Our Future is Aging: Current Research on Knowledge, Practice and Policy
Our Keynote Presentations

Wednesday, November 21 - The Greying of Medicare: Can Canada’s Aging Health System Be Revitalized?

Much is written about the aging of the population and its impact on health costs. But what about the health system itself – is the 1950s model of healthcare able to deliver 21st century care? A veteran healthcare journalist examines how Medicare should adjust to the needs of the population – and not vice-versa.

Presenter: André Picard

Biography: André Picard is the public health reporter at The Globe and Mail and one of Canada’s top public policy writers. He is the author of the best-selling books Critical Care: Canadian Nurses Speak For Change and The Gift of Death: Confronting Canada’s Tainted Blood Tragedy. He is also the author of A Call to Alms: The New Face of Charity in Canada. André has received much acclaim for his writing, including the Michener Award for Meritorious Public Service Journalism, the Canadian Policy Research Award, and the Atkinson Fellowship for Public Policy Research. In 2002, he received the Centennial Prize of the Pan-American Health Organization as the top public health reporter in the Americas. In 2005, the Canadian Public Health Association named him Canada’s first Public Health Hero. He is also a four-time finalist for the National Newspaper Awards – Canada’s Pulitzer Prize. André has been the recipient of the Canadian Nurses’ Association Award of Excellence for Health Care Reporting, the Nursing in the Media Award of the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario, the International Media Prize of Sigma Theta Tau (Nursing Honor Society), and the Science and Society Book Prize.

His advocacy work has been honoured by a number of consumer health groups, including the Safe Kids Canada, the Canadian Mental Health Association, the Canadian Alliance on Mental Illness and the Canadian Hearing Society. André has also participated in a number of academic endeavours, notably as a participant in the Governor-General's Canadian Leadership Conference and as a guest lecturer at a number of universities. In addition to his writing and speaking, André has participated in a number of professional organizations and non-profit groups. He is a former member of the advisory committees of the Canadian Institute for Child Health, Active Healthy Kids Canada, Centraide/United Way Montréal, and the Canadian Medical Association Journal.
Thursday, November 22 - The Future of Aging: Interdisciplinary Research, Practice and Policy Partnerships

There is tremendous diversity and variability in the aged population, which is not always reflected in the current language of research, policy and practice. This presentation situates the aging of Canada’s population within an international context to expand awareness of the complexity of research on aging, and with it, the possibilities and challenges of developing and implementing interdisciplinary evidence-based research partnerships and collaborations. Implications of the heterogeneity of aging populations for health services and systems will be considered, along with multidisciplinary paradigms for thinking about aging. Reflections on the importance of recognizing the diversity and complexity of aging; the need for interdisciplinary research platforms, and practice and policy partnerships; and the benefits of creating linkages across existing projects and data systems conclude the presentation.

Presenter: Dr. Anne Martin-Matthews

Biography: Anne Martin-Matthews is a Professor of Sociology at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada. She has just completed two terms (2004-2011) as the Scientific Director of the national Institute of Aging of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR). Under her leadership, the Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging (a 20 year study of 50,000 Canadians aged 45 years and older) was launched in 2009, with key operational support from the CIHR. During her term, the Institute of Aging also developed strategic research initiatives in Cognitive Impairment, and in Mobility in Aging, and developed international funding partnerships with China, France, Japan, and the United Kingdom (through both the NDA and the EPSRC). Anne led the Institute to partnership as an associate member of the ERA-AGE2, and has participated in FUTURAGE consultations on Europe’s Roadmap for Research on Aging. She holds a PhD from McMaster University in Canada. She has conducted research on home care services to elderly clients in BC, Ontario and Nova Scotia. Her publications include Aging and Caring at the Intersection of Work and Home Life: Blurring the Boundaries (2008, with Judith Phillips), Widowhood in Later Life, three edited volumes (one on the research-policy interface) and over 150 scholarly papers on aging in family contexts, widowhood, social support, caregiving, and domiciliary health care services. Dr. Martin-Matthews is currently the President of the Research Committee on Aging of the International Sociological Association (2010-2014).
Friday, November 23 - Aging into the Future: Growing Old with the Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging

Over the next twenty years, the Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging (CLSA) will generate a wealth of information that will contribute to the advancement of the science of aging and policy development in a changing world. The CLSA will collect information from 50,000 men and women on the biological, clinical, psychological, social, and economic aspects of their lives in order to understand how, individually and in combination, they influence the maintenance of health and well-being, and the development of disease and disability as people age. The CLSA will be one of the most comprehensive studies of its kind undertaken to date. Its large sample, multidisciplinary focus, and longitudinal design will provide research opportunities unprecedented in Canada and internationally. In 2009 the CLSA partnered with Statistics Canada to develop the Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) in Healthy Aging and launch the CLSA. Recruitment of the Tracking cohort began in 2010 with funding from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. In 2011, with funding from the Canada Foundation for Innovation, the infrastructure for eleven Data Collection Sites across Canada was established to conduct health assessments in the Comprehensive cohort. In 2012, recruitment of the Comprehensive cohort began. The objectives of this presentation are to: 1) Provide an update on CLSA progress and milestones achieved; 2) Give a detailed account of the data collection procedures within the CLSA that will allow researchers to appreciate its scope and potential as a platform for the study of aging; 3) Describe the process for future data access by the research community.

Presenter: Dr. Susan Kirkland

Biography: Dr. Susan Kirkland is a Professor in the Departments of Community Health and Epidemiology and Medicine at Dalhousie University. Her research lies in the areas of chronic diseases and aging. She is particularly interested in the epidemiologic investigation of chronic diseases including cardiovascular disease and osteoporosis, and the interplay between genetics and the social determinants of health as they influence healthy aging. Dr. Kirkland has been instrumental in the development of a number of large scale initiatives, including the Maritime Centre of Excellence for Women's Health and the Atlantic Interdisciplinary Research Network. She is currently one of three principal investigators leading the Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging, funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) and the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI). Dr. Kirkland also serves as a member of the Board of Governors and the Research Advisory Council at Northwoodcare Inc.