




Centre for Aging
at Vancouver Coastal Health

2024

ANNUAL REPORT

MESSAGE FROM THE CO-DIRECTORS

2024 was our third full year as Co-Directors and marked the halfway point of our leadership term. It was a year for development as the Aging SMART operations team worked with members, trainees, research staff, and partners to build out the many initiatives launched in years one and two.

We held the first meeting of our external **Scientific Advisory Board**. Work is now underway to implement their recommendations, including the formation of two new committees; **Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)**, co-chaired by **Drs Courtney Pollock** and **Julia Schmidt**, and **Patient Engagement**, chaired by **Dr Jennifer Davis**.

The **Research Rehabilitation Program** hosted a **Spring Celebration of Research Participation**, bringing together researchers and study participants to honour their contributions to research.

The Centre-hosted **CIHR-IA Summer Program in Aging (SPA)** held in June was a major success. Planning for this event took close to a year and brought 50 trainees from across Canada, raising the Centre's profile both nationally and internationally. You can read more about SPA in this report.

In July, we hosted the second **Vancouver Summer Program (VSP) Injury Biomechanics course**.

Led by PhD student **Kaya Yoshida** with assistance from MSc student **Vishak Aathresh**. The program received excellent feedback from attendees.

We revamped cubicle space in the Robert Ho building to double the 4th floor occupancy while simultaneously creating a more light-filled and open workspace. This had an immediate impact on the culture of the 4th floor, which has become a thriving and vibrant hub.

September brought the second cohort of our **NSERC-funded Care Anywhere graduate program** focused on wearable sensors. Each Spring we highlight work from Care Anywhere trainees with a showcase. We encourage those interested to come out and join the event!

Throughout the year, the Centre benefitted from the continued engagement of our community through a number of well-attended events: INCREASE BC, Aging SMART's Annual Research Day, monthly faculty and trainee-hosted Lunch and Learns, as well as a number of events led by the Aging SMART Trainee Committee. **Our Centre is only as strong as the community we create together, and we continue to be grateful for all the ways that you contribute.**

Sincerely,
Drs Janice Eng & Teresa Liu-Ambrose

ABOUT THE CENTRE

The **Centre for Aging SMART at Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH)** is a University of British Columbia affiliated, internationally recognized research centre accelerating discoveries and new knowledge to improve the lives of an aging population and individuals living with a disability. We are focused on developing novel **S**olutions for **M**obility, **A**ctivity, **R**ehabilitation and **T**echnology so that people living with the effects of aging or disability can live a high quality of life. The vision of the Centre for Aging SMART is to ensure that people of all ages and abilities enjoy a life with quality.

The Centre for Aging SMART at VCH is one of the 14 Research Centres and Programs supported by the Vancouver Coastal Health Research Institute and one of 17 Senate approved centres and institutes within the Faculty of Medicine (FOM) at UBC.

Our interdisciplinary team of researchers, clinicians, students, staff, volunteers, and community partners work together to evaluate, implement, and disseminate solutions to some of our health care system's most pressing and expensive problems. Our researchers develop and test innovative treatments to improve the lives of older adults or people living with a disability. These treatments include exercise prescriptions, surgical innovations, chronic disease management, pharmacological regimes, assistive technology, and sensor technologies.

The partnerships between the Centre for Aging SMART, Vancouver Coastal Health and the University of British Columbia are key to developing health care innovations that can be rapidly moved into practice and policies to improve the lives of patients and families today.

Aging SMART acknowledges with gratitude and respect that we are located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Coast Salish Peoples, including the territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.



MEMBERS AT A GLANCE

Core Faculty Members

37 (+1 in 2024)

Associate Faculty Members

21 (+1 in 2024)

Trainees

150+

Faculty Promotions

Dr Jennifer Davis,
Associate Professor,
Faculty of Management

Dr Ilker Hacıhaliloğlu,
Associate Professor,
Radiology

Dr Lillian Hung,
Associate Professor,
Nursing

Dr Brodie Sakakibara,
Associate Professor,
Occupational Science &
Occupational Therapy



EVENTS

- INCREASE BC
- CIHR Institute of Aging Summer Program in Aging 2024 Hosts
- Vancouver Summer Program
- Aging SMART Research Day
- Seasonal Social
- Exercise for Healthy Aging Workshop
- Care Anywhere Annual Showcase

Lunch and Learns

- **8 in 2024**

Trainee Committee hosted events

- **Summer BBQ**
- **Healthy Workplace Initiative Program**
- **Wine & Cheese Fall Welcome Back Event**
- **Cherry Blossom Spring Walk**

CIHR INSTITUTE OF AGING SUMMER PROGRAM IN AGING

The **CIHR Institute of Aging Summer Program in Aging (SPA) 2024**, hosted by the Centre for Aging SMART at Vancouver Coastal Health and led by **Dr Teresa Liu-Ambrose**, was a rich and interactive event for the over 40 trainees, mentors, invited speakers, and community partners who attended. From June 2-7, SPA 2024 addressed the multifaceted issue of ageism through a comprehensive and holistic lens. The 5-day capacity building program specifically focused on the impact ageism has on health research, delivery, and outcomes in older adults.

The program featured inspiring keynote presentations from global experts on ageism, including talks from **Drs Julie Ober Allen, Iggy E-Shien Chang, Carole Estabrooks, and Sibila Marques**. A considerable highlight was the panel of People with Lived Experience (PWLE) with **Dr Jim Mann, Elder Glida Morgan, and Lily Wong** who shared their expertise and valuable insights. Notable sessions covered topics related to cultural narratives on ageism and sociological perspectives, along with impactful talks on research that drives changes in healthcare and implementation trials. SPA 2024 truly underscored the value of interdisciplinary approaches in tackling complex issues like ageism.

SPA 2024 equipped the next generation of researchers with essential tools, knowledge, and networks, as well as highlighted the importance of addressing ageism in their work and daily lives.

The Centre for Aging SMART wishes to thank the core organizing committee, **Dr Jennifer Davis, Dr Teresa Liu-Ambrose, Amanda Main, Dr Guilherme Moraes Balbim, and Victoria Cirone**, as well as all our mentors, **Drs Janice Eng, Kristen Haase, Julia Henderson, Christiane Hoppmann, Lillian Hung, Laura Hurd, Karen Li, Linda Li, Laura Middleton, and Ben Mortenson**, and speakers, **Drs Pat Camp, Liang Hsu, Ken Madden, Taru Manyanga, Kiran Rabheru, Parminder Raina, Jane Rylett, Eric Smith, Roger Tam, Clara Tsui, Roger Wong, CIHR, and Seniors First BC**. A special thank you goes to all the trainees who participated in this intensive week-long program!



RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS AWARDS

2024 UBC Faculty of Medicine Award Recipients

- **Dr Henry Broekhuyse**. Clinical Faculty Award for Excellence in Clinical Teaching - Late Career
- **Dr Nelson Greidanus**. Continuing Professional Development Awards - Award for Distinguished Service to CME/CPD
- **Dr Teresa Liu-Ambrose**. Killam Research Prize
- **Dr Jackie Whittaker**. Distinguished Achievement Award Recipients in Overall Excellence - Mid-Career

New Frontiers in Research Fund

- **Dr Calvin Kuo**. Project title: The Role of Risk-Taking and Exploration in Motor Learning for Children

Association of Rheumatology Professionals Award

- **Dr Marie Westby**. Distinguished Educator Award

\$24.8 million
in funding
awarded

300+ Publications

Michael Smith Health Research BC 2024 Scholar

- **Dr Molly Cairncross**. Project title: Digital interventions for concussion: Connecting youth and their families to care

Michael Smith Health Research BC 2024 Convening and Collaborating (C2) Awards:

- **Dr Claudia Lai**. Project title: Population aging: Co-development of a research agenda on supports to stay at home from the perspective of older adults and caregivers with lived experiences in rural and remote communities
- **Dr Lilian Hung**. Project title: Empowering Integrated Care for Healthy Aging: Co-developing a Collaborative Plan with South Asian and Chinese Communities for Inclusion and Equity
- **Dr Heather McKay; Diya Chowdhury**. Project title: Engaging ethnocultural communities in health-promoting programs: the role of trust
- **Dr Marie Westby**. Project title: Making moves towards active living after hip and knee replacement surgery: A consensus meeting of healthcare providers, fitness leaders and people with lived experience

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

CIHR Spring 2024 Project Grants

- **Drs Janice Eng, Taru Manyanga, Courtney Pollock, and Brodie Sakakibara.** Project title: Implementation research to improve scale-up of the delivery of evidence-based community exercise programs for stroke
- **Dr Noah Silverberg.** Project title: Rehabilitation of memory symptoms after brain concussion (REMEMBR trial)

CIHR Priority Announcement Grants

- **Dr Jackie Whittaker.** Priority Announcement - Female Athlete Health. Project title: The Stop Osteoarthritis (SOAR) Hybrid Effectiveness-Implementation Type 1 Randomized Controlled Trial for Young People at-High-Risk of Early Onset Knee Osteoarthritis

NSERC Alliance Grant

- **Dr Peter Crompton.** Project title: A novel approach to study occupant kinematics, muscle activity and cervical spine posture in vehicle rollovers

UBC Strategic Equity and Anti-Racism (StEAR) Enhancement Fund

- **Dr William Miller.** Project Title: Recreational Adaptive Devices (RAD) Project

UBC Vice-President, Research & Innovation Research Facilities Support Grant

- Aging SMART received \$35,000 from this highly competitive internal grant to support upgrades to Centre equipment. Lead by **Dr Alex Scott** and operations staff, **Amanda Main** and **Dr Danmei Liu**



TRAINEE AWARD HIGHLIGHTS

2024 Banting Postdoctoral Fellow

- **Dr Codie Primeau**
(Supervisor: **Dr Linda Li**)
Project title: Engaging the Public from Sexual and Gender Minority Communities to Co-Develop Research Questions about Living with Pain

Michael Smith Health Research BC 2024 Trainee Award Recipients

- **Dr Jordyn Rice**
(Supervisor: **Dr Teresa Liu-Ambrose**)
Project title: SuPA Mobility: Supporting Physical Activity for Mobility in Older Adults with Mobility Limitations
- **Dr Elise Wiley**
(Supervisor: **Dr Brodie Sakakibara**)
Project title: Exploring the natural history of chronic disease self-management and health resource utilization after stroke

Vancouver Coastal Health Research Institute Rising Star Award 2024:

- **Karen Lok Yi Wong**
(Supervisor: **Dr Lillian Hung**)
Area of research: Dementia

2024 Alzheimer's Association Research Fellowship to Promote Diversity

- **Dr Narlon Cassio Boa Sorte Silva**
(Supervisor: **Dr Teresa Liu-Ambrose**)
Project title: Myelin Loss and Cognitive Impairment Following SARS-CoV-2 Infection

2024 CIHR Canada Graduate Scholarships — Master's program

- **Sabrina Cao**
(Supervisor: **Dr Kristin Campbell**)
- **Elyott Chang**
(Supervisor: **Dr Michael Hunt**)
- **Daniel Elesin**
(Supervisor: **Dr Teresa Liu-Ambrose**)

UBC Public Scholars Initiative

- **Rinni Mamman**
(Supervisor: **Dr Julia Schmidt**)
- **Karen Lok Yi Wong**
(Supervisor: **Dr Lillian Hung**)

UBC Killam Graduate Teaching Assistant Awards

- **Fraser Douglas**
(Supervisor: **Dr Calvin Kuo**)





Smart Biosensors to Promote Healthy Aging
and Transform Healthcare

CARE ANYWHERE RESEARCH SHOWCASE

First Annual Care Anywhere Showcase in Biosensor Tech and Digital Health

Care Anywhere is an NSERC Collaborative Research and Training Experience (CREATE) program led by the executive team: **Drs Tony Hodgson, Calvin Kuo, Lyndia Wu, and Janice Eng**. Care Anywhere's mission is to train the next generation of engineers, computer scientists, and health researchers to design, implement, and apply biosensing technologies to transform healthcare.

The first annual Research Showcase served as a platform for industry leaders, healthcare providers, faculty members, and trainees to convene and explore advancements in biosensor technology and digital health. Attendees learned about projects undertaken by the Care Anywhere Trainees, and heard keynote talks from **Harrison Brown** (CEO and co-founder of HEADCHECK Health), **Dr Rachael Ritchie** (Director, Innovation at Vancouver Coastal Health), and **Dr Calvin Kuo** (Assistant Professor, UBC School of Biomedical Engineering). To learn more about the program, please visit our website: careanywhere.ubc.ca



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**THANK YOU TO THE FACULTY,
STAFF, VOLUNTEERS, TRAINEES,
AND OUR MANY CLINICAL AND
COMMUNITY PARTNERS FOR
THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO
RESEARCH EXCELLENCE AT THE
CENTRE FOR AGING SMART**



THE UNIVERSITY
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Vancouver
CoastalHealth

Research Institute

Centre for Aging SMART at VCH
Robert H. N. Ho Research Centre
2635 Laurel Street
Vancouver, BC V5Z 1M9
aging.smart@ubc.ca
www.agingsmart.ca