

BAYCREST BULLETIN

A snapshot of Baycrest news and events - October 2020

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Baycrest's Centre for Education Launches New Health Information Portal

On October 1, Baycrest's Centre for Education, in collaboration with the Marketing & Communication Department, launched a new Health Information portal in conjunction with the start of National Health Literacy Month. The portal provides resources, links and tools in multiple formats from Baycrest experts and vetted external resources of value.

Developed with input from Baycrest's Client and Family Partners and CABHI's Senior's Advisory Group, the portal provides easy access to education resources currently on baycrest.org with excellent navigation and usability. The portal leverages information and expertise from across Baycrest departments as it is a compilation of resources currently found on the overarching site. It provides staff access to reliable and up-to-date health

information relevant to practice and supports client and family partnership in care by allowing staff to refer interested clients to this trusted site.

We invite all staff, clients and our community to walk-through and become familiar with this supportive resource. If you have any questions about this initiative, please contact

Elke Ruthig, Project Manager, Patient, Family & Consumer Education, Centre for Education at eruthig@baycrest.org or at ext. 3248.

We are grateful to everyone who contributed to the content of this portal and to our Baycrest Foundation for securing the donor funds to make this possible.



Investigating COVID-19's Impact on Brain Health

Since the start of the pandemic, scientists at Baycrest's Rotman Research Institute (RRI) have contributed their expertise and knowledge to critical research on COVID-19.

In partnership with the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH), Dr. Linda Mah, clinician scientist at the RRI, is examining the effects of the pandemic and physical distancing on the mental health of older adults. In another study, RRI researchers Drs. Jennifer Ryan and Rosanna Olsen are looking at the possible effects of the pandemic on the trajectory of dementia in older adults.

These studies will increase our understanding of the risks posed to older adults' brain health during the pandemic, allowing public health officials to make informed decisions on how best to implement community-wide restrictions to mitigate the impact of COVID-19.

In addition, RRI researchers Drs. Jean Chen, Asaf Gilboa and Allison Sekuler are working with the Sunnybrook Research Institute and other organizations across Canada to investigate COVID-19's impact on the brain, using clinical assessments and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI)

of the brain in recovered COVID-19 patients. The results of this study will allow experts to direct patients in need towards neurointerventions and treatments as early as possible. They will also enable us to prepare for the possible longer term consequences of the virus.



Supporting Healthy Aging During the COVID-19 Pandemic



The mental and physical health of older adults has been impacted because of the anxiety and fear of contracting COVID-19, as well as the lack of meaningful in-person interactions with one another.

Dahlia*, a client of Baycrest's Day Treatment Centre program, explains how the pandemic has taken a toll on her physical health: "I have Parkinson's, and how I feel is impacted by how much exercise I get. It can be really uncomfortable for me if I don't get the exercise I need. When I was unable to attend exercise programs, my muscles were just not functioning well, and the longer I was not exercising, the harder it was for me to do it."

Baycrest knew that the daily needs of older adults like Dahlia needed to be addressed. To support healthy aging and mental wellbeing in our community during the pandemic, Baycrest launched a virtual component to our established Day Treatment Centre, which adapted the Day Treatment Centre's in-person offerings.

The Virtual Day Treatment Centre program engages with each client and their family to assess their needs and build a plan based on their individual requirements.

Shirley Lee, Occupational Therapist at the Day Treatment Centre, explains, "Since March, so many older adults were cut off from programs and services they had access to before, which was essential to support their physical and emotional well-being. It is important for us to reach out and connect with them during this difficult time, and we are proactively supporting older adults through our Virtual Day Treatment Centre program."

Like many other clients, Dahlia was relieved when she heard that Baycrest had started a Virtual Day Treatment Centre program. She says, "I was delighted. It was like hearing from an old friend. The classes are perfect; they have a very well-rounded program, especially for those who use a mobility aid. They listen to each person and give us enough time to tell our stories completely. We get the attention we need."

Baycrest continues to use the innovations and technologies it has created to reach older adults beyond the campus and in the community, providing respite to caregivers and helping older adults at greater risk for isolation. To learn more about Baycrest's Virtual Day Treatment Centre program, visit www.baycrest.org

**A pseudonym has been used to protect the privacy of our client.*

Staff Supports During COVID

As a reminder, an intranet page was built with helpful resources for staff to access during these challenging times. Staff are encouraged to visit to find information about discounts or free products, mental health supports for all ages, resources for parents and much more. Additionally, we offer free virtual mindfulness classes once a week (registration is required).

Innovation Updates



Digital and Technology Literacy Program for Older Adults

Baycrest is developing a program that teaches older adults digital literacy and technology skills. Technology Education for Adults (TEA) is a tool to bridge the digital divide that acts as a social barrier for older adults. It helps to empower them to connect online to reduce social isolation and loneliness and to support independence and aging at home. Staff can find more information on the TEA program by visiting <https://planbox.ca/baycrest-default/ideas/150>



Telemedicine Rapid Implementation (TRIM)

As a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, staff from across Baycrest came together to form the Telemedicine Rapid Implementation (TRIM) initiative. Through the generous support of Baycrest's donor community, Baycrest staff collaborated to create and develop innovative solutions to enable staff and volunteers to provide safe and efficient care, while keeping our residents engaged and connected to their loved ones. Recently, the TRIM team reached an impressive milestone: over 150 nurses at Baycrest are now trained to provide virtual care using Baycrest's telemedicine carts. Baycrest staff can find more updates on TRIM by visiting <https://planbox.ca/baycrest-default/ideas/152>



Connected Seniors

The Connected Seniors Initiative is a partnership between the City of Toronto's Seniors Housing Unit and Baycrest's Interprofessional Primary Care Team (IPCT) that aims to address the complex interrelated barriers to accessing health and social services experienced by low-income seniors. The goal of this initiative is to reduce the digital divide affecting 3,000 seniors living in North Toronto, linking them with social and health services, as well as family and friends. Staff can learn more about this initiative by visiting <https://planbox.ca/baycrest-default/ideas/151>

Members of the public can learn more about these initiatives by contacting innovation@baycrest.org

Speech-Language Program Helps Improve Social Interaction



The Lee Silverman Voice Treatment (LSVT) LOUD program at Baycrest is a voice therapy program for people living with Parkinson disease. The goal of the program is to increase vocal loudness to a healthy, normal volume so the patient can improve communication with others. Clients who participate in the program have found it extremely helpful because as their voice and speech improves, so does their ability to interact with

friends and family. Being able to use the phone to call family members again is of great importance now when physical distancing can be a barrier to maintaining meaningful relationships.

"If taken seriously, this is quite a demanding course of treatment, both in monetary terms as well as time and effort," said a client of the LSVT LOUD program. "In my opinion, though, such investments are well worth it in every way. The dividends are huge and immediate, and of particular benefit for the Parkinson sufferer. From being a mere spectator excluded from the conversation, I could actively, vigorously and enjoyably become an enthusiastic

participant in that conversation. Well worth the course fee and a few hours of my time!"

This telemedicine practice was launched in 2016 to serve clients living in remote areas of Ontario with limited Speech-Language Pathology services. It is also available to those who live locally but have difficulty getting to the clinic. All a person needs to participate is a computer with internet and a microphone. LSVT LOUD is a fee-for-service program and is not covered by OHIP. For more information about the program, please visit baycrest.org or call 416-785-2500, ext. 2928.

Stay Safe. Get Your Flu Shot!



Influenza season is here and it's time to get your flu shot. Getting your annual flu shot provides protection against influenza and helps fight the flu in our community. While we do not yet have a vaccine for COVID-19, there is one available for the flu. Influenza, like COVID-19, creates an increased risk of complications for those with underlying chronic conditions. Therefore, we must stay safe and protect our vulnerable client population, ourselves and our families. Given the current pandemic, it is tremendously important this year to get the flu shot to reduce the risk of infectious disease at Baycrest and

collectively work to avoid adding pressure to our healthcare system during this time.

"The flu shot is your best defense against the flu," says Nadia Boroja, Manager, Occupational Health & Safety. "We urge all staff at Baycrest to get the flu shot early to protect yourself, your family and the vulnerable patients, residents and clients at Baycrest."

Where to get the flu shot:

- The Flu Buggy will be making its rounds on all clinical departments and units. The schedule will be made available on all units and on the intranet.

- Drop by the Occupational Health & Safety office on the second floor of the hospital, Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Drop by the Marketplace to have your bi-weekly COVID-19 test and receive your influenza vaccine. Hours of operation will be posted on the intranet.
- Visit your own healthcare provider and provide OH&S with written confirmation that you've received the vaccination.

As always, teams from different areas of the organization will be competing for the highest vaccination rates. Watch for more details on prizes on the intranet.

Dr. Morris Freedman Honoured By World Federation of Neurology



Dr. Morris Freedman was recently elected as a Trustee of the World Federation of Neurology (WFN). This is a tremendous honour and accomplishment for Dr. Freedman, Baycrest's Head, Division of Neurology and Medical Director, Cognition and Behaviour. The mission of the WFN is to foster quality neurology and brain health worldwide by promoting global neurological education and training, with an emphasis placed firmly on under-resourced parts of the world.

B2B Cyclists Raise More Than \$485,000 for Baycrest



Fifty million people are living with dementia – and there are nearly 10 million new cases each year, according to the World Health Organization. By delaying the onset of dementia by five years, we can reduce its prevalence by

30 per cent. That is what cyclists in this year's Barrie 2 Baycrest ride hit the road to support. On Sunday, September 13, more than 100 riders came together to ride a route of either 50 or 100 km, raising more than \$485,000 for the Baycrest Foundation.

Their efforts will help develop exercise programs at The Kimel Family Centre for Brain Health and Wellness. A first of its kind in Canada, the Centre will be located at Baycrest and play a pivotal role in the fight against dementia. With a focus on therapeutic fitness, the Kimel

Family Centre for Brain Health and Wellness at Baycrest will have the tools and resources necessary to completely change the way Canadians age; and aims to improve the way people age on a global scale.

As one of the longest standing community organized rides in Canada, Barrie 2 Baycrest has raised almost \$13 million to date. For photos of this year's event visit the Baycrest Foundation Facebook page, and for more information on the 2021 ride visit <http://b2b.baycrestfoundation.org/>

Baycrest



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