

Meeting Book

CIHR-Institute of Aging Summer Program in Aging (SPA)

Celebrating 20 Years of Impact and
Achievement

June 4, 2026



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Welcome

A Message from Dr. Jane Rylett CIHR-Institute of Aging Scientific Director

For the past 20 years, the Canadian Institutes for Health Research - Institute of Aging (CIHR-IA) has played a vital role in cultivating a strong and dynamic health research community by supporting trainees at all stages of academic and professional development. By providing ongoing training and capacity-building opportunities through the CIHR-Summer Program in Aging (SPA), CIHR-IA has continued to support trainees in gaining the skills, experience, and confidence to become future leaders with expertise and knowledge of Canada's aging population. Supporting trainees has indeed ensured a pipeline of highly qualified personnel in the field of aging and has promoted innovation and best practices overall in the Canadian health research ecosystem. This investment over two decades has strengthened Canada's capacity to address current and future health priorities for older persons and has ensured that we have a strong and impactful research community with skills aligned to both the present and future health needs of older persons. Thank you for participating in this program, and for being with us to mark this special milestone event for training and capacity building for research on aging in Canada.

Jane Rylett, PhD, FCAHS
Scientific Director, CIHR – Institute of Aging (IA)

A Message from Dr. Anne Martin-Matthews former CIHR-Institute of Aging Scientific Director, 2004-2011

It has been a great privilege to witness the growth of the CIHR Summer Program in Aging from an ambitious idea in 2006 into a nationally recognized training program that has helped shape the next generation of leaders in aging research. What began as a commitment to strengthen research capacity in Canada has evolved into a vibrant and interdisciplinary community of trainees, mentors, researchers, clinicians, policy leaders, and lived-experience partners who come together each year with the shared goal of improving the health of older persons. As we celebrate 20 years of this program, we also celebrate the many remarkable achievements of our alumni, many of whom are now leading innovative research, influencing policy and practice, advancing care, and mentoring future generations across Canada and internationally. This anniversary is a reminder of the growing importance of aging research in a rapidly changing world. I warmly welcome you to this special 20th anniversary celebration and look forward to the conversations, ideas, and collaborations that will inspire the next 20 years.

Anne Martin-Matthews, O.C., Ph.D., FCAHS, FGSA
Scientific Director, CIHR – Institute of Aging (IA) 2004-2011

Event Overview and Objectives

Event Overview

This event is intended to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the CIHR-IA Summer Program in Aging (SPA), which first started welcoming trainees in 2006. We aim to celebrate 20 years of program achievements, engage alumni and current participants in extending this tradition, and highlight the past and future of aging-related research and capacity-building.

Objectives

- Commemorate two decades of the CIHR-IA Summer Program in Aging, highlighting achievements and progress.
- Showcase past and present program successes.
- Provide networking opportunities for alumni, faculty, and students.
- Hear about the history of the SPA program and career successes of alumni.
- Foster dialogue on the future of training and research on aging in Canada.

Program

CIHR Institute of Aging Summer Program in Aging (SPA) 2026

20th Anniversary

Thursday, June 4, 2026

9:00am-10:00am

Breakfast Networking Session

Meet and dine with speakers

10:00am-10:15am

Welcome Remarks

Dr. Marie-Josée Drolet

SPA 2026 Host

Welcome to Day 4

Dr. Jane Rylett

Scientific Director, Canadian Institutes of Health Research Institute of Aging

Welcome from the CIHR Institute of Aging

10:15am-11:15am

Session 1

Moderated by Dr. Lauren Griffith

Dr. Ben Mortensen

Making the Most out of the Summer Program in Aging and Supporting Access to GreenSPACES Across the LifeSPAN

Dr. Carole Estabrooks

Is Long-Term Care a Research and Innovation Orphan? Where Are We, Where Do We Need to Go, and What Do We Need to Do to Get There?

Dr. Janice Keefe

SPA at the Seaside²: Changes and Growth Over a Decade

11:15am-11:40am

Discussion & Question Period

11:40am-1:10pm

Lunch

1:10pm-1:50pm

Session 2

Moderated by Dr. Carole Estabrooks

Dr. Suzanne Dupuis-Blanchard

The Climate of Research Success

-bilingual presentation

Dr. Andrew Costa

From Training to Impact: Reflections on Research, Mentorship, and System Change

1:50pm-2:15pm

Discussion & Question Period

2:15pm-2:45pm

Session 3 - Featured Address from the CIHR Institute of Aging

Dr. Jane Rylett

Working Toward Impact: Research and Capacity-Building at the CIHR Institute of Aging

2:45pm-3:35pm

Moderated by Dr. Jane Rylett

Session 4 - Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging (CLSA)

Dr. Lauren Griffith

Showcasing the CLSA Research Platform: Latest Updates on Data Collection, Data Availability, and Data Access

3:35pm-3:45pm

Break

3:45pm-4:30pm

Introduction by Dr. Jane Rylett

Anniversary Keynote

Dr. Anne Martin-Matthews

Celebrating 20 Years of the “Summer Program in Aging”: Back to the Future, Looking Ahead

4:30pm-5:30pm

Break Before Reception

5:30pm-6:30pm

Networking Reception

Bistro La Traite

Group Photo at 6:00 PM

6:30pm-9:00pm

CIHR Institute of Aging Summer Program in Aging 20th Anniversary Dinner

Bistro La Traite

9:00pm onward

Free Time

Speakers



Dr. Andrew Costa is the Canada Research Chair (Tier 2) in Integrated Care for Seniors in the Department of Health Research Methods, Evidence, and Impact at McMaster University (<https://experts.mcmaster.ca/display/acosta>). He serves as the Scientific Director of the St. Joseph's Centre for Integrated Care (<https://stjoescic.ca/>) and is an Associate Scientific Director of the Canada Longitudinal Study on Aging. He is an interRAI Fellow, and member of the Instruments and Systems Development (ISD) Committee. His program of research makes use of health information ('big data') to target, develop, and evaluate models of care in home and community care, emergency departments, hospitals, and long-term care. Since 2014, he has over 170 publications and has held more than \$9 million CAD in research funding as the nominated primary investigator.



Dr. Suzanne Dupuis-Blanchard, RN Ph.D. is professor at the School of Nursing, Université de Moncton, where she holds the Research Chair in Population Aging, and is director of the Centre on Aging. Her program of research focuses on the multiple dimensions of aging in place for older adults and their caregivers, as well as access to health services for older adults living in Official Language Minority Communities (OLMC). She combines qualitative and participatory community-based research approaches and ensures that the experiences of older adults and their families inform policy and practice. She has been the chairperson of the National Seniors Council at the federal government and president of the Canadian Association on Gerontology. She is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada as well as Fellow of the Canadian Academy of Nursing. She has been the recipient of multiple awards such as King Charles III's Coronation Medal, Catalyst Prize of ResearchNB, the Victor Marshall prize for distinguished member of the Canadian Association on Gerontology, and the Healthy Aging 50 recognition from the World Health Organization.



Dr. Carole Estabrooks is Scientific Director of the pan Canadian *Translating Research in Elder Care* (TREC) research program. TREC is focused on improving resident quality of life and quality of care, and staff quality of work life using implementation and improvement science methods in long term care (nursing) homes. Dr Estabrooks held a Tier 2 and then *Tier 1 Canada Research Chair in Knowledge Translation & Long-Term Care* for 24 years. She is a graduate of the University of New Brunswick (undergraduate), the University of Alberta (graduate degrees), and did her postdoctoral training at the Clinical Institute for Evaluative Sciences and University of

Toronto. During her postgraduate and postdoctoral work, she was supported by fellowships from the Alberta Foundation for Medical research, the Medical Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. She is a member of the *Order of Canada* and an elected Fellow in the *Royal Society of Canada*, the *Canadian Academy of Health Sciences*, and the *American and Canadian Academies of Nurses*. She is a past member of the *National Seniors' Council* and a past and current member of CIHR's *Institute of Aging*. She led the Royal Society of Canada's two task force reports on LTC and COVID, *Restoring Trust* and *Repair & Recovery*.



Dr. Janice Keefe, Professor and Chair of the Department of Aging and Family Science at Mount Saint Vincent University, holds the Lena Isabel Jodrey Chair in Gerontology and is Director of the Nova Scotia Centre on Aging. She is an Adjunct Professor with Dalhousie Medicine, an Affiliate Scientist with Nova Scotia Health and a Fellow of the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences and the Gerontological Society of America. Janice regularly contributes as an expert on national initiatives like Statistics Canada's Demography Committee, and the Royal Society of Canada's reports on COVID-19 and Long-Term Care.

Janice has had a focus on family/friend caregivers since graduate school including developing the C.A.R.E. assessment tool and evaluating National and International policies for financial support of caregivers. During her 30+ year career, she has led several multidisciplinary Tri-Council and government-funded projects focused on family/friend caregivers, homecare clients and caregivers and most recently, leading the Atlantic Canadian Research Collaboration assessing how work environment impacts the quality of work life (QWL) of staff in long-term care.



Dr. Anne Martin-Matthews has focused her career on issues of aging and social gerontology. Born in Newfoundland, she holds a PhD in Sociology from McMaster University, and has been on faculty of the University of Guelph (1978-1997) and The University of British Columbia (1998-2024). She has twice served the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR): as Scientific Director of the Institute of Aging (2004-2011), and Acting Vice-President, Research, Knowledge Translation and Ethics (2017-2018). As Scientific Director, she was a strategic champion for the Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging (CLSA) and launched CIHR's Summer Program in Aging for trainees in

all fields of aging across Canada. Her commitment to student mentoring has been recognized with a Killam Award for Excellence in Student Mentoring, and a CIHR doctoral award in her name. Anne has served as Editor-in-Chief of the *Canadian Journal on Aging*, and President of the Research Committee on Aging of the International Sociological Association. Her most recent research examines issues of home and community care. Anne serves on the Boards of AGEWELL and the Health Data Research Network (Canada). In 2018, she was inducted as an Officer of the Order of Canada, in recognition of her contributions to research on aging.

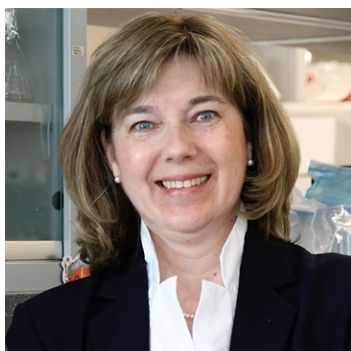


Dr. Ben Mortenson has been an occupational therapist since 1991. He is Professor and Head of the Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy at the University of British Columbia. He held a New Investigator Award (Institute of Aging) from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (2016-2021). He is a principal investigator at the GF Strong Rehabilitation Research Program and International Collaboration on Repair Discoveries. He is an experienced mixed-methods researcher with over 200 peer-reviewed publications and he has over \$7M in funding as a principal investigator or co-PI and almost \$50M as co-investigator. He has had over 300, peer reviewed abstracts accepted at national and

international conferences. He has provided research supervision to over 130 trainees. 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, accessibility, caregiving and sustainability. He was section editor for the journals *Assistive Technology* and *Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation*. He was the 2021 recipient of the Award for Innovative Practice from the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapy (CAOT). In 2022 he was inducted as a CAOT Fellow.



Dr. Lauren Griffith is a Professor in the Department of Health Research Methods, Evidence, and Impact at McMaster University where she holds the McLaughlin Foundation Professorship in Population and Public Health and is an active member of the McMaster Institute for Research on Aging (MIRA). Prior to receiving her PhD in epidemiology from the University of Toronto, she completed her Bachelor of Science degree in pure mathematics and Master of Science degree in biostatistics from the University of Michigan. Her research interests include frailty, physical functioning, and aging, as well as the harmonization of longitudinal data. Dr. Griffith collaborates extensively and has authored over 325 peer-reviewed publications. She is a Co-Principal Investigator of the Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging (CLSA) and the lead of the McMaster CLSA Data Collection Site. Dr. Griffith is also leading the co-design of PACIFIC, a complex community-based frailty intervention for older post-acute care patients.



Dr. Jane Rylett is the Scientific Director of the Canadian Institute of Health Research (CIHR) Institute of Aging. She is a Fellow of the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences, a Distinguished University Professor at Western University and Scientist in the Translational Neuroscience Group at Robarts Research Institute. She is a former Chair of the Department of Physiology and Pharmacology and served as an Associate Dean at the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry. Following a PhD in Pharmacology, she trained in neurophysiology at University College London, England and neurochemistry at the Max-Planck-Institute for Biophysical Chemistry, Germany. Dr. Rylett was appointed as an inaugural College Chair of the CIHR College of Reviewers in 2016 and held the position of Executive Vice-Chair. She served as Chair of the Institute Advisory Board for the CIHR Institute of Aging, on Boards of Directors of the Alzheimer Societies of Canada and Ontario, and on taskforces for international endeavours for Alzheimer Disease research.