Greetings from the PIR Ivey Research Chair...

The holidays have arrived!

This time of year is often about hope, and one of the important things about the research we do here at PIR is that it brings hope to some of the very difficult situations experienced by our patients, patients’ families, and community. The link between hope and research it what makes an open house even more meaningful at the start of the holiday season. I’m happy to report that on November 30th 2018, Parkwood Institute Research hosted its second holiday themed Open House. The Open House was again split into two exciting events: one for PIR staff and scientists, and the second for external stakeholders, including members of the general public. Over 50 PIR researchers and staff participated in our fun and informative internal event in the morning. The purpose of the internal event was to encourage relationship building among the whole PIR team while increasing everyone’s level of knowledge regarding each other’s research areas. Participants were split into 6 teams, made up of members from 10 different research teams. Together these teams explored 10 research exhibits across both Parkwood Main and Parkwood Mental Health, learning about each research teams’ projects through unique experiential learning and puzzles at each exhibit. In addition, each participating research team was again asked to decorate their research space, as there was a prize for the most festive exhibit. Congratulations to the Mental Health Nursing Research Alliance for creating such a festive exhibit with the theme “Santa’s Workshop”! Further to that, there was a prize for the best game and/or puzzle at an exhibit, please join me in congratulating Dr. Robert Teasell’s CORRE team for creating such an entertaining and slightly frightening game (for those who missed it there are apparently best practices for dealing with Zombies, so we can all rest a little easier now).

Our external Open House was also a success! We welcomed even more people into our labs than we did at last year’s event, which saw nearly 200 visitors. We had media attention from CTV (click here to see the video) and the London Free Press (click here to see the article), as well as two MPPs join us for a tour. We had many members of the public including those wanting to participate in research, past and current patients and past and current research participants. We also had many community partner organizations attend the open house.

These two very busy events would not have been possible without a lot of help from a planning committee. Thanks to all the committee members Julie Walsh, Vanessa Cullen, Shona Macpherson, Stephanie Marrocco, Ashraf Janmohammad, Laura Goncalves, Sarah Best, Kristy Coleman, Jerome Iruthayarajah, Callista Forchuk, Kaitlin Saxton and Shay Nejim.

I wish you all happy holidays and wonderful New Year.

Cheryl
Welcome to all New Research Personnel!

Nada Elhayek joined Dr. Borrie’s team as a research assistant in cognitive clinical trials in April 2018. She received her BHSc at Western University and is currently completing her MSc in Health and Rehabilitation Sciences in the Speech Language Sciences stream at Western University. She is interested in research in Alzheimer’s and dementia and is excited to expand her knowledge in cognitive clinical trials.

Lauren Cole is a research assistant in the Cognitive Clinical Trials Group at Parkwood Institute. She received her Hon. B.A in Music Therapy at Acadia University and became an accredited Neurologic Music Therapist this past year. Lauren is very excited to be joining Dr. Borrie’s team to gain relevant clinical research experience and to help with the advancement in dementia and Alzheimer’s disease research.

Joseph Dube joined the Cognitive Clinical Trials research team in September 2018. He earned his MSc in biochemistry from Western University and is a recent medical graduate of Saba University. He is interested in geriatric medicine and cognitive health.

Roha Alam, an undergraduate Western student, has joined the CORRE research group on a part-time basis.
Sebastiano Failla is currently completing an MSc in Rehabilitation Sciences. His research primarily focuses on investigating communication outcomes of individuals who have lost their voice box to malignant disease. He joined Dr. Robert Teasell’s CORRE team in September 2018 as a clinical research assistant and is working on the Spinal Cord Injury Research Evidence (SCIRE) project, Stroke Rehabilitation Evidence-Based Review (SREBR), and clinical trials.

Ariel Tran, is a Partners in Experiential Learning (PEL) co-op student with the MINDS of London-Middlesex (MINDS) team. Ariel is currently a grade 11 student at London Central Secondary School and will be with the MINDS team from October 2018 to June 2019. As part of the PEL program, Ariel is part of the MINDS Research Team as a youth co-researcher. Through this experience, she has been able to enrich her research skills and improve her presentation skills. She looks forward to developing many other skills as her placement progresses.

Mark Lynch recently graduated from Western University with an MSc in Health and Rehabilitation Science. He completed his Bachelor of Health Sciences degree with a specialization in Biology from Western University as well. Through his graduate research which he completed in “the Laboratory for Well-Being and Quality of Life in Oncology” and his volunteer work with various organizations such as the Alice Saddy Association, the Victorian Order of Nurses, and the Canadian Cancer Society’s Research Initiative Outreach Team he has become interested in exploring the relationships between physical health, mental health, and quality of life. Mark hopes to one day establish a career where he is able to combine his interests in healthcare and research to improve the patient experience and the overall healthcare environment.

Grace Kadler is in the final year of her undergraduate degree in medical sciences and psychology at Western University. She is particularly interested in consciousness, emotional well-being, and behavioural neuroendocrinology. Grace has joined the research team of Dr. Vasudev as a student volunteer to assist with the study An Exploratory Examination of Potentially Anomalous Human-Machine Interactions in Clinically Depressed and Anxious Out-Patients in Late Adulthood. She will be co-supervised by Professor Barušs (King’s College) for this study which will explore the relationship between pathological emotional states and the ability to engage in direct mental influence through human-machine interactions.
Alexa Momy graduated from Western University in 2017 with a BA Honors Specialization in Kinesiology and a Major in Psychology. While at Western, she began volunteering in Dr. Fisher and Dr. Campbell’s labs in the Psychology Department, where she continues to volunteer today. She’s passionate about sexual health and sexual health education, and hopes to pursue a career in these fields.

Dr. Luxey Sirisegaram is currently enrolled in her residency program of Internal Medicine at the Schulich School of Medicine at the University of Western Ontario, and is doing a Research Rotation the Gait and Brain Lab. She completed her BSc. Honours in Neuroscience at Carleton University, and went on to complete her MD at the Cumming School of Medicine at University of Calgary. She has a keen interest in interplay between neuroscience and medicine within the sphere of the aging population.

Dr. Anthony Nazarov is a clinical neuroscientist with a research focus on PTSD, moral injury, and social cognition. He completed his doctoral studies at McMaster University under the mentorship of Drs. Margaret McKinnon and Ruth Lanius, where he explored the impact of complex psychological trauma on cognitive and affective processes. After completing his PhD, he joined the Department of National Defence as a defence scientist at Defence Research and Development Canada investigating psychological resilience and mental health in Canadian Armed Forces personnel. The majority of his clients included the Canadian Forces Health Services and the Surgeon General, where he applied experimental and survey methodologies to explore the interplay between psychological trauma, perceived moral transgressions, and psychological well-being. He is interested in understanding how we can better identify, treat, and prevent moral injury and improve treatment outcomes in PTSD.

Suzanne Blainey - Suzie is a Psychology student at the University of Western Ontario who joined the research team of Dr. Akshya Vasudev this September. Suzie is a student volunteer assisting with the study Alternative Treatments to Help Late-Life Depression. In addition to assisting with the study she will be completing her undergraduate thesis project which will focus on executive functioning outcomes in the study. This study will assess the role of Sahaj Samadhi Meditation (SSM) compared to an active control, Health Enhancement Program (HEP) in a 12-week RCT in patients with late life depression (LLD).
Yashasvi Sachar (Yash) is currently in the fourth year of his BMSc Honours program, specializing in Interdisciplinary Medical Sciences. Yash joined the research team of Dr. Kamini Vasudev in September 2018 to assist with the study ‘Alternative Treatments for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder’ study. He is also assisting Dr. Akshya Vasudev with various projects, including the "Alternative Treatments for Late-Life Depression" study.

Deena Lala joined the Research to Practice (R2P) Team as a Postdoctoral fellow with Dr. Dalton Wolfe and clinical co-leads Anna Kras-Dupuis and Stephanie Cornell in September 2018. She recently completed her PhD in Health and Rehabilitation Sciences and Masters of Physical Therapy at Western University. She was the recipient of the 2018 Mary Horney Fellowship in Rehabilitation and will be examining the feasibility and value of using wearable sensors (developed in Zurich, Switzerland) by clinicians and persons with spinal cord injury during inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation. She will also be working closely in the PRIME (Program for Rehabilitation Innovations in Mobility Enhancement) initiative with the interest of identifying an appropriate staging tool for individuals with acquired brain injury that can aid physiotherapists and other clinicians in decisions related to activity-based therapies.

Congratulations on these Notable Accomplishments...

A talented physician and community leader
He’s a go-to leader renowned in his field, who treats every patient with compassion – mind, body and spirit – and has personally cultivated support that has advanced care, teaching and research across St. Joseph’s. These are some of the exceptional qualities of Dr. Tim Doherty, this year’s recipient of the St. Joseph’s Medical Advisory Committee (MAC) Award. The award is presented to an individual for demonstrating qualities of leadership and providing outstanding contributions to the success of initiatives aligning with the strategic directions of St. Joseph’s. Congratulations Dr. Doherty!
Members of the CORRE Team (Dr. Robert Teasell, Magdalena Mirkowski, Joshua Wiener, Jerome Iruthayarajah, and Pavlina Faltynek) attended the American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine (ACRM) in Dallas, Texas, September 30-October 3, 2018. They presented 11 posters, and 1 abstract which was selected for a podium presentation. Two of the posters were selected for awards (see below).

Dr. Robert Teasell received the 2018 Award for Excellence in Post-Acute Stroke Award. This award is co-sponsored by the American Congress of Rehabilitation and National Stroke Association in the United States and recognizes outstanding clinical, intellectual, and service contributions in the area of stroke. Dr. Teasell was presenting a featured lecture and presented the award at the American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine, the world’s largest interdisciplinary rehabilitation research conference, in Dallas Texas, September 2018.

Dr. Robert Teasell was invited to the Stroke Recovery and Rehabilitation Roundtable Knowledge Translation International Advisory Group (SRRR2) retreat in St. Sauvier, Quebec – Stroke Rehabilitation Research Roundtable. This international group’s goal was to determine international directions in future stroke rehabilitation research.

Dr. Robert Teasell was invited as the Keynote Speaker to a special Stroke Recovery Workshop: Bridging the Translational Gap in Stroke Recovery & Rehabilitation Research, November 27-28, 2018 at the NIH (National Institute of Health) in Washington DC/Bethesda Maryland. The Goal of the Workshop, which involved top scientists from across the United States, was to work to align preclinical studies to clinical trial designs to move stroke recovery research forward. Dr. Teasell began the meeting with an Invited Presentation on “What is the Current State of Modern Stroke Rehabilitation Practice?”
On November 16, Dr. Montero-Odasso received the Top Editor Reviewer Award from the Journal of Gerontology Medical Science, for his outstanding contributions to the peer-review process. During the 2018 Meeting of the Argentinian Society of Internal Medicine, Dr. Montero-Odasso received the distinction of Honorary International Member of the Argentinian Society of Gerontology and Geriatrics.

The CIHR Institute of Aging welcomed Dr. Montero-Odasso as a new member of the Institute Advisory Board (IAB). He will contribute his creativity, diversity of experience, and perspectives to the IAB.


Gerontological Society of America Fellowship Nomination (FGSA)
On November 15, Dr. Montero-Odasso received the Gerontological Society of America Fellowship Nomination (FGSA) from current GSA president David J. Ekerdt at the 2018 GSA Meeting. This is the highest honour conferred by the Gerontological Society of America!

CCNA 1st Public event – Montreal (QC)
On September 30, 2018 Dr. Montero-Odasso was a featured panelist on Exercise and Mobility at the Canadian Consortium on Neurodegeneration in Aging (CCNA) first public event: Dementia Risk Reduction: What the research tells us. In this event, attendees heard evidence-based advice on ways to build cognitive resilience, lead a healthy diet by following the Brain Health Food Guide, and the importance of physical exercise and to its link to cognition. More than 150 people from the general public attended the event!

Gait and Brain Lab Trainees Josh Titus and Stephanie Cullen presented their research at the first CCNA public forum on Dementia Risk Reduction in Montreal, QC
2018 Gait and Brain Seminar
The 12th annual Gait and Brain Seminar “Gait and Cognition: Cause, Effect, Both or Neither” was hosted at Parkwood Institute on Tuesday October 16th, 2018 with guest speaker Dr. Richard Camicioli from the University of Alberta.

Congratulations on a successful PIR Open House!
Here are some photos from the day:

The winning teams for the Internal Open House. Best Research-Related Puzzle goes to the CORRE Lab (left) Best Festive Decorations goes to the MHNRA Lab (right)

Talking Mental Health Research with MPP Peggy Sattler, MPP Terrance Kernaghan, Dr. David Hill and others...

A demonstration in the CORRE Lab
Thesis Defense!

Congratulations to:

- **Fatima Bukair** who defended her thesis “Examining the Relationship between Body Mass Index and Health-Related Quality of Life Perception among People with Mental Illness” on October 4, 2018.
- **Anna Rudkovska** was successful in her MSc Defense “Changes in bowel function associated with Lokomat training in persons with SCI, and determining the most appropriate patient-reported outcome measures to assess Lokomat-related changes to bowel function” October 18, 2018.

Grants & Research Funding

**Principal Investigator:** Teasell R., (Wolfe D, Loh E).
**Study Title:** Spinal Cord Injury Review Evidence. **Ontario Neurotrauma Foundation**
**Year:** 2017 - 2020
**Amount:** $240,000

**Principal Investigator:** Dr. Arlene MacDougall
**Grant:** Seed Grant, Ontario Trillium Foundation
**Year:** 2018 - 2019
**Amount:** $75,000
[https://london.ctvnews.ca/grant-supports-innovation-in-transitional-aged-youth-mental-health-1.4189376](https://london.ctvnews.ca/grant-supports-innovation-in-transitional-aged-youth-mental-health-1.4189376)

**Co-Investigator:** Dr. Montero-Odasso (Team co-leader)
**Study Title:** Ontario Neurodegenerative Disease Research Initiative (ONDRI) 2.0 “Using wearable at home”.
**Year:** 2018-2023
**Amount:** $375,000 CAD (shared part of $3M)

**Principal Investigator:** Wolfe D
**Co-Investigators:** Bailey C, Duggal N, Urquhart J, Potter PJP, Sequeira K
**Study Title:** Rick Hansen Spinal Cord Injury Registry (RHSCIR) - London
**Agency:** Rick Hansen Institute
**Year:** 2018-2019
**Amount:** $60,000

**Principal Investigator:** Dr. Don Richardson
**Study Title:** Understanding predictors recovery of military-related PTSD from both an individual and family perspective using qualitative and quantitative analysis
**Year:** 2018
**Amount:** $47,260.00
Presentations/Invited Lectures

SEPTEMBER

Borrie, M.  September 27, 2018 Invited Expert Panelist for Booster Day in London, Ontario

Wells, JL.  September 27, 2018 Invited Expert Panelist for Booster Day in London, Ontario


Wells, JL. October 29, 2018 Invited Lecturer Geriatric Interdisciplinary Grand Rounds "Adverse Childhood Experience and other Trauma/PTSD Relevance in Geriatrics". St. Joseph's Health Care - Parkwood Main Auditorium London ON


Presenters: Dr. Akshya Vasudev, invited Lecturer, Non pharmacological interventions in the treatment of mental disorders: results from pilot studies and RCT, Hospital Deu Grace , 2018 Oct 26, Windsor, Ontario, Canada, Original Research Presentation

Student Presentation
A Feasibility (Pilot) Study of An Innovative Non-Pharmacological Intervention in At-Risk Youth, Canadian Mental Health Association Conference Titled Mental Health For All, Presenters: Aman Chauhan, Fatima Bukair, Cheryl Forchuk, Javeed Sukhera, Mark Speechley, Akshya Vasudev, 2018 Oct 22, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, Original Research Presentation,

Pharmacological and Clinical Profile of Newer Atypical Antipsychotics as Treatments for Bipolar Disorder: A Systematic Review and Considerations for Use in Older Patients, Canadian Academy of Geriatric Psychiatry, Presenters: Sumit Chaudhari, Akshya Vasudev, 2018 Oct 12, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, Original Research Presentation,


NOVEMBER

 Presenter, Role of Meditative Practices: an interview, Clickbait Medicine, Presenters: Dr. Akshya Vasudev, 2018 Nov 23, London, Ontario, Canada, Community Outreach Activity


PUBLICATIONS


Wells JL, Pasternak SH. Case Report of a 63-Year-Old Patient With Alzheimer Disease and a Novel Presenilin 2 Mutation. *Alzheimer Dis Assoc Disord*, 2018 Aug 24, Principal Author, DOI: 10.1097/WAD.0000000000000269


Pieruccini-Faria F, Montero-Odasso M. Obstacle Negotiation, Gait Variability and Risk of Falling. Results from “Gait and Brain Study”. *Journal of Gerontology : Medical Sciences* (In press)


PUBLISHED ABSTRACTS


The Surgeon General announces the release of the Canadian Armed Forces Clinician Handbook on Suicide Prevention


Eynan, R. (1st Nov. 2018). Who Leaves Suicide Notes? Oral presentation at the 2018 Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention Conference, St. John’s NFLD.


MEDIA

Borrie M. Macleans Interview with Shannon Proudfoot. “ I am mine’: This is what Alzheimer’s is like at 41”. Published. Sep 18, 2018 https://www.macleans.ca/news/canada/i-am-mine-this-is-what-alzheimers-is-like-at-41/
CALL FOR APPLICANTS:
Parkwood Institute Research Student Endowments will be released early in 2019! Watch for emails from PIR_info@sjhc.london.on.ca!

SAVE THE DATE: Parkwood Institute Research – RESEARCH DAY!
Friday, April 26th, 2019
8:30 – 3:00pm
Parkwood Main Hospital
Call for Abstracts coming in Mid-January!

SAVE THE DATE: 33rd Annual Geriatric Medicine Refresher Day, Current and Practical Knowledge to Inspire and Advance Care
Wednesday, May 1, 2019
7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
London Convention Centre, London, Ontario