

Health Notes

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CPA Health Psychology and Behavioral Medicine Section Newsletter

Edited by Jennifer Gordon, PhD., R.D. Psych.

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Message from the Editor

Jennifer Gordon, PhD, R.D. Psych.

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Dear Health Psychology and Behavioural Medicine Section members,

It is my great pleasure to take on the role of *Health Notes* editor and to work with the wonderful members of our Executive Committee to make our section the best it can be. My own research is focused on mental health issues surrounding women's reproductive transitions and challenges, such as infertility, the postpartum period, and the menopause transition, but I am fascinated by all areas of Health Psychology so I love that my role as editor brushes me up on all the exciting Health Psychology research that's going on in this country.

I absolutely welcome all suggestions for newsletter pieces! Have you or someone you know received funding to conduct research in the areas of Health Psychology and Behavioural Medicine? Or do you know of Canadian Health Psychology research that's been making the news lately? Please drop me an email and tell me about it! I'm also happy to advertise events or opportunities that would be of interest to our section members. I want this newsletter to be useful and relevant to you!

Finally, I wish to put out a call for newsletter writers. For this edition, I benefited from a wonderful and dedicated team of talented writers but I could always use more! If you're interested in becoming a regular contributor to the newsletter, or if you'd like to contribute a single piece on a particular topic, please contact me – I'll be happy to welcome you to the writing team!

I hope you've enjoyed the current edition of *Health Notes* – we'll be back with a new one in spring 2020, just in time to give you all of the most important highlights of the upcoming CPA conference!

Jennifer Gordon
Editor of *Health Notes*



Message from the Health Section Chair



Justin Presseau, PhD

Assistant Professor, University of Ottawa
Scientist, Ottawa Hospital Research Institute
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Dear Health Psychology and Behavioural Medicine Section members;

I am delighted to introduce the new format of *Health Notes*, our bi-annual Section newsletter and to welcome Dr. Jennifer Gordon as our new *Health Notes* editor. The November 2019 issue features an interview with Dr. Wolfgang Linden, our most recent senior investigator award winner, and an overview of our Ron Melzack poster prize winners from the 2019 CPA conference, Dr. Kharah Ross and Melina Tomasiello. This issue also highlights how Health Psychology has been in the news, recent health psychology related funding, and a guide of five health psychology conferences that should be on your radar for 2020 if they are not already. We also flag our call for applications for this year's Early Career Award – do consider nominating an outstanding early investigator or practitioner! Finally, the call for abstract submissions is now open for the 2020 CPA Annual Convention to be held May 28-30th 2020 in Montreal (abstract deadline is December 2nd, 2019).

I am very excited to take on the role of Chair of our Section and am here on behalf of the wider Executive Committee to help in any way I can. I wanted to thank outgoing section Chair Dr. Kim Lavoie for steering our Section so ably. Her stewardship has seen our Section go from strength to strength and I look forward to doing my best to continue to build on that success with a number of planned initiatives over the next few months. If you're not yet following the Section on socials, our Facebook page and Twitter (@CPA_Health) feed feature recently-published research and news relevant to health. Please let us know if you would like us to share your recent publications. Finally, I am delighted to let you know that CPA has now put in place a new (lower) Early Career membership fee for recent graduates to ensure that anyone transitioning from being a student to their professional career can maintain the benefits of being a member, see the CPA membership website for details.

Wishing you a happy, healthy, and productive Fall and Winter and hope to catch up with many of you at the conference in Montreal.

Justin Presseau, PhD
Chair, Health Psychology and Behavioural Medicine Section

Senior Investigator Award Winner:

Dr. Wolfgang Linden

Written by Natasha Gallant, M.A. (Regina)



Dr. Wolfgang Linden is a Professor Emeritus at the University of British Columbia who has devoted his long career to advancing research in the areas of Health Psychology and Behavioural Medicine, with a focus on psychological contributors and adjustment to cancer and cardiovascular disease. With well over 100 publications and nearly 12,000 citations, Dr. Linden has certainly enjoyed an enormously successful career in academia. Most recently, his significant contributions to the discipline of Health Psychology were recognised with the CPA Health Section Senior Investigator Award. In light of this honor, I recently had the pleasure of speaking with Dr. Linden about what this award means to him and what has contributed to his long, successful career. Here's what he had to say.

What drew you to a career in health psychology?

My father had a mild heart attack when he was only 67 years old and that, at around the same time, he had a chance to get involved in research involving cardiac rehabilitation: All of a sudden, there was something that I could find personally meaningful. The thing about health, of course, is

that it's an incredibly easy subject to connect to. Health issues are relevant to everybody. There's really no exception. There will be members of your family who go through a cancer experience. There's just a thousand connecting points with this topic and with your own personal life.

**“Say ‘yes’ to opportunities...
You can’t just wait for
opportunity to knock on your
door. You’ve got to get out
there.” -Dr. Linden**

How has health psychology evolved since you began your career?

There's no question that the consciousness or the awareness of it has gone way up because there's a lot of really good research. You can also look at which diseases people develop and which diseases they die from as a function of prosperity. If you go back, people died in large numbers as children from infectious diseases because we didn't have antibiotics. So, we get older and older and now you get the diseases that are age-specific like heart disease and, if they survive that, they have a reasonable chance to develop cancer. The key challenge is that, because of these changes, we have way more people living with chronic diseases, and so you want to reduce their suffering, but also offer them either cures—of which we have very, very few—or at least ways to manage their disease that allows you a decent quality of life and without blowing up the budgets of health care systems.

What has contributed to your success in a career in academia as a health psychologist?

One of my philosophies of life that is, I think, apparent in all this. And that is, if you want to get somewhere, say “yes” a lot. Say “yes” to opportunities. That applies to everything. I mean, if you were a student in political science or if you were a plumber, it's the same idea. If you want to enjoy life, you need to be willing to engage in something—that could be a psychology career. You need to engage. You can't just wait for opportunity to knock on your door. You've got to get out there and look for things—interesting things—that are around. Say “yes” and play with it for a while. If it turns out to be awful, walk away, change your mind. By trying out all of these things, you find out what's exciting and you meet other people who think like you and function like you. And that's a great joy.

What does this mean to you to receive the Senior Investigator Award?

In most professions, we learn to live with very little reinforcement; when it does come along, it feels pretty good. It's good that somebody recognizes the things you've done and that they think it's worthwhile to mention it.

Students in Health Psychology:

Introducing the 2019 Winners of the Ron Melzack Student Award

Written by Ashley Balsom (Regina)

The Ron Melzack Student Award is awarded annually to recognize the single best poster presented by a trainee at the annual CPA meeting. At the most recent CPA meeting, however, choosing a single award-winner proved to be an impossible task for the awards committee; as a result, two trainees, tied for first place, were honoured with the award.



Dr. Kharah Ross, now Assistant Professor at Athabasca University

Kharah Ross, PhD

CIHR Postdoctoral Fellow
University of Calgary

Dr. Karah Ross was honoured with the Ron Melzack Student Award at CPA 2019 for her poster presentation, entitled “Change in anxiety and depressive symptoms during pregnancy and executive function and attention in 2-year-olds”. The project examined the long-term effects of maternal mental health on offspring among 336 mother-child dyads from the Alberta Pregnancy Outcomes and Nutrition (APrON) study. Women were recruited to participate in the project early in their pregnancy and were asked to complete measures of anxiety and depression during their second and third trimesters. When their child was 2-years-old, maternal reports of executive function and

attention were collected. Results revealed that higher second-trimester anxiety was associated with poorer child executive functioning and attention and that an increase in anxiety from the second to the third trimester was associated with poorer executive functioning. In contrast, depressive symptoms were not associated with cognitive functioning.

Did you know?

The point prevalence of major depression in pregnancy is 11%; for anxiety disorders, it's 13%¹.

This project is in line with Dr. Ross' overarching research interests, which involve examining the relationships between maternal and child health, and the potential role of the immune system in mediating these relationships. For example, she currently has one paper in progress exploring the influence of maternal distress on immune epigenetic profiles at 3 months of age. Dr. Ross has also been involved in a pilot project examining a community intervention for at-risk mothers aimed at supporting and improving mother-child relationships.

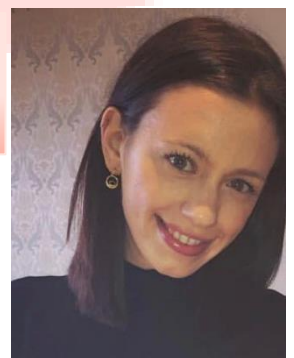
At the time of the award, Dr. Ross was a CIHR-funded postdoctoral fellow at the Alberta Children's Hospital Research Institute at the University of Calgary, under the supervision of Dr. Nicole Letourneau. However, Dr. Ross has since happily accepted a tenure-track position at Athabasca University in the Department of Psychology, where she continues her work in perinatal psychoneuroimmunology. She continues to collaborate with the University of Calgary's Owerko Centre and remains a member of the Alberta Pregnancy Outcome and Nutrition (APrON) study team. Currently, Dr. Ross is in the process of adapting to her new role as an independent researcher: says Ross, “it's a bit of a learning curve but I'm enjoying the process”.

¹Baratz Dalke et al. (2016). *Current Psychiatry Reports*, 18: 59.

Melina Tomasiello

M.A. Candidate
McGill University

Ms. Tomasiello was also presented with the Ron Melzack Student award for her poster presentation, entitled “Sleep and dietary patterns of children with externalizing problem or in comorbidity with internalizing and/or attentional problems”. This longitudinal study explored differences in sleep and dietary patterns among various groups of children with conduct problems: those with conduct problems alone, those with co-morbid anxiety, co-morbid depression, co-morbid ADHD, or all three co-morbidities combined. A sample of children with no mental disorders were also included for comparison. Parent-reported symptoms of conduct problems, depression, and ADHD were first assessed when the children were a mean age of 8.5 years. Sleep and dietary patterns were assessed years later, when the participants were a mean age of 15.5 years. Results revealed that, with regards to diet, children with comorbid conduct problems and ADHD had significantly poorer diets than children with comorbid conduct problems and depression and that all groups with conduct problems had poorer diets than controls. With regards to sleep, children with comorbid conduct problems and depression, as well as children with conduct problems and co-morbid depression and ADHD, were found to have significantly worse sleep than the other groups.



Melina Tomasiello

These findings are part of Ms. Tomasiello's master's research exploring the long-term risk behaviour of children with early externalizing problems. In the future, she aims to look more carefully at the link between early externalizing behaviour and later risk for comorbid mental health difficulties. Ms. Tomasiello is currently in the second year of her M. A. in Counselling Psychology at McGill University, under the supervision of Dr. Caroline Temcheff. Ms. Tomasiello plans to pursue a Ph.D. focused on similar work and hopes that her research will inform mental health service delivery for children with externalizing problems.

Health Psychology Funding News:

CIHR funds project on long-term mental health effects of infertility

Written by Seint Kokokyi, M.A. (Regina)

In Canada, 1 in 6 reproductive-aged couples struggle with infertility¹, which the World Health Organization defines as the failure to achieve pregnancy despite 12 months or more of regular unprotected sexual intercourse. Though the source of infertility is equally likely to lie with either sex, it is often women who bear the greater physical burden associated with fertility treatments. It is therefore unsurprising that research suggests that they also experience greater emotional burden associated with infertility; in fact, some, albeit dated, research conducted in the United States suggests that as many as 30-40% of women struggling with infertility meet criteria for depressive and anxious disorders². However, research examining psychological outcomes related to infertility within Canada remains scant.



Dr. Natalie Dayan, MD, M.Sc., FRCPC
McGill University Health Centre

Thanks to a CIHR project scheme grant awarded in the most recent spring competition, Dr. Natalie Dayan, an internist specialized in obstetric medicine from the McGill University Health Centre, and Dr. Maria Velez an Reproductive Endocrinologist and Infertility specialist (REI) from Queen's University, hope to further our understanding of the long-term impacts of infertility and its treatment among Canadian women. Together with the FERTILE Network, consisting of Canadian researchers from multiple disciplines, including internal medicine and perinatal epidemiology, Dayan and Velez plan to review data from 2006 to 2018 through administrative health datasets and birth registries, allowing them to examine approximately 59,500 cycles of in vitro fertilization (IVF) in 36,666 women. Using this enormous dataset, they plan to investigate three primary outcomes: 1) the prevalence of mental illness among women undergoing IVF compared to women who are not receiving any fertility treatments; 2) the rate of mental illness among women with successful versus unsuccessful IVF; and 3) the incidence of postpartum mental illness among women who receive fertility treatments compared to those who are fertile.

Did you know?

The most recent Canadian Community Health Survey¹ revealed that **16%** of married and common-law reproductive-aged couples were currently experiencing infertility.



Dr. Maria Velez, MD, PhD
Queen's University

This project comes hot on the heels of another CIHR-funded project, led by Dayan, examining the risk of medical pregnancy complications in women who had conceived via fertility treatments versus conceived naturally, using an administrative dataset of Ontario births. This study observed that women who received fertility treatments experienced a small but significant increase in the risk of medical complications. This latest project will further contribute to our understanding of the health impact of fertility treatments.

Dayan and Velez hope this research will inform the identification of women who are at risk for mental health problems, both during and after the struggle to conceive, to facilitate early intervention. In future research, they plan to evaluate whether the Ontario Fertility Program, which provides eligible residents with government-subsidised fertility treatments, may have a positive impact on women's mental health by helping to relieve the financial burden that unfortunately accompanies most fertility treatments. Says Velez, "Ultimately, the goal of this line of research is to improve women's health."

¹Bushnik, T, et al. (2012). *Hum Reprod.* 27(3), 738-746; ²Chen T-H, et al. (2004). *Hum Reprod.* 19(10),2313-1318.

Health Psychology in the News:

Innovative technologies improve pain care in older adults with dementia

Written by Louise Castillo (Regina)

Pain is frequently under-assessed, undermanaged, and undertreated in older adults with dementia. The cognitive impairments associated with dementia likely contribute to the problem as they often limit seniors' ability to effectively communicate their pain experience. Recently featured in the *Globe and Mail*¹, a Canadian research team is gaining media attention for their work that aims to improve pain management in individuals with dementia through the use of innovative technologies.



Hadjistavropoulos preparing a participant for testing.
Courtesy: Debra Marshall for SHRF

Federally funded through the AGE-WELL Network and co-led by Dr. Thomas Hadjistavropoulos, Research Chair in Aging and Health at the University of Regina, this research includes work toward the development of an automated computer vision system that will alert nursing staff when significant pain behaviours are detected in long-term care (LTC) facilities. Hadjistavropoulos and his collaborators, including experts in computer vision and engineering, plan to test a prototype of this system in a laboratory setting within the next year.

Hadjistavropoulos' team, in collaboration with University of Alberta computer scientist Eleni Stroulia, is also working on the creation of an app version of the Pain Assessment Checklist for Seniors with Limited Ability to Communicate (PACSLAC-II), a tool that was developed in Hadjistavropoulos' lab in collaboration with graduate students Sarah Chan and Shannon Fuchs-Lacelle. The PACSLAC-II aids clinicians in the assessment of pain among seniors with severe dementia. According to Hadjistavropoulos, nursing staff prefer an app version of the tool because they can easily track and compare each patient's pain behaviours over time without the need for time-consuming chart reviews and recording. So far, initial tests in the field suggest the technology has been well-received by front line staff.

Though he believes that many of the solutions to current challenges associated with aging will come from technology and engineering Hadjistavropoulos warns that developing new technologies is only part of the solution to improving care: "The gap between research and implementation is very wide and can take an average of 17 years until clinically important research findings find their way into widespread practice." Aiming to close that gap, the research team has several ongoing knowledge translation initiatives including web-based training on pain assessment continuing education for long-term care facility staff.

With the aim of increasing awareness of the problem of pain under-management in people with dementia and uptake of evidence-based practices, Hadjistavropoulos, along with partnering organizations (e.g., AGE WELL NCE, Canadian Association on Gerontology), stakeholders, and health professionals, have also recently launched a large-scale initiative via social media; #SeePainMoreClearly. As part of the initiative, they have prepared an engaging informational video titled "Pain in Dementia #SeePainMoreClearly" www.seepainmoreclearly.org. During the first two weeks of the campaign, the initiative received over 2 million impressions on Twitter.

In Hadjistavropoulos' view, these initiatives are part of a growing movement that has broad implications for health care research: "With the advent of technology and social media, health care is in a period of paradigmatic shift in the types of solutions that are becoming available. As an example, technological advances, like self-driving vehicles, will increase the freedom of those who can no longer drive due to sensory and/or cognitive impairments."

¹Leung, W. (2019, June 16). Facial-recognition technology may help detect pain in patients with severe dementia. *The Globe and Mail*. Retrieved from <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/>

Conference Guide 2020:

Five health psychology conferences to consider today!

Written by Jessie Young (Regina)

Conference abstract submission season is mostly behind us but here are a few great conferences with upcoming submission deadlines to consider, with some exciting destinations to boot!

1. Canadian Psychological Association Annual Convention

Location: Montreal, QC

Conferences Dates: May 28-30th 2020

Abstract Deadline: Dec 2nd 2019

Website: <https://convention.cpa.ca>

Conference Breakdown: This one's a no-brainer – after all, CPA provides a unique opportunity to connect with colleagues from across the country. This year's program promises to be a great, including a keynote address by Dr. Steven Pinker!



Montreal City Skyline: view from the top of Mount Royal

Montreal has so many things to offer

tourists, it was hard to narrow them down into these suggestions!

- **Tourist Hot Spots:** in the Mile End district you can shop at some of the city's best boutiques, eat at amazing restaurants (you are in Montreal, you may as well get a poutine or a bagel) and visit a Canadian national historic site, the Théâtre Rialto for a show. In Old Montreal, you can find souvenir shops, art galleries, more restaurants and cobblestone streets.
- **The Party Scene:** Montreal is renowned for its lively nightlife, with plenty of pubs, bars and clubs to choose from. Crescent Street (nicknamed the “party street”) is one area that is packed with venues that you can add to your itinerary!

2. International Trials Network (IBTN) Summer School & Conference

Location: Montreal, QC

Conference Dates: summer school - May 24th-30th, conference only - May 28-30th 2020

Abstract Deadline: Starting November 4th 2019 (summer school application, Dec. 2nd)

Website: <https://www.ibtnetwork.org/conference/>

Conference Breakdown: If you're interested in the development and testing of behavioural interventions, IBTN is for you! The IBTN Summer School in Behavioural Trials is a 6-day intensive program covering all aspects of behavioural trial methodologies and includes registration in the conference. The conference itself features interactive workshops, plenary sessions and poster presentations on a range of research related to behavioural trials. And it overlaps with CPA so if you're feeling ambitious, you might consider attending both conferences – have your cake and eat it too!

3. Society of Behavioral Medicine (SBM) Annual Meeting

Location: San Francisco, USA

Conferences Dates: April 1-4th 2020

Abstract Deadline: Rapid communication poster submissions due Nov. 15th, 2019

Website: <https://www.sbm.org/meetings/2020>

Conference Breakdown: With over 2,100 attendees from around the world, SBM is huge compared to some of the others on this list, with over 250 educational sessions that will cover more than 30 topic areas relations to health psychology and behavioural medicine. The deadline for regular abstract submissions has come and gone but rapid communications poster submissions are still being accepted!

Now that you are in San Francisco, what next? Consider adding some of the adventures below to your itinerary!

- **Fisherman’s Wharf:** At Fisherman’s Wharf you can visit Pier 39 (a waterfront marketplace), get a sourdough bread bowl of clam chowder, or take a bay cruise under the Golden Gate Bridge.
- **Wine Tasting in the Napa Valley:** With more than 400 wineries of varying sizes, styles and prices to choose from, the Napa Valley is only about an hour’s drive from the Golden Gate City.
- **Nightlife:** San Francisco’s Exploratorium hosts Thursday evening adult-only After Dark events with over 650 interactive exhibits. Besides this, the city is filled with nightclubs, bars and excellent mixologists. The disco tech app can be used to help you research the nightlife scene (depending on your preferences) by the date (<http://www.discotech.me/app>).



The Goldengate Bridge in San Francisco

4. International Congress of Behavioural Medicine

Location: Glasgow, SCT

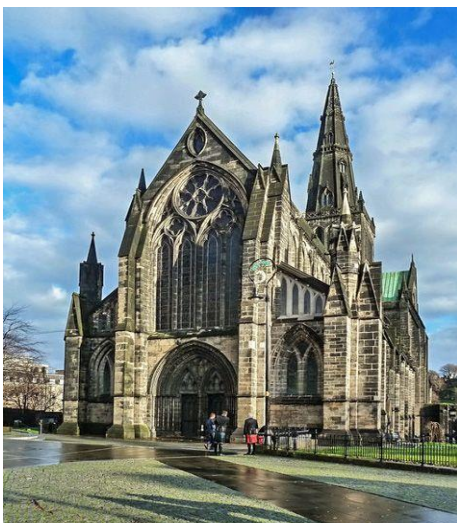
Conference Dates: August 19- 22nd 2020

Abstract Deadline: November 15th 2019

Website: <https://happening.eventsair.com/icbm2020>

Conference Breakdown: The official conference of the International Society of Behavioral Medicine, ICBM focuses on a broad range of topics in the area of behavioural medicine and offers a number of interactive, hands-on workshops. In addition to the conference itself, attendees can look forward to a Scottish themed drink reception, a gala dinner and a traditional Scottish ceilidh. **(What in the world is a Ceilidh?** It is a social event with traditional Scottish dancing, singing and story-telling).

If you’re going to travel all the way to Glasgow, make sure you reserve enough time to take in the sights. Here are just a few ideas for attractions to check out:



The Glasgow Cathedral

- **Museums and Theatres:** Glasgow is filled with museums! Particularly, Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum is a free attraction. Glasgow is also home to the Sharmanka Kinetic theatre which features motorized machine sculptures synchronized to music and lights.
- **Glasgow Cathedral and Necropolis:** The Cathedral is one of the last remaining cathedrals in the UK, while the necropolis is among the most significant cemeteries in all of Europe. Various tours are available in the cathedral so you can marvel at the architecture and stained glass.
- **Drinks, Food and Tours:** One of two remaining whiskey distilleries in Glasgow, Clydeside Distillery offers a whiskey and chocolate tour. Hungry? Consider checking out Café Gandolfi which offers traditional Scottish cuisine. Or book a walking whiskey or lunch tour that will take you to some of the most popular breweries, distilleries and restaurants.

5. American Psychological Association Convention

Location: Washington, DC

Conference Dates: August 6-9, 2020

Abstract Deadline: December 2nd 2019

Website: <https://convention.apa.org/>

Conference Breakdown: The APA convention is much more general than the other conferences on this list, but will still feature a large health psychology division. In terms of attendance, guests can expect this to be one of the larger conferences on our list. There is still time to get your abstract in, so be sure to take advantage of this opportunity if you have missed out on the others!



The Washington Monument

While you visiting the capital city of our southern neighbours, take in all of the sights that Washington has to offer!

- **Tours Galore:** There are so many things to see and do in Washington, and you may be feeling overwhelmed by the thought of figuring out what is worth your time. Luckily, the city is jam-packed with tours to streamline your site seeing! You can view the city on a Segway, visit the many monuments by moonlight on a trolley or go on a guided night tour.
- **Catch a Ball Game:** Washington is home to the Nationals major league baseball team and one of the newest stadiums in the league (Nationals Park). They offer a refreshing change from the typical sports stadium food by featuring tons of locally sourced food. Baseball aside, they also host special events like Pups in the Park and decade nights.

Options to Consider Next Year:

- **International Conference on Health Psychology and Stress**
 - Abstract deadline: Early October
 - Website: <https://waset.org/health-psychology-and-stress-conference-in-july-2020-in-toronto>
- **Annual meeting of the American Psychosomatic Society**
 - Abstract deadline: mid-October
 - Website: <http://www.psychosomatic.org/home/index.cfm>
- **Annual meeting of the International Society of Psychoneuroendocrinology**
 - Abstract deadline: September
 - Website: <http://www.ispne.net/>

Call for Applications: Early Career Award

Are you an outstanding young investigator or practitioner in the area of health psychology? Submit an application for an Early Career Award today!

Applicants must:

1. Be a Canadian resident who is less than 10 years from their highest degree (PhD, not post doc);
2. Do research and/or practice in the field of health psychology or behavioral medicine or a related field;
3. Accept to attend the upcoming meeting in Montreal and present a 30-minute talk;
4. Send a 1-2 page nomination letter stating how they have made a significant contribution to health psychology and/or behavioral medicine in Canada, along with a recent CV (any format) to Wolfgang Linden (awards chair) at wlingen@psych.ubc.ca.

Deadline: December 1, 2019.

The winner will receive a \$500 cash prize and certificate acknowledging the honour.

ibtn

international
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ÉCOLE D'ÉTÉ | SUMMER SCHOOL

MAY 24 - 30, 2020

CONGRÈS | CONFERENCE

MAY 28 - 30, 2020

SUMMER SCHOOL REGISTRATION OPENS- DEC. 2, 2020

MONTREAL, QUEBEC

WWW.IBTNETWORK.COM

The 2020 IBTN Conference is a forum for behavioural researchers and professionals interested in sharing leading behavioural trial research, practices, and innovations. Topics will touch upon intervention development, design and assessment, behavioural trial fidelity and validity, clinical practices and ethics, intervention outcomes, and reporting and knowledge transfer.

Learn more about the IBTN Conference at:

ibtnetwork.org/conference/

Registration opens in January 2020