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WOMEN'S AGE LAB A GLOBAL FIRST WCIT WOMEN'S COLLEGE HOSPITAL Women's Age Lab Welcome to our Fall 2023 Newsletter! **HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!** WOMEN'S COLLEGE HOSPITAL Women's Age Lab **IMPACT REPORT**

2022/2023

We had a very busy summer and that's now turning into an even busier fall! On October 1st, we celebrated our second anniversary with the launch of our Impact Report just in time for International Day of Older Persons. We are proud of the growth of Women's Age Lab over the past year, with the addition of many new staff members and scientists, and embarking on exciting, multi-year research projects. Our

and increase medication safety. Click here to see our Impact Report for details on everything that we have been up to this last year.

work.

The Lancet

In this newsletter you will find some more highlights of our exciting national and international

work last year included many initiatives to promote the health and well-being of older women,

intersectoral collaboration on addressing loneliness with a virtual workshop series to promote

digital literacy for older adults, and our ongoing international work to reduce prescribing cascades

starting with our campaign to raise awareness about gendered ageism, wrapping up our

Women's Age Lab is proud to share the recent profile, "Paula Rochon: championing the health needs of older women," published by The Lancet. The profile highlights Dr. Rochon's exciting career, body of research, her role as a mentor for scientists and trainees, and the founding of Women's Age Lab. "I want to actively highlight the systemic barriers that women face in advancing their careers and advocate for a more equitable landscape for women's health researchers."

Update on NORCs

We were pleased to announce we were awarded a Healthy Cities grant from the Canadian

Retirement Communities (NORC) research project. The PHAC funding will allow us to study

beyond the implementation of NORC models and what determines their success, to include

Institute of Health Research and in February we received confirmation of additional funding from

the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) to invest into our Healthy Cities Naturally Occurring

health and wellness outcomes, and extend our understanding of NORC programming in different

In recent months, we have been busy growing our research team, building relationships with key partners, planning for study implementation (selecting sites and identifying data collection tools), putting enablers in place such as funding for our community partners, setting up governance structures, and engaging with the Women's College Hospital Research Ethics Board for approval

Research Collaboration on Polypharmacy."

of the study to move forward.

cities, particularly for equity-deserving populations.

The full profile can be found here,

data collection at the Toronto sites through site observations, a survey, as well as resident and staff interviews, and focus groups. Working with the NIC, we are actively engaging residents in piloting our data collection tools and will be adjusting our research design as needed based on their feedback and that of the NIC team. **Prescribing Cascades on the International Stage** Women's Age Lab scientists Dr. Paula Rochon and Professor Rachel Savage recently had the opportunity to present our iKASCADE research at this year's European Geriatric Medicine

Society's Annual Conference in Helsinki, Finland. Along with our international collaborators from

six countries, we presented a symposium "Sex and Gender Matter: Lessons from an International

Dr. Rochon also gave an invited presentation on the evolution of prescribing cascades, presented

at the Special Interest Group on Pharmacology, and our team put together a research poster. The

key international investigators met in-person for our annual iKASCADE team meeting to reflect on

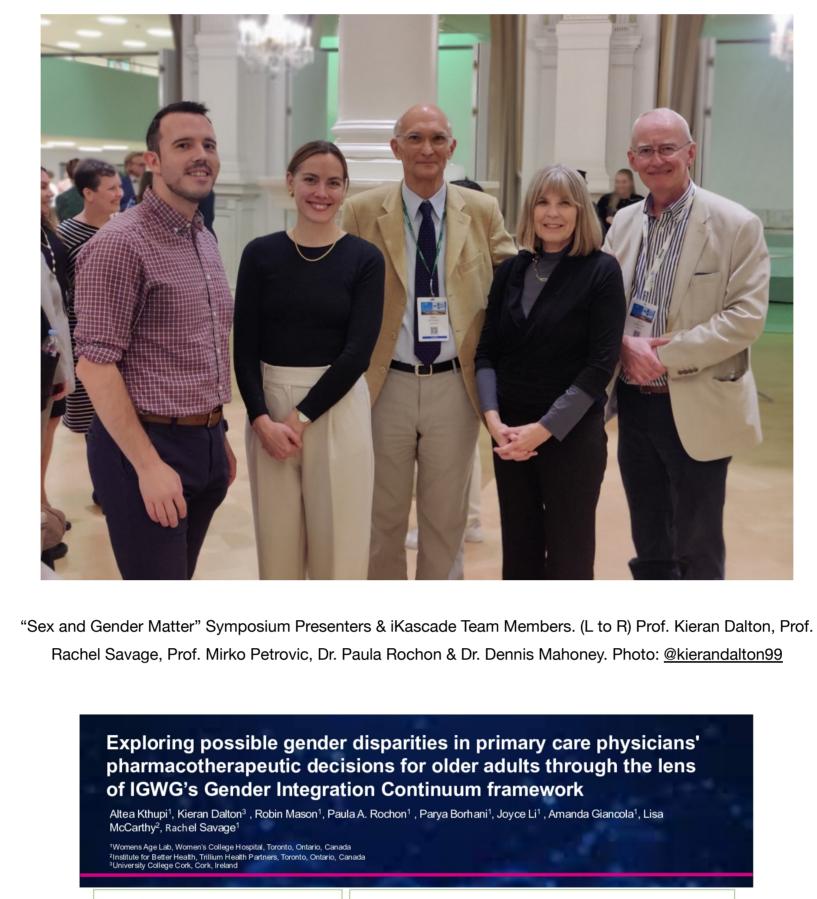
the accomplishments and progress of the project, and future opportunities to collaborate.

other drugs.

This fall, with the support of our partners at the NORC Innovation Centre (NIC), we aim to begin

Describing Prescribing Cascades When drugs are used to treat the side effects of

Dr. Paula Rochon Presenting at the 19th EuGMS Conference in Helsinki, Finland. Photo: one-wantervelde



INTRODUCTION

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

We interviewed Canadian

primary care physicians.

to either an older male or

female clinical vignette

Participants were randomized

METHODS

Equitable healthcare emphasizes fairness and

patient's sociocultural context and gender-specific needs.

We explored primary care physicians' awareness of and consideration for gender-related sociocultural

2 2 2 2 S

factors in pharmacotherapeutic decisions for older men and women who presented with medication-induced peripheral edema.

Explicit questions were posed to explore if and how changes in the following factors would alter treatment (e.g., if the patient were male instead of female):

ntentionally or unintentionally takes advantage of gender

Transcripts were thematically analyzed using an adapted version of the Gender Integration Continuum Framework (Figure 3)

individualized attention and is particularly crucial for older

adults who often require tailored interventions to achieve To provide equitable care, clinicians must consider their

"My job is to look at the big picture. Yes, we're looking at medication treatments of "Someoody iming alone at seventy-rive opens some new doors immy mind about who that person is, what their resources are...! think! would've done things slightly differently if the person was alone. I might be faster to stop the medication that has an undesirable side effect." exactly the same thing. illustrating a patient presenting all of this. But what else can we do from a social services point of view? with symptoms suggestive of a prescribed drug's side effect "I don't think that the (Figure 2). medical treatment would differ. It would still be a Caregiving status Participants described their joint decision making. And I · Financial capabilitie thought process and proposed she can't get her shoes on. So, I would be more indined then to stop this would still be asking questions about social circumstances as a treatment plan using a 'thinkmedication faster and not try to keep

While awareness of gender disparities among primary care physicians is encouraging, there is a discernible gap between thi knowledge and its application in pharmacotherapeutic decisions.

Emphasis should be on dinical training that incorporates intersections of sex, gender, and sociocultural factors in treatment plans, ultimately leading to more equitable healthcare outcomes for older adults.

Fourteen physicians (7 female and 7 male)

When hypothetical scenarios were posed, most

Physicians rarely connected sex and gender to gender-related sociocultural factors.

When adapting treatment, there was discrepancy between physicians' treatment alterations based on gender-related factors and their expressed view that

patients' gender would not affect treatment decisions.

physicians demonstrated an awareness of gender

disparities, yet this awareness did not translate into

participated (Table 1)

Bias

factors to be relevant to

this case and these have

"No, men and women hate edema... I would do the

LOOKING FORWARD

Table 1. Participant Characteristics

Gender Equity

sticking with something that is not helping her."

CONTACT INFORMATION

REFERENCES

Proud To Be An Age

Carley Moore is a first-year Master of Public

Health Student at the Dalla Lana School of

Public Health, with a specialization in Aging,

Palliative and Support Care Across the Life

Course. Carley completed her BA (Hons) at

interests include intersectionality, equity,

it relates to social inclusion and broader

health outcomes of older women.

well-being of older adults.

housing security, sexual health and overall

the University of Toronto in 2022. Her research

Carley's project explored gendered ageism as

degree at the University of Waterloo, majoring

in Public Health and minoring in Gerontology,

Her research project focused on evaluating

best practices and creating toolkits for older

to support the implementation, spread and

scale of NORC models of varying intensities.

Joelle Li is a summer research student and is

McMaster University with a Bachelor of Health

in her 3rd year of medical school at the

University of Toronto. She graduated from

Sciences (Honours) and her interest in the

volunteer work in the community, whereby

she conducts regular home visits to older

Joelle conducted a scoping review following

health of older women stems from her

adults in Toronto to foster social

the rigorous Arksey and O'Malley

methodology. Her review focused on

assessing gender and gender-related

sociocultural variables as it pertains to

Gagandeep Saini is Geriatric Medicine

Summer Older Adult Research (SOAR)

Experience student. She completed her

Public Health degrees from McMaster

University, and is in her second year of

Bachelor of Health Sciences and Master of

potentially inappropriate medication

prescribing in older adults.

connectedness.

adults, care partners, and health professionals

Mental Health, and Health Policy.

Physician Demographics (n=14)

Female

Woman

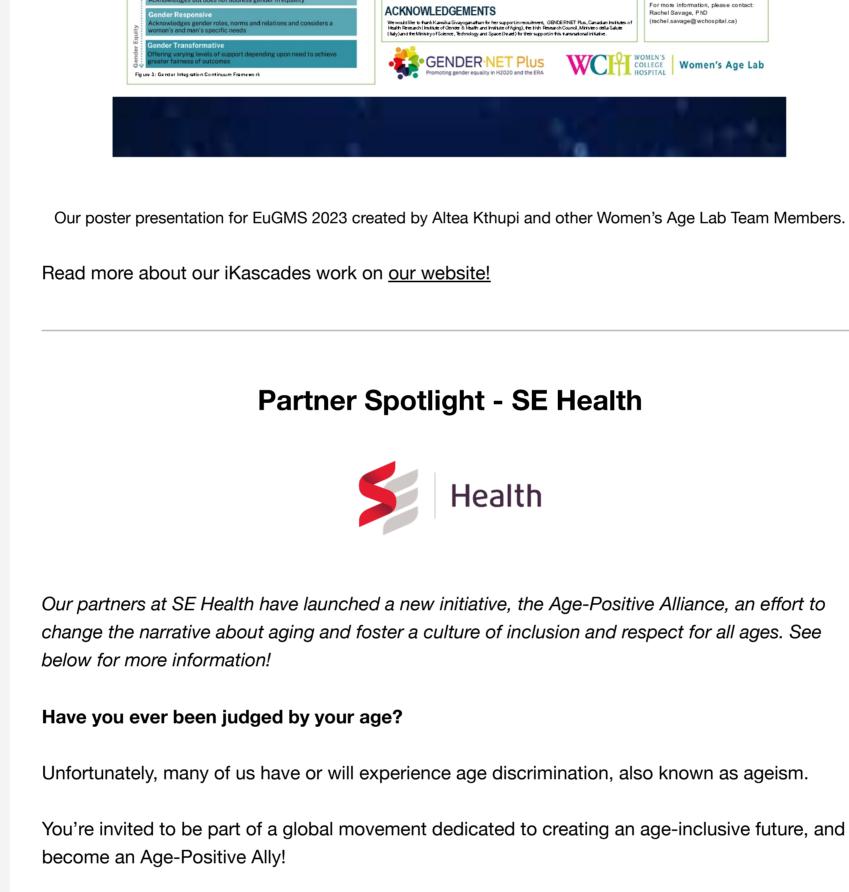
Other Age (years) ≤35 35 - 44

45 - 54 ≥55

Physicians consider sociocultural factors, but such considerations have no impact

well."

Gender



Ready to take action? Yes, I'm in! **Positive** Ally >

Summer was a busy term for us as we welcomed four trainees to Women's Age Lab. They

Trainee Spotlight

brought their diverse educational backgrounds and experiences to the team. See what projects

Join hundreds of like-minded people who are passionate about creating an age-positive world.

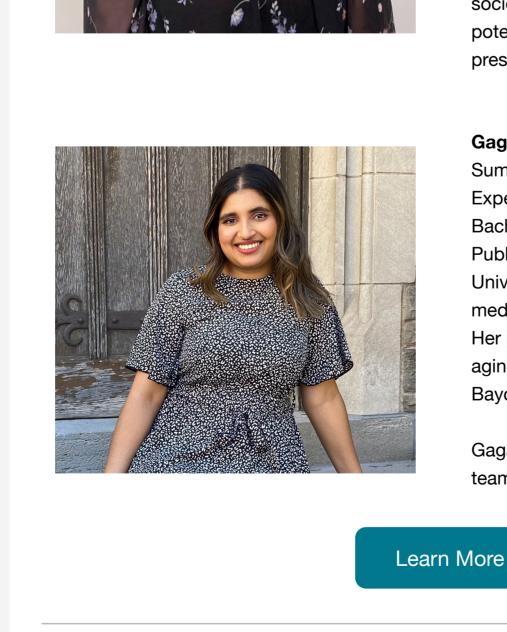
Whether you are an individual or representing an organization, get access to resources to take

action, make connections and spread the word to drive transformative change within our

workplaces and communities. Every conversation and action helps. Everyone is welcome!

they were hard at work on below.

Serrina Philip is a first year MPH student at the University of Toronto completing a collaborative specialization in Aging, Palliative, and Support Care Across the Life Course. Serrina completed her undergraduate



medical school at the University of Toronto. Her passion for women's health and healthy aging stems from her previous roles at Baycrest, SickKids, and Ontario Health. Gagandeep worked with our Healthy Cities team on the NORCs project.

Corresponding to this study, Drs. Reppas-Rindlisbacher, Stall, and Rochon also published an Op-Ed, "COVID-19 Unleashed A Crisis of Delirium in Our Hospitals" in the Globe and Mail. Read here.

In Case You Missed it: Trends in Delirium and New

Antipsychotic and Benzodiazepine Use Among Hospitalized

Older Adults Before and After the Onset of the COVID-19

Pandemic

Drs. Reppas-Rindlisbacher and Rochon from Women's Age Lab recently published an article titled

Adults Before and After the Onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic" published in JAMA Network Open.

"Trends in Delirium and New Antipsychotic and Benzodiazepine Use Among Hospitalized Older

The paper explores how the COVID-19 pandemic caused large disruptions to healthcare for

hospitalized older adults, especially for those experiencing delirium.

Recent Awards Drs. Rochon and Stall have been awarded the <u>University of Toronto's President's Impact Award for</u> their work on the Ontario COVID-19 Science Advisory

<u>Table</u>

For the full paper, click here.

Paula Rochon, University of Toronto - Filling a Gap: Women's Age Lab. The Academic Minute.

Highlights: In the Media &

hospitals. The Globe and Mail. We have a loneliness crisis — it's time to act. Toronto Star.

Why Artificial Intelligence Needs to Consider the

Unique Needs of Older Women. Women's eNews.

Rachel Savage, University of Toronto – Reimagining Aging in Place. The Academic Minute. COVID-19 unleashed a crisis of delirium in our

<u>Unpaid Family Caregiving—The Next Frontier of</u> Gender Equity in a Post pandemic Future. JAMA Health Forum.

Pandemic. JAMA Network Open.

European Geriatric Medicine.

Society.

Factors associated with loneliness in immigrant and Canadian-born older adults in Ontario, Canada: a population-based study. BMC Geriatrics.

STOPP/START Version 3: Even Better with Age.

Trends in Delirium and New Antipsychotic and

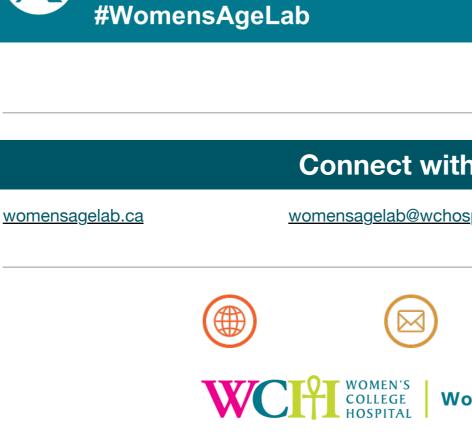
Benzodiazepine Use Among Hospitalized Older

Adults Before and After the Onset of the COVID-19

WOMEN'S COLLEGE HOSPITAL Women's Age Lab

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Recent Publications Sex-based differences in the association between loneliness and polypharmacy among older adults in Ontario, Canada. Journal of the American Geriatrics

FOLLOW US FOR OUR LATEST WORK!

Connect with us: womensagelab@wchospital.ca