



THE IALH UPDATE

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Dr. Ryan Rhodes, Director, Behavioural Medicine Lab; Professor, School of Exercise Science, Physical and Health Education; IALH Faculty Affiliate. Photo: UVic Photo Services

Physical Activity in the Time of COVID-19

Dr. Ryan Rhodes' Behavioural Medicine Lab is emphasizing the importance of building healthy exercise habits during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since the start of the pandemic, Canadian adults' moderate to vigorous physical activity has declined by an average of 46 minutes per week. A recent study by the Behavioural Medicine Lab has shown that 58% of adults reported their level of activity changed very little, another 15% struggled in the beginning of the pandemic, but have since re-established their activity habits, while 6% of study participants reported that they became more active. Dr. Rhodes' team is focusing on the final 20% who were active prior to the pandemic, but have since become inactive.

But a decline in physical activity during the pandemic is not limited to adults. Canadian children and youth have also become more inactive. This is particularly concerning as before the pandemic, only 15% of children were active on a regular basis.

"Movement behaviours are linked to mental health and quality of life. Overall, getting outside regularly, even for brief bouts, can help"

- Ryan Rhodes

As the winter months approach, Dr. Rhodes suggests that people start forming healthy exercise habits to get them through the dark, cold and wet weather. One way to do this is to pair new habits with already established cues. For example, "Every morning, I drink my coffee and then I go for a walk." Other suggestions include taking a socially distant walk with a friend or joining an online fitness class.

More information on the impact of COVID-19 on physical activity can be found [here](#).

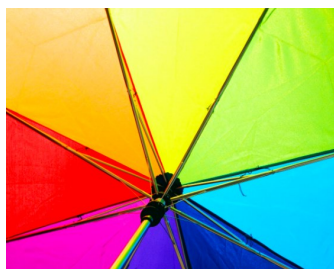
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Generational Allies Project

Are you over 55 and LGBTQ2I+? The Generational Allies project, funded by New Horizons for Seniors (Service Canada), asks for your participation in this survey to share your thoughts and the kinds of things that are important to you.

[Take The Survey](#)



STAYING APART TO STAY SAFE

The Impact of Visit Restrictions on Long-Term Care and Assisted Living Survey

November 2020



Staying Apart to Stay Safe: The Impact of Visit Restrictions on Individuals in Long-Term Care and Assisted Living

On November 3, 2020, the Office of the Seniors Advocate (OSA) released the results of a province-wide survey on the impact of visitor restrictions at long-term care and assisted living homes. The report, *Staying Apart to Stay Safe*, reflects the experiences of more than 13,000 British Columbia long-term care and assisted living residents and their family members during the current pandemic.

Visitor restrictions were enforced in long-term care and assisted living homes in March 2020, separating some residents and their loved ones for over eight months.

Survey respondents recognized the necessity of visiting restrictions, but indicated the negative impacts of limited or no visits are of greater concern than contracting COVID-19.

Recommendations in the report include authorizing longer and more frequent visits. Residents should have the ability to designate an essential care partner, for more frequent and longer private in-room visits, as well as one or more designated social visitors.

For more information about the survey, the OSA recommendations, and personal stories from respondents, please read the report here:

<https://www.seniorsadvocatebc.ca/osa-reports/staying-apart-to-stay-safe-survey>.

Culturally Appropriate Coming of Age and Urban Indigenous Youth in Care Project

The *Culturally Appropriate Coming of Age and Urban Indigenous Youth in Care Project* has brought together Victoria's Indigenous youth community, elders, and Indigenous and non-Indigenous allies to explore how youth in foster care or living away from home can access culturally appropriate and relevant coming of age resources.

For Indigenous youth in care, coming of age involves a convergence of individual, family and community relationships. Traditionally, coming of age teachings are grounded in wisdom held by knowledge keepers and are shared through songs, stories, ceremonies and rites of passage. (Re)connecting with these teachings supports community healing, wellness, and resilience, and helps to prepare young people for their roles in preserving cultural knowledge.

The project is a collaborative effort of Surrounded by Cedar Child and Family Services, the University of Victoria, and Island Health. The UVic research team includes Andrea Mellor, a PhD candidate in the Social Dimensions of Health Program, Dr. Denise Cloutier (Geography, IALH Faculty Affiliate), Dr. Nick Claxton (School of Child and Youth Care) and Dr. Karen Kobayashi (Sociology, IALH Faculty Affiliate). The project has been funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, Island Health, and the BC SUPPORT Unit.

Upcoming Events & Lectures:

Better Now: How We Can Improve Healthcare for Seniors



In a recorded lecture, Dr. Danielle Martin from Women's College Hospital and University of Toronto explains how we can improve healthcare for Canadian seniors. Dr. Martin is known for defending Canada's Health Care System before a United States Senate subcommittee. She is the author of the book *Better Now: Six Big Ideas to Improve Healthcare for all Canadians*.

The link to this lecture has been generously provided by the University of Regina, with permission of Dr. Martin. You can watch the lecture [here](#).

Dementia Lab Conference – 2021

The 5th annual Dementia Lab Conference, hosted by the Health Design Lab at the Emily Carr University of Art and Design, will be held virtually between January 18 and 28, 2021.

The theme of this year's conference is *Supporting Ability*, and talks, workshops and performances will look at how design can uncover, support and enhance the abilities of individuals with dementia. The focus will be on engagement, empowerment and identity. The conference is supported by the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority, the Alzheimer Society of BC, and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC).

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.dementialabconference.com/Supporting-Ability-2021/index.php>

Social Isolation May Increase Likelihood of Hypertension in Women

New research using cross-sectional analyses of Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging (CLSA) Comprehensive Cohort data, shows that women may be at a higher likelihood of suffering from high blood pressure as a direct result of social isolation compared to men. Dr. Annalijn Conklin, the study's Principal Investigator and Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences at the University of British Columbia, explains that limited social participation or social isolation led to an increased risk of hypertension among women. The risk was higher with single, divorced or widowed women in comparison to married women.

Although it is still unknown why social isolation has had this affect on women, Professor Conklin noted that the findings indicate

“women's heart health, and the determinants of women's heart health should be looked at as a separate point of interest by researchers.”

More information about the study can be found [here](#).

IALH supports one of the 10 data collection sites in the CLSA Comprehensive Cohort.

Toward Equity-Informed Care: Making Visible the Needs of Marginalized and Vulnerable Populations

A research team with the BC SPOR (Strategy for Patient Oriented Research) has created a committee consisting of researchers and those with lived experience of homelessness and chronic illness, to identify and explain in the context of lived experience what is most important to measure, and how best to measure it.

The Persons with Lived Experience Advisory Committee met virtually eight times between May 2020 and August 2020. The committee members, Daniel Sands, Kara Whitlock, Erin Donald (Uvic Nursing PhD candidate), and IALH Faculty Affiliate, Dr. Kelli Stajduhar, began by discussing concepts related to PROMs (Patient Reported Outcome Measures) and PREMs (Patient Reported Experience Measures) and identifying the most important concepts for persons with lived experience of homelessness, substance use, or mental distress who also experience chronic illness.

These discussions generated a series of themes, as well as specific recommendations for the choice and delivery of PROMs and PREMs. The committee's themes included: 1) Trust and Relationship Building, 2) Health and Quality of Life, and 3) Equity.

The committee presented a virtual poster detailing the first phase of the three-phase project to the BC Support Unit Conference *Putting Patients First: Connecting Face to Face* in Virtual Space on October 8th.

You can view the poster at :

<https://my.visme.co/view/4d86k3d9-ppf20>

(Please note Internet Explorer does not support this link– please use Google Chrome or Firefox to view)

The Phase 1 Advisory Committee findings will help inform Phase 2 of the research.

More information on the BC Support Unit Conference can be found at

<https://bcsupportunit.ca/conference>

Have your say: Island Health Hospital at Home

This fall, a Hospital at Home prototype is coming to Victoria General Hospital. Hospital at Home programs in other provinces and

countries provide acute patient-centred care, with a lower risk of hospital-based complications or infections, to patients in their own home and Island Health is testing the program here. Patients who would normally be in hospital can choose to be treated at home, with virtual and in-person medical care to provide medications, monitor vital signs, and deliver nursing care with support from their own caregivers. The program's goal is to reduce the risk of hospital-driven infections.

In order to ensure the program meets everyone's needs, Island Health would like to hear from patients, family caregivers, and health professionals.

For more information about the program, and to complete a survey, please visit: <https://www.islandhealth.ca/our-services/hospital-home-services/hospital-home>.



BC SUPPORT Unit
Advancing Patient-Oriented Research
VANCOUVER ISLAND CENTRE



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[islandhealth.ca/hospital-at-home](https://www.islandhealth.ca/hospital-at-home)

Research Opportunities:

VADAC | VICTORIA ASSISTIVE DEVICES AND COACHING STUDY

Take part in an exciting new study!

THE VICTORIA ASSISTIVE DEVICES AND COACHING (VADAC) STUDY IS LOOKING FOR PARTICIPANTS.

The University of Victoria – Institute on Aging & Lifelong Health is conducting an exciting new research study in the lower Vancouver Island area. The study will evaluate the effectiveness of health coaching and home assistive devices. Health coaches provide encouragement, support, and teach participants key self-management skills and strategies.

- PARTICIPANTS WILL:**
- ▶ Be seniors (65 years+),
 - ▶ Be living on Vancouver Island (Victoria to Nanaimo),
 - ▶ Have one or more chronic health conditions, and
 - ▶ Have an internet connection with Wi-Fi.

Participants will be randomly assigned to one of 3 groups: a group which gets a Health Coach and receives 30-minute weekly telephone calls for a period of 3 months; a group that receives the Health Coach in 3 months; or to a group which receives a Health Coach and also has assistive devices that are installed in their home with virtual assistance (telephone and online only – no in-person contact) from a research assistant.

For more information please contact the Health Coach Coordinator, Suzanne:

1-866-902-3767 (toll free)
or email: vadac@uvic.ca



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