

AGING & GEROPSYCHOLOGY NEWSLETTER

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Friday, February 7, 2025



Welcome to the Aging & Geropsychology Newsletter!

Welcome to the inaugural edition of the Aging and Geropsychology Newsletter! This marks the beginning of the journey to connect our growing community of professionals, researchers, and students who are passionate about aging and psychological care. In this newsletter, we will keep you informed about the latest section news, share updates and opportunities, highlight funding and training opportunities, and feature innovative initiatives and resources. Additionally, we'll explore special topics in geropsychology research and clinical practice, showcasing the incredible work being done across Canada and beyond.

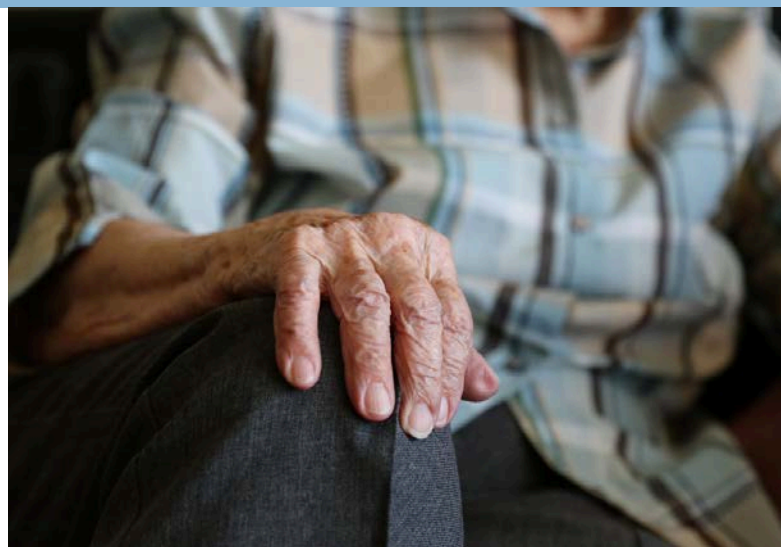
Newsletter Goal

Our goal is to create a **hub for knowledge exchange, collaboration, and inspiration** as we work together to advance psychological care, research, and advocacy for older adults. We hope this newsletter serves as a valuable resource for you, whether you're just starting your journey in geropsychology or are an experienced professional.

What to expect in this edition?

1. **Who and what are we?** Meet the Aging and Geropsychology Section team
2. Upcoming **funding / scholarship opportunities**
3. What to expect this year at the **CPA conference** (speaker, poster session)
4. **Discover our new Mentorship Program:** Calling potential mentors and mentees!
5. **Add your name:** List of Aging and Geropsychology researchers and clinicians in Canada
6. **Hot off the press:** Special topics in geropsychology research and clinical practice

Thank you for being part of this community, and we look forward to sharing this journey with you!



- Aging and Geropsychology students
(Allie Grady, University of Ottawa and
Li-elle Rapaport, University of Manitoba)

MEET THE TEAM

We'd like to introduce the individuals supporting the Aging and Geropsychology section:

Dr. Natasha Gallant (Chair)

Natasha.Gallant@uregina.ca
Assistant Professor and Canada Research Chair in Aging and Long-Term Care, Department of Psychology, University of Regina



Dr. Colleen Millikin (Past-Chair)

cmillikin@sbgh.mb.ca
Clinical neuropsychologist, Clinical Health Psychology, Winnipeg, MB; Assistant professor, Department of Clinical Health Psychology, Rady Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Manitoba



Dr. Katherine Buell (Secretary)

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Clinical & Counselling Psychologist, M.K. Buell Psychology Professional Corporation, Kingston, ON



Dr. Marla Morden (Treasurer)

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Professor, Vancouver Island University, tiwš'emawtxw Campus, Powell River, BC



Dr. Venera Bruto (Member-At-Large)

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Clinical Neuropsychologist / Psychologist & Manager, Mental Health Programs, Sienna Senior Living – St. George Community, Toronto, ON
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Dr. Marnin Heisel (Member-At-Large)

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Professor, Departments of Psychiatry and of Epidemiology & Biostatistics, Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry, Western University



Dr. Peggy Koopman (Member-At-Large)

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Ms. Allie Grady (Student Rep)

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Doctoral Candidate, Department of Psychology, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ottawa



Ms. Li-elle Rapaport (Student Rep)

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Doctoral Candidate, Department of Psychology, Faculty of Arts, University of Manitoba



Upcoming Funding and Scholarship Opportunities

The Aging & Geropsychology Section offers **Student Presentation Awards** to recognize student achievements and promote sharing student research. Each year, **three awards of \$250** are available to student members presenting work related to aging and geropsychology. One of these awards is reserved for presentations accepted by the Aging & Geropsychology Section. If there are more than three applicants, winners will be chosen by lottery.

If fewer than three students apply, non-presenting student members attending the convention may be eligible for a **Conference Travel Award of \$250**. Priority for travel awards is given to students attending universities located more than 500 km from the conference city. Students are eligible for one award per year and a maximum of two awards during their academic career.

To apply, students must **email the section chair by June 10th** with their attendance confirmation, student membership status, and university affiliation. Presentation award applicants should also include proof of presentation acceptance. Awards are reimbursed after the convention.

Applications should be sent to Dr. Colleen Millikin at cmillikin@sbgh.mb.ca.

For more information, please visit this link: <https://cpa.ca/sections/agingandgeropsychology/aging-and-geropsychology-section-student-presentation-awards/>

We look forward to reviewing your applications!

What to Expect this Year at the CPA 2025 Conference

Exciting plans are underway for the annual CPA conference, and the Aging and Geropsychology Section is thrilled to share a preview of what's in store for our members this year!



Keynote Speaker: Dr. Sherri Carter

We are delighted to announce our 2025 keynote speaker, Dr. Sherri Carter, an esteemed expert in aging and cognitive health. Dr. Carter will deliver an insightful presentation on best clinical practices for Vascular Cognitive Impairment (VCI), offering practical strategies and research updates for clinicians and researchers alike. Stay tuned for more details about her highly anticipated talk!

Aging & Geropsych Poster Session

Explore the latest research and innovations in aging and geropsychology during our poster presentation session. This is a fantastic opportunity to engage with groundbreaking work from colleagues across the field and spark meaningful conversations about advancing care for older adults.



Thank you for your ongoing enthusiasm, support, and participation in our section. Mark your calendars—**we can't wait to see you in June 2025!**

BEST PRACTICES IN VASCULAR COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT

Background/rationale: VCI refers to cognitive problems that are caused by the effects of vascular disease on brain function, which can range from mild cognitive impairment to vascular dementia (Skrobot et al., 2018). The prevalence of risk factors for VCI, such as hypertension, cardiovascular disease, and diabetes, is high in Canada, and expected to worsen with an aging population (Leung et al., 2019). Symptoms of depression are associated with VCI in those with a history of vascular events, such as lacunar stroke (Ohlmeier et al., 2023).

Methods: A review of best practices for the assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of VCI will be presented, including the most recent Canadian Stroke Best Practice guidelines. Implications for the role of psychologists will be examined.

Results/Conclusions: Current best practice guidelines address screening, assessment, and management of cognitive dysfunction in VCI, screening, assessment, and treatment for VCI-related mood disturbances, and psychoeducation and support for caregivers. Psychologists working with older adults should be aware of and incorporate these recommendations into their practice.

Action/Impact: From contributing to assessment and diagnosis of VCI, lifestyle modification, and treatment of VCI-related mood disturbances, psychologists can play a key role in managing this important determinant of health in an aging population.

About Dr. Sherri Carter, Keynote Speaker

Sherri L. Carter, Ph.D. is a psychologist with a practice in clinical neuropsychology and over 20 years of experience in the area of stroke rehabilitation. She divides her time between the Nova Scotia Rehabilitation Centre, Nova Scotia Health and private practice. In addition to her clinical practice, she is the Professional Practice Coordinator for the QEII Psychology discipline in the Nova Scotia Health Rehabilitation and Supportive Care portfolio.

She holds an Adjunct (Clinical Associate) appointment with the Dalhousie University Department of Psychology and Neuroscience. Sherri completed a Ph.D. in Clinical Neuropsychology from the University of Windsor, a predoctoral residency in adult neuropsychology at London Health Sciences Centre and a postdoctoral research fellowship in neuropsychological rehabilitation at St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto.

Sherri has served as a member of the scientific writing group for the updated Canadian Stroke Best Practice Recommendations, Vascular Cognitive Impairment (7th edition; 2024). She was also a member of the writing group for the Canadian Stroke Best Practice Recommendations: Rehabilitation, Recovery and Community Participation following stroke (6th edition; 2019).



Introducing our new Mentorship Program

The Aging and Geropsychology section is launching a mentorship program to connect professionals and students interested in aging-related research and practice. **We are seeking:**

- **Professionals** willing to serve as mentors, offering guidance via email or video conferencing (minimal time commitment - approximately 15-30 minutes per month).
- **Students and trainees** looking for mentorship in areas such as research, clinical practice, and professional development in aging and geropsychology.

If you are interested in being a mentor or mentee, please sign up here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/QZKRWQW>

*Matching subject to availability of mentors and mentees





Compiling a list of Aging and Geropsychology researchers and clinicians

We are creating a comprehensive list of aging researchers across Canada. This resource could be used to foster research collaborations, find dissertation committee members, and suggest external reviewers during journal submissions. **Please add your name** to the spreadsheet, and circulate to those in your networks:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1yfRBKgO-vtkY5kxSuhMr6lty6GJ65tjnmfTodLoavsE/edit?usp=sharing>

Special Topics in Geropsychology

Recent Aging and Geropsychology research has highlighted key topics including:

- **Post-Incarceration Challenges in Older Adults:** Older adults post-incarceration face unique health and social challenges, such as limited access to healthcare, social reintegration difficulties, and accelerated aging.
- **Social Isolation and Cognitive Decline:** New studies continue to highlight how loneliness and social isolation significantly increase the risk of dementia. A large-scale study found that socially disconnected older adults are more likely to experience cognitive decline, emphasizing the need for mental health interventions that target loneliness to support aging populations.
- **Brain Health and Lifelong Learning:** Researchers are exploring how cognitive training programs and lifelong learning activities may help older adults maintain brain health. Engaging in mentally stimulating activities and education programs has been shown to slow down cognitive aging and improve emotional well-being among seniors.
- **Digital Interventions for Depression in Older Adults:** Innovations in mental health care include technology-based therapies, such as apps and online cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), which have shown promising results in addressing depression and anxiety in older adults who face barriers to accessing traditional care.
- **Social Prescribing and Overall Health:** Loneliness has also been tied to higher risks of physical, emotional, cognitive decline, and overall mortality. Researchers suggest that social prescribing—connecting older adults to community and social activities—could mitigate these risks.
- **Advances in Late-Life Suicide Prevention:** With rising concerns about suicide rates among older adults, studies are exploring early identification and prevention strategies, particularly among those that are at greater risk.

Click each heading to read the full article

