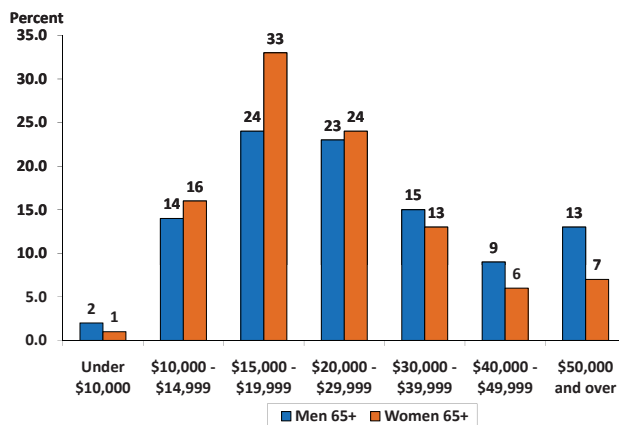
Profile of 2010 Manitoba's Seniors



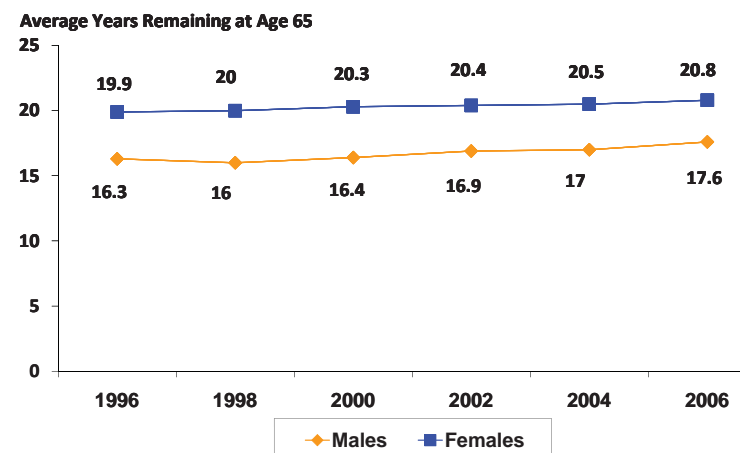
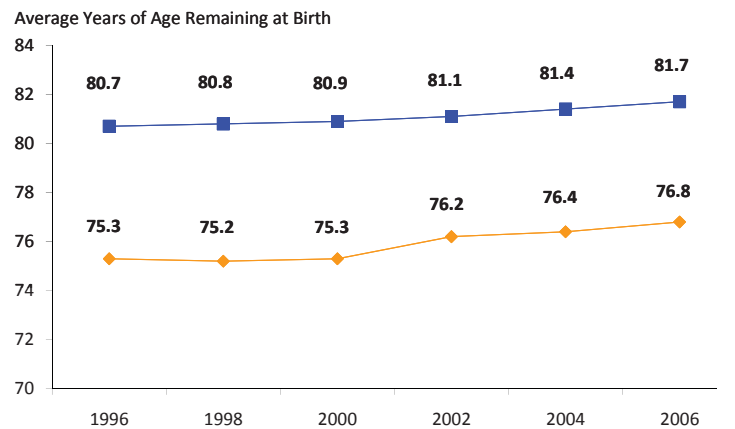
Did You Know?

- In 2006, those aged 65 and older made up 14.1% of Manitoba's total population.
- By 2031, the number of persons aged 85 or older is projected to be 36,000, accounting for 2.7% of Manitoba's population and women will outnumber men, particularly in this age group.
- In 2005, about one-half (55.2%) of employed Manitobans aged 65 and over were still working at full-time jobs.
- Of importance is the income disparity between men and women living alone. The average annual income of women aged 65 and over living alone was \$26,099 compared to \$31,690 for men aged 65 and over living alone.
- At age 65, women can expect to live an average of 20.8 more years while men can expect 17.6 more years of life.

Income Groups of Persons Aged 65 and Over Living Alone by Gender, Manitoba, 2005



Average Years of Life Remaining at Birth and at Age 65 by Gender, Manitoba, 1996-2006



The Profile of Manitoba's Seniors 2010 is available on the Centre on Aging's web site at: www.umanitoba.ca/centres/aging.

Geriatric Interest Group

The University of Manitoba (UofM) was one of five universities across Canada invited to take part in a national program funded by Health Canada (through the National Initiative for the Care of the Elderly) to establish a “**Geriatric Interest Group**” (GIG) at their universities.

The purpose was to increase awareness and interest in the field of aging and to provide an interactive learning opportunity for students and faculty members. **Barbara Payne**, PhD, Acting Director, Centre on Aging, and **Kristina Zawaly**, Student Coordinator, were the UofM contacts.

Interested individuals were involved in a series of events including:

- a presentation by **Jie Pan**, PhD, Visiting Professor, Economics, Loyola University, Maryland, “*The effect of state tax preferences on the living arrangements of elderly individuals*”;
- a presentation by **Senator Sharon Carstairs**, Chair, Special Senate Committee on Aging, entitled *Is Canada ready for an aging population?* In their final report to the Canadian Senate, the Committee identified serious gaps for older Canadians and concluded that Canada should be doing more to assist its aging population. It brought forth 32 recommendations within five frameworks. Information on these recommendations and the report are available at:

<http://www.parl.gc.ca/40/2/parlbus/commbus/senate/com-e/agei-e/rep-e/AgingFinalReport-e.pdf>

and, the governments’ response to the report is available at:

http://www.seniors.gc.ca/images/upload/canada/165/Report_on_Aging_eng.pdf ;

- a discussion session facilitated by **Norma Drosdoweck** (Manitoba Council on Aging and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) Institute on Aging Advisory Board) following Senator Carstairs’ presentation;
- the Applied Health Sciences (AHS) PhD Program **Research Day Poster Competition**. Three poster awards were provided by the AHS program, and the GIG presented a \$250 prize for the best poster in the field of aging.

Lucelia de Melo, was the recipient for her research on the relationship between neighbourhood characteristics and walking. Participants aged 45 and over were drawn from among individuals who had previously participated in in-person interviews in the Wellness Institute Services Evaluation Research Study (WISER).

Ms. de Melo’s findings included: increased walking was significantly associated with personal factors, particularly younger age, fewer chronic conditions and normal weight; accessible paths was the only perceived environmental component marginally associated with increased walking; and, men living in high-income neighbourhoods were more likely to walk compared to those living in low-income neighbourhoods. The neighbourhood economic status made no difference for women; and,

- the lecture and workshop presented by **John Creswell**, PhD, University of Nebraska-Lincoln (see page 2).

Applied Health Sciences PhD Program

The University of Manitoba’s Applied Health Sciences (AHS) Ph.D. program is a multi-unit, research-based program available to students in four academic units: Human Ecology, Kinesiology and Recreation Management, Nursing, and Medical Rehabilitation. The program offered is a unique and timely Ph.D. program, which includes the treatment and discussion at a graduate level of applied health sciences as a multi-dimensional entity, while at the same time allows for individualized high-quality health science research with an individual researcher, or small group of researchers.

For information on the AHS program contact:

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CENTRE ON AGING

The Centre on Aging, established on July 1, 1982, is a university-wide research Centre with a mandate to conduct, encourage, integrate, and disseminate research on all aspects of aging.

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The Centre on Aging News is published 3 times a year and is available on our web site or by request. Direct comments and inquiries to:

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