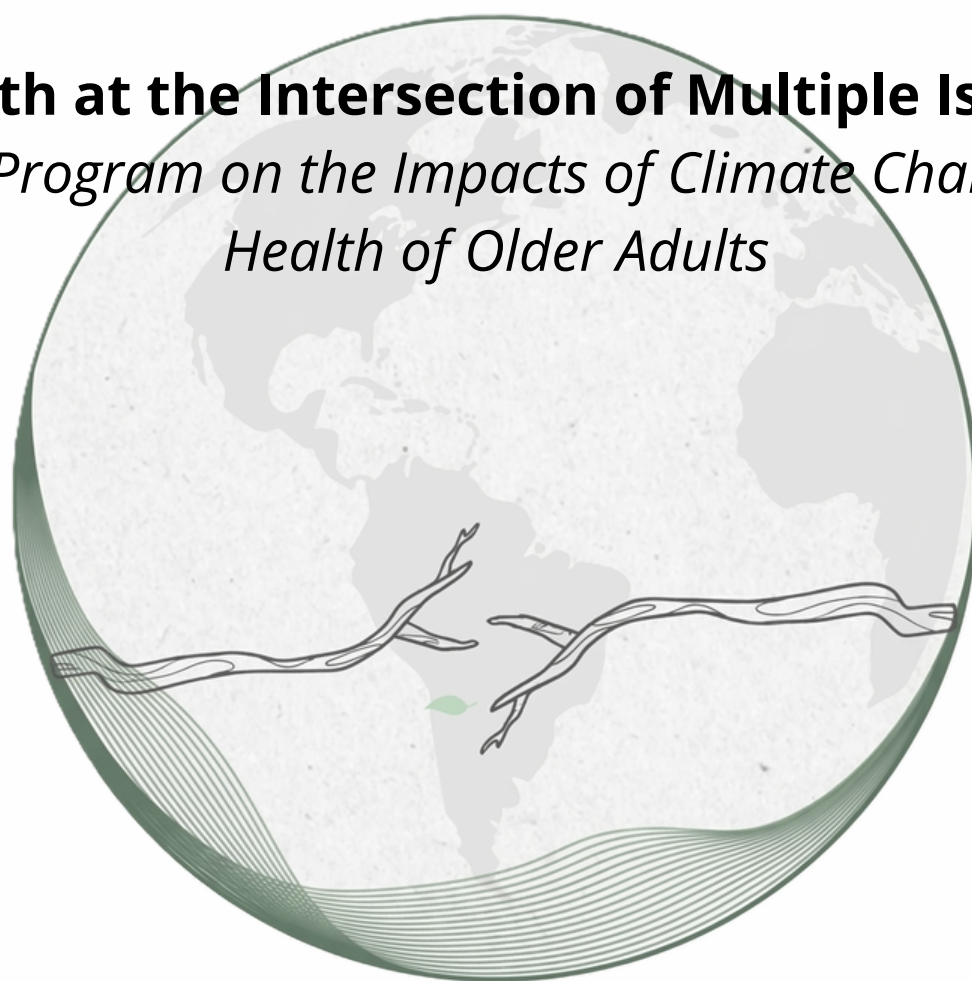


Summer Program in Aging 2026

Programme d'été sur le vieillissement 2026

Health at the Intersection of Multiple Issues

Summer Program on the Impacts of Climate Change on the Health of Older Adults



June 1- 5, 2026

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SPA Partners



Université du Québec
à Trois-Rivières



CREGÉS

Centre for Research and Expertise
in Social Gerontology

CRiSES

Centre de recherche sur les innovations sociales



Fonds
de recherche
Québec



School of Population and Global Health

McGill Centre for Climate
Change and Health



ASSOCIATION POUR LA SANTÉ
PUBLIQUE DU QUÉBEC



Précrisa

Réseau de prévention
des crises en santé



Réseau communautés rurales et éloignées en santé

About SPA 2026

The CIHR-IA Summer Program in Aging (SPA) is an intensive 5-day capacity-building program with the aim of providing graduate trainees with advanced training that crosses disciplines, offering networking opportunities, and disseminating best practices in research. SPA has been held yearly across Canada since 2006 on a different strategic theme each year. The program brings together up to 40 research trainees and numerous academic mentors to participate in interactive learning sessions over the course of one week. The strategic theme for SPA 2026 is on the Impact of Climate Change on the Health of Older Adults.

Impact of Climate Change on the Health of Older Adults

The needs of older adults are changing across several important dimensions. Not only is the scale of our need increasing rapidly as the population ages, the Canadian healthcare workforce faces new challenges due to a rise in globalization, pandemic-related pressures and associated caregiver burnout, as well as financial challenges. Simultaneously, technological developments have provided a growing suite of digital solutions designed to meet the needs of older adults. Therefore, it is imperative that healthcare training and program developments are evidence-based, effective, and engaging to successfully meet these complex needs and challenges. To accomplish this, researchers must be equipped with holistic core competencies (knowledge, skills, and attitudes) regarding aging, the care systems and workforce that serve older adults and caregivers, and interprofessional research approaches and stakeholders in order to inform, develop, pilot, implement, and/or evaluate new healthcare workforce training.

SPA Objectives

1. Determine the impact of climate change on older adults, including Indigenous Peoples
2. Consider climate justice and intergenerational solidarity during the thinking process
3. Identify resources and models for the conduct of research and cross-sectoral interventions
4. Determine the priorities for research and collective action tailored to local realities
5. Join together to highlight the 20th anniversary of CIHR's Summer Program.

Organizing committees

Coordinating Committee



**Marie-Michèle
Lord**

Associate Professor,
Occupational Therapy
Department,
Université du Québec
à Trois-Rivières



**Louis Pierre
Côté**

Researcher,
Occupational Therapy
Department,
Université du Québec
à Trois-Rivières



**Marie-Josée
Drolet**

Full Professor,
Occupational Therapy
Department,
Université du Québec
à Trois-Rivières



**Valérie
Lafond**

Ph.D. Candidate,
Philosophy
Department,
Université du Québec
à Trois-Rivières

Operational Committee



**Cynthia
Angelozzi**

Coordinator,
Réseau
CommunAutés rurales
et éloignées en santé



**Ornella Gwladys
Motouom Fokam**

Master's Student,
Physical Activity
Department,
Université du Québec
à Trois-Rivières



**Noémie
Couture**

Planning, Scheduling,
and Research Officer,
Centre de recherche
et d'expertise en
gérontologie sociale



**Amy
Provost**

Ph.D. Candidate,
Psychology
Department,
Université du Québec
à Trois-Rivières



**Louis Pierre
Côté**



**Marie-Michèle
Lord**

Organizing committees

Scientific Committee



**Céline
Campagna**

Scientific
Programming
Coordinator for
Adaptation Science ,
Ouranos



**Isabelle
Goupil-Sormany**

Associate Professor,
Department of Social
and Preventive
Medicine,
Université Laval



**David
Predovan**

Researcher,
Réseau québécois de
recherche sur le
vieillessement



**Cynthia
Angelozzi**

Coordinator,
Réseau
CommunAutés rurales
et éloignées en santé



**Maryline
Vivion**

Assistant Professor,
Department of Social
and Preventive
Medicine,
Université Laval



**Chantal
Viscogliosi**

Associate Professor,
Rehabilitation School,
Université Sherbrooke



**Valérie
Lafond**



**Marie-Josée
Drolet**

Volunteers

We would also like to acknowledge the many volunteers who contributed to the success of SPA 2026. Special thanks to Amy Provost, Livia Delattre, Marie-Hélène Lévesque, Olushina Ayo Junior Ale, and Ornella Gladys Motouom Foka for ensuring that the event ran smoothly.

SPA Mentors



Ben Mortenson is a Professor and the Department Head of the Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy Department at the University of British Columbia. His work is centered on four main populations: assistive technology users, informal and formal caregivers, individuals with spinal cord injury, and residents in long-term care. His research focuses on four overlapping areas: assistive technology, social participation, caregiving and outcome measurement.



Galaad Lefay is an ergonomist, activity analyst, and postdoctoral researcher. He is also a “scientist-in-residence” fellow of the Fonds de recherche du Québec. He focuses his work on the practical ways in which technological, organizational, and social transformations are adopted by communities and environments, as well as the effects these transformations have on practices, individuals, and health development. His profile is that of a deliberately interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral interface researcher, grounded in activity analysis and collaborative action-research approaches, who bridges expert and experiential knowledge.



Alexandra Éthier is a postdoctoral researcher at the Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières (UQTR), affiliated with both CRÉGÈS and CRISES. Her research interests fall into two main categories. First, she examines how the institutional context (e.g., laws, regulations, policies, and service organization) influences the work of home care professionals. Second, she explores the role of local governments (municipalities and cities) in the health and well-being of aging citizens.



Didier Brassard is a professor of nutrition at UQTR. His research focuses on the intersection of aging and nutritional epidemiology, aiming to document the impact of adhering to Canada’s Food Guide recommendations among older adults. He is also interested in the relationship between diet and cardiovascular health, as well as the dietary habits of populations in Quebec and Canada. His areas of expertise include causal inference methods, statistical modeling, and correcting measurement errors in dietary intake.



Pier-Luc Turcotte is a professor in the School of Rehabilitation Sciences at the University of Ottawa. His research examines the physical, psychological, social, and economic risks and vulnerabilities associated with climate change among people with disabilities, including older adults. Drawing on critical medical humanities, his research addresses the greatest health threat of the 21st century.



Pierre-Yves Therriault is a full professor in the Department of Occupational Therapy at UQTR. He holds an M.Sc. in Industrial Engineering from École Polytechnique de Montréal and a Ph.D. in Biomedical Sciences from Université de Montréal. He is also a regular researcher at the Centre for Research and Expertise in Social Gerontology (CREGES), where he works on issues related to the integration and active engagement of populations in various contexts. Specifically, he is interested in creating spaces that enable productive thought, present engaging challenges, and foster skill development.

Speakers



Mélanie Perroux, Scientific Advisor and Project Manager, Institut National de Santé Publique du Québec
Loriane Estienne, Executive Director of Proche aide Québec

Title: Pathways of Aging in the Context of Climate Change: The Experiences of Older Adults and Caregivers

Abstract: Climate change is already affecting the health of older adults. It exacerbates cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, neurocognitive disorders, and reduces their ability to adapt to heat waves, smoke, power outages, and extreme weather events. However, aging at home requires a support ecosystem in which family caregivers—more than 20% of whom are older adults—face growing complexities as climate hazards intensify. This activity invites participants to imagine the lives of older adults and their caregivers in a changing climate, exploring how such a climate can alter their life trajectories, reveal or undermine their adaptive capacities, and affect the balance of home-based support.



Isabelle Goupil-Sormany, Associate Professor, Université Laval
Karen Messing, Professor Emerita, Université du Québec à Montréal

Title: Science Without Stereotypes: Rethinking Risks

Abstract : This presentation will focus on some precautions for treating and interpreting public health data on age and other risk factors in relation to environmental variations. We emphasize the danger of transposing population-level categories directly to individual cases without taking their real-world context into account. We will explain why risk factors reflect probabilities and not determinants, and that a rigid treatment of epidemiological data can lead to erroneous conclusions, to stigmatizing, and to the failure of attempts to improve population health. We will also discuss why statistical adjustment for risk factors such as age and sex/gender can lead to misunderstanding results. Examining some scientific studies, we will demonstrate how specific groups are too-often represented as “at risk” generally, although their experience, capacities, and environments vary greatly. Conversely, protective factors are too-often produced by inverting risk factors rather than being investigated independently. Anecdotes from real-life situations will illustrate the complexity of individual realities and the need for a nuanced, contextualized, and rigorous approach to risk evaluation.

Speakers



Glen P. Kenny, Full Professor of Physiology, University of Ottawa

Title : From Mechanisms to Mitigation: Protecting Older Adults from Extreme Heat in a Warming World

Abstract: Extreme heat is one of the most immediate and rapidly intensifying health threats associated with climate change, and older adults account for a disproportionate share of heat-related illness and mortality during heatwaves. As populations age and extreme heat events become more frequent, protecting older adults has become a critical public-health priority. In this presentation, I will provide an overview of our research program examining heat vulnerability in older adults across multiple levels of human physiology, from cellular stress responses to whole-body thermoregulation during prolonged heat exposure. This work has helped clarify the physiological mechanisms that increase susceptibility to heat with aging, including age-related impairments in heat dissipation and the resulting increases in physiological strain during extreme environmental conditions. I will also highlight findings from our controlled heatwave simulation studies that have evaluated indoor overheating and commonly recommended cooling strategies in older adults, many of which had never been rigorously tested in heat-vulnerable populations. These studies have helped determine which interventions meaningfully reduce physiological strain and which may provide limited protection without appropriate guidance. I will conclude by discussing how these discoveries have been translated into practical tools, public-health recommendations, and policy guidance, including safe indoor temperature thresholds, that are helping reshape strategies to better protect older adults in a warming world.



Pier-Luc Turcotte, Associate Professor, School of Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Ottawa

Title: Exploring what “Occupies” the Body of Breathless Individuals in Polluted Environments: A Body-Mapping Workshop

Abstract : Air pollution and ecological crises—such as extreme heat, wildfires, and biodiversity loss—are increasingly affecting the ability of individuals with respiratory conditions to breathe. While biomedical solutions like prescribed oxygen exist, access to these technologies is unequal, often deepening social inequities, especially among marginalized populations. This highlights the overlooked sociopolitical dimensions of breathing. This workshop introduces body-map storytelling (BMST), a creative, arts-based methodology used to explore lived experiences. BMST involves creating visual representations of people’s bodies and lives through drawing and painting. It is widely used in research, intervention, and advocacy. Here, BMST is applied to understand the experiences of breathless individuals living in polluted environments. Grounded in Merleau-Ponty’s critical phenomenology, the study examines both visible and invisible aspects of breathing. Researchers conducted two interviews with 12 participants in East Montreal and British Columbia. Preliminary findings reveal that breathing is deeply intertwined with environments and survival technologies. Participants often described breathlessness as a form of “imprisonment.” This reflects not only personal suffering, but also how pollution limits their movement, activities, and use of space. These experiences underscore invisible suffering and support advocacy for breathing as a fundamental human right.

Speakers



Marianne-Sarah Saulnier, Researcher, Observatoire québécois des inégalités

Title: Aging in the Face of Climate Change: A Look at Territorial and Social Inequalities

Abstract: The health impacts of climate change are often presented as universal risks. Yet, the effects are profoundly unequal. This conference offers reflections on climate change from the perspective of social and territorial inequalities. Drawing on recent research on climate vulnerabilities in Quebec, we will demonstrate how characteristics of living environments, such as access to services, infrastructure, housing conditions, social isolation, and community resources, influence the ability to adapt to extreme weather events. This presentation will offer a multifaceted perspective on climate vulnerabilities and pay particular attention to the realities faced by older adults, as well as how certain inequalities can amplify or mitigate their experiences of climate change.



Sébastien Jodoin, Associate Professor, Faculty of Law, McGill

Title: Climate Resilience Among Older Adults: An Inclusive Perspective on Disability

Abstract: People with disabilities are disproportionately affected by the global climate crisis. Since the risk of disability increases with age, older adults are also particularly vulnerable. They die in greater numbers during extreme weather events, and gradual and slow-onset climate disruptions seriously threaten their physical and mental health.

Drawing on case studies conducted in Montreal, Dr. Jodoin will demonstrate that the disproportionate impact of climate change on people with disabilities, including older adults, stems from long-standing economic, social, and institutional barriers they face in society and their exclusion from emergency response and climate adaptation efforts.

Dr. Jodoin will argue that governments have an obligation to assess and minimize the climate-related harms to which people with disabilities, including older adults, are exposed and engage them as experts, stakeholders, and participants in adaptation planning. Therefore, an inclusive approach to disability in adaptation is essential to protecting the lives and safety of people with disabilities and older adults.

Speakers



Émilie Fortin, physiotherapist and PhD candidate at Université du Québec à Chicoutimi.

Title: Aging in Relationships: Nature at the Heart of Sustainable Health

Abstract: This event will begin with an interactive lecture on the effects of nurturing our relationship with the land or nature, drawing on current evidence and traditional Indigenous perspectives. We will also discuss how nature can be incorporated into the rehabilitation of chronic pain and Parkinson's disease in an aging population. This discussion is based on the results of two pilot research programs, Parc 1 and Parc 2. Described as eco-bio-psycho-social, these group programs take a holistic approach, aiming to support participants' mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual health simultaneously. To experience the discussed principles in a more immersive way, the conference will be followed by an outdoor walk and a short guided meditation inspired by the programs' activities. Trainees will also have the opportunity to experience the challenges faced by older adults with functional limitations and identify potential barriers and facilitators associated with this experience.



Stéphanie Meynet, Postdoctoral Fellow, Université de Sherbrooke

Ginette Laflamme, Vice Chair of the Board of Directors of the Maison des grands-parents de Sherbrooke

Title: Generations United for the Environment (GénéRE): an intergenerational program promoting climate action among young people and seniors

Abstract: Although older adults are often portrayed as vulnerable to climate change, their potential as agents of adaptation is largely unexplored despite their significant capacity for social and civic engagement. Against this backdrop, the GénéRE program was developed to promote intergenerational climate action by uniting older adults and young people. The program consists of eight workshops, six of which are led by climate change experts. These workshops are followed by a volunteer project involving concrete actions in the community. This presentation will outline the program's foundations, objectives, and implementation across four sites (one in France and three in Quebec). It will also discuss preliminary outcomes observed among participants, the climate actions carried out, and challenges related to the program's sustainability. Additionally, the presentation will include a testimonial from an older participant to illustrate the lived experience and transformative potential of this intergenerational initiative.

Activities and Animation

SPA Animation & Cross-Disciplinary Workshops



**Marie-Michèle
Lord**



**Louis Pierre
Côté**

SPA will be emceed by Marie-Michèle Lord and Louis Pierre Côté. Marie-Michèle will also lead a workshop at the end of each day. She will summarize learnings and provide support in drafting a grant proposal for a fictional research project that will be developed in small groups throughout the week.

Opening Discussion



**Caroline
Quach-Thanh**



**Marie-Josée
Drolet**



**Maryline
Vivion**

To kick off the summer program, we welcome Caroline Quach-Thanh, National Director of Public Health and Assistant Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Health and Social Services, to discuss aging and climate change and explore broader perspectives on research.

World Café



**Marie-Josée
Drolet**



**Maryline
Vivion**



**Isabelle
Goupil-Sormany**



**Valérie
Lafond**

We are offering a World Café workshop on the topic: "Navigating the World of Research." Topics of discussion will include networking, careers outside academia, relationships with research supervisors, and identifying relevant opportunities.

Activities and Animation

Privileges Walk



**Cynthia
Angelozzi**



**Marie-Josée
Drolet**



**Valérie
Lafond**



**Louis Pierre
Côté**

We will lead a workshop exploring how social privilege impacts people's vulnerability to climate change.

Key Partners Roundtable



**Marie-Michèle
Lord -
CRÉGES**



**Cynthia
Angelozzi -
CARES**



**Éliane
Brisebois -
CRISES**



**Sylvie
Belleville -
RQRV**



**Jill
Baumgartner -
MC3H**



**Micheline
Namj-
Précrisa**



**Céline
Campagna -
Ouranos**



**Galaad Lefay -
IVEO**

We invite you to join our partners for a roundtable discussion about the importance of research partnerships in addressing complex, multifaceted issues, such as aging and climate change.

Schedule - Orientation Day

May 31

Hours	Details
15h00 - 18h00	Participant reception at Manoir D'Youville 498 D'Youville Boulevard, Chateauguay, Quebec, Canada
18h00 - 19h00	Supper
19h00 - 20h30	Icebreaker activity : mentors and students introduction
20h30 -	Free time

Venue



Schedule - Day 1

June 1

Hours	Details
7h00 - 8h30	Breakfast
8h30 - 9h00	Participants Reception
9h00 - 9h30	Welcome Reception
9h30 - 10h30	Opening Discussion with Caroline Quach-Thanh
10h30 - 10h45	Break
10h45 - 12h00	Pathways of Aging in the Context of Climate Change: The Experiences of Older Adults and Caregivers <i>Mélanie Perroux & Loriane Estienne</i>
12h00 - 13h00	Lunch
13h00 - 14h00	Science Without Stereotypes: Rethinking Risks <i>Isabelle Goupil-Sormany & Karen Messing</i>
14h00 - 15h30	World Café : Navigating the World of Research <i>Marie-Josée Drolet, Maryline Vivion, Isabelle Goupil-Sormany & Valérie Lafond</i>
15h30 - 15h45	Break
15h45 - 16h30	Cross-disciplinary Learning Workshop <i>Marie-Michèle Lord</i>
16h30 - 17h00	Summary and Discussions in Subgroups
17h00 - 18h00	Free Time
18h00 - 19h00	Supper
19h00 -	Free Time

Schedule - Day 2

June 2

Hours	Details
7h00 - 8h30	Breakfast
8h30 - 9h00	Participants Reception
9h00 - 10h00	From Mechanisms to Mitigation: Protecting Older Adults from Extreme Heat in a Warming World <i>Glen P. Kenny</i>
10h00 - 10h15	Break
10h15 - 11h15	Exploring what “Occupies” the Body of Breathless Individuals in Polluted Environments: A Body-Mapping Workshop <i>Pier-Luc Turcotte</i>
11h15 - 12h15	Aging in the Face of Climate Change: A Look at Territorial and Social Inequalities <i>Marianne-Sarah Saulnier</i>
12h15 - 13h15	Lunch
13h15 - 14h15	Climate Resilience Among Older Adults: An Inclusive Perspective on Disability <i>Sébastien Jodoin</i>
14h15 - 15h15	Privileges Walk <i>Cynthia Angelozzi, Marie-Josée Drolet, Valérie Lafond & Louis Pierre Côté</i>
15h15 - 15h30	Break
15h30 - 16h00	Cross-disciplinary Learning Workshop <i>Marie-Michèle Lord</i>
16h00 - 17h00	Summary and Discussions in Subgroups
17h00 - 18h00	Free Time
18h00 - 19h00	Supper
19h00 -	Free Time

Schedule - Day 3

June 3

Hours	Details
7h00 - 8h30	Breakfast
8h30 - 9h00	Participants Reception
9h00 - 10h00	Aging in Relationships: Nature at the Heart of Sustainable Health <i>Émilie Fortin</i>
10h00 - 11h00	Walk in Nature <i>Émilie Fortin</i>
11h00 - 11h15	Break
11h15 - 12h15	Generations United for the Environment (GénéRE): an intergenerational program promoting climate action among young people and seniors <i>Stéphanie Meynet & Ginette Laflamme</i>
12h15 - 13h15	Lunch
13h15 - 14h45	Key Partners Roundtable <i>Céline Campagna, Éliane Brisebois, Marie-Michèle Lord, Sylvie Belleville, Micheline Namj, Jill Baumgartner, Cynthia Angelozzi & Galaad Lefay</i>
14h45 - 15h00	Break
15h00 - 16h00	Cross-disciplinary Learning Workshop <i>Marie-Michèle Lord</i>
16h00 - 17h00	Summary and Discussions in Subgroups
17h00 - 18h00	Free Time
18h00 - 19h00	Supper
19h00 -	Free Time

Schedule - Day 4

Part 1

June 4

Hours	Details
7h30 - 9h00	Free Time
9h00 - 10h00	Breakfast Meet and dine with speakers
10h00 - 10h15	Welcolme to Day 4 <i>Marie-Josée Drolet & Jane Rylett</i>
10h20 - 11h20	To be confirmed <i>Ben Mortenson</i> Is LTC a research and innovation orphan? Where are we, where do we need to go, what do we need to do to get there? <i>Carole Estrabrooks</i> SPA at the Seaside ² : Changes and Growth over a Decade <i>Janice Keefe</i>
11h20 - 11h45	Question Period
12h00 - 13h00	Lunch
13h10 - 13h50	The Climate of Research Success <i>Suzanne Dupuis-Blanchard</i> To be confirmed <i>Andrew Costa</i>
13h50 - 14h15	Question Period

Schedule - Day 4

Part 2

June 4

Hours	Details
14h15 - 14h45	Working Toward Impact : Research and Capacity-Building at the CIHR Institute of Aging <i>Jane Rylett</i>
14h45 - 15h35	Showcasing the CLSA research platform - Latest updates on data collection, data availability & data access <i>Parminder Raina</i>
15h35 - 15h45	Break
15h45 - 16h30	Celebrating 20 years of the “Summer Program in Aging”: Back to the Future, Looking Ahead <i>Anne Martin Matthews</i>
16h30 - 17h30	Break before reception
17h30 - 18h30	Networking Reception - Bistro La Traite <i>Group Photo at 6pm</i>
18h30 - 21h00	CIHR Institute of Aging Summer Program in Aging 20 th Anniversary Dinner <i>Bistro La Traite</i>
21h00 -	Free Time

Schedule - Day 5

June 5

Hours	Details
7h00 - 8h30	Breakfast
8h30 - 10h30	Subgroup Projects Presentation
10h30 - 10h45	Break
10h45 - 12h00	Closing Ceremony
12h00 - 13h00	Lunch
13h00 - 15h00	Departure

