



at the UNIVERSITY OF REGINA

The Newsletter

CAH Member Dr. Natasha Gallant Announced as New Canada Research Chair

The Centre on Aging and Health is thrilled to announce that Dr. Natasha Gallant, CAH Member and Assistant Professor in Clinical Psychology at the University of Regina, has been awarded a Tier 2 Canada Research Chair (CRC) in Aging and Long-Term Care by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research beginning on July 1, 2024. The Government of Canada will contribute \$600,000 over 5 years to



Dr. Natasha Gallant (U of R Photography)

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2025 Centre on Aging and Health Distinguished Public Lecture: Live Long, Die Short: Aging at the Intersection of Technology, Philosophy, and Purpose

Thursday, March 27, 2024 6:30 PM
University Theatre, Dr. William Riddell Centre
Main University of Regina Campus

Dominic Carter
The Carter Group
Tokyo, Japan

Long-time Japan resident, consumer researcher, and entrepreneur Dominic Carter delves into how the Japanese philosophies of ikigai (personal purpose) and pin pin korori (live long, die short) offer valuable insights for addressing the challenges of aging. By incorporating these human-centric principles, Carter reveals how the development and adoption of technology for aging adults can align with deeper values of purpose and fulfillment. Drawing on lessons from Japan's aging society, this talk explores the fusion of cultural wisdom and innovative solutions, inspiring a more meaningful and human-focused approach to the future of aging.

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fund Dr. Gallant's research.

Dr. Natasha Gallant is Director of the Aging, Residents, and Caregivers (ARC) Research Lab through which her CRC research will be conducted. The ARC Lab has received an additional \$79,927 in funding from the Canada Foundation for Innovation's John R. Evans Leaders Fund for necessary infrastructure and technology.

Dr. Gallant completed her honours psychology degree at Huron College, University of Western Ontario, and completed her Master's thesis and doctoral studies in clinical psychology at the University of Regina's Health Psychology Lab, focusing on pain assessment in older adults and on the effects of social supports on older adults and their caregivers, particularly in long-term care environments. She is passionate about using research in a way that meaningfully improves the quality of life of Canada's aging population, on researching the influence of psychological factors on physical health, and the way in which the Canadian healthcare system incorporates this research.

As Canada's population of older adults is growing at an unprecedented rate, the number of people diagnosed with dementia is expected to double over the next decade, growing from half a million to over one million people with dementia.

As Canada's population of older adults is growing at an unprecedented rate, the number of people diagnosed with dementia is expected to double over the next decade, growing from half a million to over one million people with dementia. Older adults who are socially isolated or lonely are more likely to develop dementia. Research suggests that reducing these risk factors could reduce or delay the incidence of dementia by up to 40 per cent, thereby reducing suffering in the older adult population, reducing stress and demands on caregivers, and significantly reducing health care and caregiving costs associated with supporting those experiencing dementia.

Research suggests that reducing the risk factors of isolation and loneliness could reduce or delay the incidence of dementia by up to 40 per cent.

With the support of her team of more than twenty students and trainee researchers, Dr. Gallant's CRC program will learn from older adults with and without dementia and will develop strategies to reduce social isolation and loneliness among older adults to prevent or delay dementia, with the goal of reducing the detrimental effects of dementia in our society with a particular focus on the residents of long-term care facilities, of whom over 50% experience dementia.

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The Centre on Aging and Health is tremendously appreciative of the substantial funding from the Government of Canada and wishes to congratulate Dr. Gallant on leading her CRC program. The funding provided will enable this

important research to take place, with the potential to have a meaningful impact on the lives of generations of Canadians by improving quality of life, and reducing the social, economic, and health impacts of dementia in our population.

Examining the Relationship of Ageism and Pain With COVID-Related Stress in Older Adults

By Kylie Arsenault

Department of Psychology, University of Regina & Centre on Aging and Health

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on older adults, negatively affecting both physical and mental health. One such consequence of the pandemic has been a notable rise in ageism directed towards older adults (e.g., social media posts suggesting that older adults are “vulnerable” or “helpless” against COVID-19, beliefs that public health measures should only target older adults). Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic introduced significant challenges in the delivery of pain-related treatments for older adults, a population where pain is already often undermanaged and undertreated. Despite the known negative impacts of the pandemic on older adults, research on psychological reactions to COVID-19, specifically how ageism and pain may have influenced levels of COVID-related stress, has been limited in this population.

Under the supervision of Dr. Thomas Hadjistavropoulos at the University of

Regina, my Master’s thesis sought to address these research gaps by exploring whether both ageism and pain were associated with increased COVID-related stress among older adults. This research, supported in part by a SSHRC Canada Graduate Scholarship-Master’s and the Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation, aimed to shed light on these critical issues and also validate the widely used COVID Stress Scales (Taylor et al., 2020) tool for future research and clinical use with older adults.

In January 2024, we recruited nearly 500 older adults from across North America to participate in an online survey that assessed self-reported experiences of ageism, pain, and stress related to COVID-19. Our findings showed that, although levels of COVID-related stress were lower compared to data collected during the peak of the pandemic, the degree to which older adults reported experiencing ageism and pain predicted higher levels of COVID-related stress. Findings also supported the psychometric properties of the COVID Stress Scales, confirming it as a valid and reliable tool for measuring COVID-related stress in older adults.

Overall, this research highlights factors that may increase pandemic-related stress in older adults. These findings also suggest that targeted interventions addressing ageism and pain management may be

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needed to better support the mental health and well-being of older adults in the event of future waves of COVID-19 or other pandemics. Results from this thesis

are set to be published in the peer-reviewed literature and were presented at the Canadian Association on Gerontology (CAG) 2024 annual meeting.

CAH Director Awarded Saskatchewan Order of Merit

The Centre on Aging and Health is pleased to announce the investiture of CAH Director, Dr. Thomas Hadjistavropoulos, with the Saskatchewan Order of Merit. The Saskatchewan Order of Merit is the province's most prestigious recognition of excellence, achievement and contributions to the social, cultural and economic well-being of the province

and its residents. Selected as a recipient of the Saskatchewan Order of Merit in recognition of this work as an internationally recognized psychologist, researcher, academic and mentor, Dr. Hadjistavropoulos is recognized by Stanford University as being in the world's top 2 per cent of cited scientists.

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2024 Saskatchewan Order of Merit recipients

Back row (L to R): Hon. Brad Wall, Greg Yuel, Tribal Chief Mark Arcand, Floyd Favel, Colonel (Ret'd) Malcolm Young, C.D. Front row (L to R): Dr. Thomas Hadjistavropoulos, Brynn Boback Lane, Olivia Yuel, Renu Kapoor, S.V.M., Curtis Kleisinger

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Dr. Hadjistavropoulos led his lab's team of researchers to develop an evidence-based assessment tool to understand, diagnose, and treat pain experienced by older people and others suffering from dementia that impairs their ability to communicate. Approaches developed in his lab increase the likelihood that older people and those experiencing cognitive decline receive world-class pain assessment management.

Along with his collaborative partners, Dr. Hadjistavropoulos has focused on

sharing his groundbreaking research and assessment tool widely, through an extensive #SeePainMoreClearly social media campaign, which has received millions of social media impressions and visits to the seepainmoreclearly.org website from over 60 countries.

The Centre on Aging and Health congratulates Dr. Hadjistavropoulos for his tremendous achievements and dedication to improving the lives of people experiencing pain and dementia, both in our province and worldwide.

U of R-led Team Successful in the CIHR Planning and Dissemination Grants Competition

Researchers from the University of Regina, Oxford Brookes University in the United Kingdom, University of Ghana, Ghana, the University of the Free State, South Africa, and collaborator from the Older Adult Community Health Center in Saskatoon have been awarded a CIHR Planning and Dissemination Grant - Institute of Aging competition to share the findings on their

pilot project exploring older adults' aging in place in the four participating countries. The team led by Dr. Vivian Pupilampu will employ a hybrid approach to meet and engage in discussion as well as plan innovative dissemination strategies with stakeholders focused on contextual strategies to address the after-effects of the pandemic in regards to aging-in place.

In May 2025, the research team will meet in-person in Saskatoon to interact with the Canadian community partner, share their sites' strategies identified to address concerns influencing aging-in-place and understand health practices to catalyze

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and click on **"Become a Member."**

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new initiatives to support older adults' aging in place and potentially develop a new partnership. Furthermore, the team, in collaboration with the Centre on Aging and Health (CAH) at the University of Regina, will receive support on knowledge translation and mobilization

and will present to the CAH in Regina and at the Canadian Gerontological Nursing Association (CGNA) conference in Manitoba. The Centre on Aging and Health congratulates Dr. Pupilampu and her colleagues on their success.

Age-Friendly Regina Celebrates New Website and Translation of 'Aging Well in Regina' Guides

Age-Friendly is a worldwide movement that was established by the World Health Organization (WHO) and is promoted by the Public Health Agency of Canada. Established in 2018, Age-Friendly Regina is comprised of volunteer community members, community organizations, the City of Regina, the Saskatchewan Health Authority, and the University of Regina's Centre on Aging and Health. The organization's goal is to make Regina a more age-friendly city where people of all ages are valued, included and supported, enjoy healthy, active lifestyles and age positively.

Age-Friendly committees engage with older adults to provide an Age-Friendly

Friendly "lens", which is then applied to all ages and all aspects of the community where the policies, services and structures related to the physical world and social environment are designed to help people of all ages "age actively."

Age-Friendly Regina (AFR) recently celebrated the launch of its website at a public event on September 25 at Regina's Central Library. The AFR website incorporates both visual aids and language translation features to make its information more accessible to community members. AFR's *Guide to Aging Well in Regina*, which includes Housing, Mental Health & Wellbeing, Transportation, and Crime Prevention and Safety Guides, has also been translated into multiple languages through the Saskatchewan Senior's Mechanism's Facilitating Independence Grant with the financial support of the Government of Saskatchewan, and in partnership with the Regina Open Door Society (RODS) and the Regina Immigrant Women Centre (RIWC). Visit AFR's new website at: www.agefriendlyregina.ca.

CAH NEWSLETTER ACCEPTING SUBMISSIONS

Your announcements, member and research updates, and CAH-related news items are welcome. Please email submissions to: Kathryn Smart, CAH Administrator at Kathryn.Smart@uregina.ca.

APPLY FOR THE M.A./M.SC. AGING STUDIES PROGRAM

**“Seniors make up the fastest growing age group...
By 2051, about one in four Canadians is expected to
be 65 or over.”**

– *Statistics Canada*

- Exciting inter-disciplinary, research-oriented graduate degree program.
- Provides research training and specialized gerontology knowledge to health professionals and students.
- Emphasizes both the physiological and psychosocial aspects of aging.
- The collaboration of the Faculty of Arts, the Faculty of Kinesiology and Health Studies and the Faculty of Social Work and coordinated by the University of Regina’s Centre on Aging and Health.

Admission Requirements:

4-year undergraduate degree in areas such as, nursing, kinesiology, psychology, social work, health studies, sociology, biology, or a health professional degree .

Applications Due: March 31st, 2025
(for Fall 2025 Admissions)

For More Information:

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Apply now for the 2024/2025 CAH Small Grants Research Award!

Amount Available: \$1,500 Application Deadline:
December 15, 2024

This award is intended to fund pilot projects or other work aimed to lead to the preparation of a major national application in the area of health and aging.

To apply, or for more information:
Visit <https://research.uregina.ca/cah/about-cah/cah-grants-programs/>
or contact cah@uregina.ca or 306.337.8477

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Full: \$100 Half: \$50 Quarter: \$35

Corporate Rates (per page):

Full: \$150 Half: \$100 Quarter: \$85

Contact CAH Administrator at: 306.337.8477
or cah@uregina.ca for more information.



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