

# THE IALH UPDATE

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## Bridging the Gap Between Research and the Community



Pictured above: 2020 Ruth A. Gardner Award Recipient and IALH Student Affiliate, Sanjit Roy (Left) and Eldercare Foundation Awards Committee Member, Annette Laurin.

Contributed by: S. Zinovich

The partnership between the Greater Victoria Eldercare Foundation (Eldercare Foundation) and the University of Victoria’s Institute on Aging and Lifelong Health (IALH) is one that helps bridge the gap between research and the community. Both organizations benefit - IALH Student Affiliates are supported financially, and the Eldercare Foundation is able to attract important research projects that can potentially improve the lives of older individuals locally, nationally, and internationally.

*“Research has always been a very important piece of what the Eldercare Foundation does. By partnering with IALH, we can share expertise and knowledge transfer, and fund changes that might help to improve quality of life.”*

-Lori McLeod, Executive Director, Eldercare Foundation

The Ruth A. Gardner Research Award, held and administered by the Eldercare Foundation with research support from IALH, is one example of how vital connections between research and community organizations can be strengthened. The award was created to honour Ruth A. Gardner’s legacy and professional interests as a psychologist and social worker. The annual award supports a University of Victoria student undertaking a clinical or applied research project designed to enhance and advance care for individuals with chronic conditions who are aging.

The 2020 Ruth A. Gardner Research Award recipient is Sanjit Roy, a PhD student in the Social Dimensions of Health program and an IALH Student Affiliate. As part of his doctoral research, Sanjit is applying his education and proficiency in applied statistics to better understand socialization and community building for individuals with Alzheimer’s Disease or another form of dementia. The World Health Organization, which has recognized dementia as a public health priority, estimates that 5% to 8% of the population globally has some form of dementia (see <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/dementia>). As there is no current treatment for dementia, those who have been diagnosed need extra care and support to continue to be an active part of their communities.

*(Story continues on next page)*

Stay Connected! You can email us at [aging@uvic.ca](mailto:aging@uvic.ca), or visit us on social media



UVic Institute on Aging & Lifelong Health



@UVicAging



*“Creating a dementia-friendly community provides the opportunity for persons with dementia to be engaged in the community and with peers to increase quality of life.”*

-Sanjit Roy, 2020 Ruth A. Gardner Research Award Recipient

For more information on the Ruth A. Gardner Research Award and other awards available through the Eldercare Foundation, please see <https://gvef.org/the-ruth-a-gardner-research-award/>

For more information on other awards available to IALH Student Affiliates, please see <https://www.uvic.ca/research/centres/aging/awards/scholarships/index.php>

## Mental Health Impacts of COVID-19

Contributed by: T. Paterson



In response to the global COVID-19 pandemic, IALH faculty affiliate Theone Paterson, PhD (Psychology) and colleague Brianna Turner, PhD (Psychology) are leading a nation-wide study exploring how COVID-19 and the associated preventative measures are affecting the lives of Canadians. In partnership with researchers in the UK, Canada is one of eleven (11) countries seeking to identify what has been helpful or harmful to our well-being throughout this time, across multiple nations and public health responses. Paterson and Turner are collecting three waves of national surveys which will allow them to examine the mental health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic across different phases of the pandemic (Fall 2020, Winter 2020/2021, and Spring 2021).

The first wave of the general population survey was completed in October 2020. Some 6,629 Canadians participated from across the country. Preliminary results suggest:

- Young Canadians under the age of 35 are feeling the pandemic the hardest, showing anxiety, worry, and depression rates above any other age group.
- All age groups reportedly adhered to social distancing guidelines equally and did not differ in the extent to which they worried about direct (e.g., catching or spreading the virus) and indirect (e.g., overloading the health system, economic recession) impacts of the pandemic. These findings challenge media narratives that young Canadians are unconcerned with the pandemic.
- Canadians who work directly with people who may be displaying symptoms of COVID-19 outside of healthcare settings (e.g., retail, food and restaurant services, essential services) report more mental health concerns, including depression and worry, relative to healthcare workers or Canadians whose work does not put them in potential contact with COVID-19.
- Unemployed Canadians, regardless of whether they received benefits such as CERB and EI, reported worse mental health compared to Canadians who were employed or who were on another type of leave from work (e.g., medical, disability, or parental leaves).

The team also observed plenty of Canadians who are adjusting well to this new normal, leaning on their supports, finding time for self-care, and reflecting on the challenges.

For more information on the second wave of the survey, please visit: <https://onlineacademiccommunity.uvic.ca/covidmentalhealth/participate/>.

For more information on the project see <https://oac.uvic.ca/covidmentalhealth/>. The project is funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research, and BC Ministry of Health.

## Upcoming Events:

### Jukebox Days—International Music Reminiscence Program

**When: February 25, 2021 at 10:00 AM**

Reminisce the Jukebox Days of the 1950's and 1960's during this free Zoom session. To register, please email Dr. Debra Sheets at [dsheets@uvic.ca](mailto:dsheets@uvic.ca). More information on this event can be found on the IALH website: <https://www.uvic.ca/research/centres/aging/events/index.php>

### An Elder Academy Event: Polar Opposites!



University  
of Victoria

Retirees  
Association

Why are our polar regions so different? This series explores why and how Earth's polar regions are so different from one another. Despite the differences, both regions play an integral part in the way they influence global climate. This series will be of interest to travelers and those with a curiosity for political, historical, socio-economic and technical issues.

**When: Saturday's March 6, 13, and 20, 2021 at 10:00 AM — 12:00PM via Zoom**

**Cost: \$15.00 for all 3 sessions\***

\*Students may attend free of charge but must email [UVRAElderAcademyEvents@uvic.ca](mailto:UVRAElderAcademyEvents@uvic.ca) to register

For more information on presenters and to register, please visit:

<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/polar-opposites-tickets-128090814073>

The UVic Retirees Association provides the public with better mental and physical health for seniors through stimulating education experiences.



University  
of Victoria

Institute on Aging  
and Lifelong Health  
& Retirees Association

Since 2006, the UVic Retirees Association (UVRA) and the Institute on Aging and Lifelong Health have sponsored an annual public lecture series on Wednesday evenings in April. In 2020, the series was postponed due to the evolving COVID-19 pandemic. The UVRA and IALH are excited to once again present the series, this time via Zoom Webinar.

Registration for this free lecture series opens Wednesday, March 3, 2021. More information on the speakers and their topics is available at [www.uvic.ca/aging/events](http://www.uvic.ca/aging/events)

### Masterminds 2021 Schedule:

**Wednesday, April 7, 2021 7:00 PM—8:30 PM**

*Plants, People and Places: Lessons in Stewardship and Reciprocity*

Presenter: Nancy Turner, Professor Emeritus, Environmental Studies

**Wednesday, April 14, 2021 7:00 PM—8:30 PM**

*Commercial Sex: A Problem of Gender or Social Inequality?*

Presenter: Cecilia Benoit, Professor Emeritus, Sociology

**Wednesday, April 21, 2021 7:00 PM—8:30 PM**

*Elementary Particles: The Fundamental Building Blocks of Nature*

Presenter: Richard Keeler, Professor Emeritus, Physics and Astronomy

**Wednesday, April 28, 2021 7:00 PM—8:30 PM**

*Thinking About Aging in Place*

Presenter: Mary Ellen Purkis, Professor Emeritus, Nursing

## Dementia Connections:

Dementia Connections is an online publication that contains a wealth of information for individuals coping with Alzheimer's Disease or another form of dementia. The publication has been Alberta based, but will be applicable to readers across Canada beginning Spring 2021. For more information, see <https://www.dementiaconnections.ca/magazine>



## New Research Opportunities:

### RESEARCH STUDY

Online 12 week Zoom program  
Saturdays, 11:00 AM to 12:00 PM  
February 27 to May 15, 2021

**Intergenerational: Bringing older and younger adults together**

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Debra Sheets, Ph.D., MN, RN  
School of Nursing, Univ. of Victoria  
Ph: (250) 853-3947  
Email: [dsheets@uvic.ca](mailto:dsheets@uvic.ca)



# MEMORY CAFÉ VICTORIA



A joyful creative space for people with memory loss and their family members

Experience joy, creativity and social connections! Our professionally led arts program includes storytelling, poetry, music, art, gentle movement, and more!

Participate in a UVic research study that will explore the impact of social connection and creative engagement on well-being and quality of life.

### ARE YOU ELIGIBLE?

- Mild to moderate memory loss and their care partners
- Able to participate online for 1 hour
- Access to a computer/tablet and internet

### BEFORE THE PROGRAM STARTS & AT THE END YOU WILL BE ASKED TO:

- Participate in a Zoom interview (~20 min.)
- Complete an online survey (~30 min.)

**eFIT** Executive Function Improvement Training

# Looking to be active? Free Guided Exercise

## The Cortex Lab in collaboration with Tall Tree is looking for participants

8 week cognitive health study divided into  
1 hour a week of video guided exercise  
2 hours a week of self-directed exercise  
completing questionnaires and  
computer-based cognitive tasks

Randomized group assignment to:  
**Active Group or Control Group**

### Eligibility Criteria:

- ✓ 65+ yrs old, in good health
- ✓ Currently living in Canada
- ✓ Access to internet and smartphone or tablet
- ✓ All genders are welcomed

[www.uvic.ca/efit](http://www.uvic.ca/efit)      [efitstudy@uvic.ca](mailto:efitstudy@uvic.ca)



**CORTEX**

A RESEARCH LAB FOR THE STUDY OF  
EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS



Count your age by friends, not years.  
Count your life by smiles, not tears.

-John Lennon