



CLSA Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging
ELCV Étude Longitudinale Canadienne sur le Vieillessement

Newsletter from the CLSA Principal Investigators

Number 1

Summer 2007

Dear Colleagues

In the last few months, the Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging (CLSA) has achieved a number of important milestones in its journey towards the Study launch slated for October 2008. The purpose of this newsletter is to bring CLSA researchers, associates and colleagues up to date on these developments, and to use this opportunity to thank you for your ongoing commitment to the CLSA. As our work gathers in intensity in the lead-up to October 2008, we will use the newsletter to update you on a quarterly basis.

Updates

CLSA and Statistics Canada Collaboration

A major focus of CLSA work at this time is the development of the domain areas that will form part of the Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) Cycle 4.2, intended to serve as the inception cohort for the CLSA, to be launched in June 2008. The CCHS 4.2 will involve one hour in-home interviews with 30,000 participants across Canada, aged 55 and over. Efforts to secure additional resources for the 45 to 54 population are being led by Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC) and Statistics Canada.

To help ensure effective contributions by stakeholders and strong ongoing partnerships for this Survey, the proposed content of the domain areas, developed by various CLSA expert working

groups, was presented to a meeting of stakeholders on May 2, 2007, with participation from:

- Statistics Canada
- Health Canada
- The Public Health Agency of Canada
- Human Resources and Social Development Canada
- Canadian Institutes of Health Research
- CLSA researchers

Domains considered for the CCHS survey include the following (subject to change)	
Health/Health care	
General health	Health care utilization
Chronic conditions	Oral health
Height and weight	Weight fluctuations
Falls	
Socio-demographic	
Socio-demographic characteristics	Education
Income	Transportation
Lifestyle	
Physical activity	Sleep, hearing, vision
Smoking	Alcohol use
Social	
Social networks & social support availability	Loneliness
Social participation	Informal & formal care giving and care receiving
Psychology	
Cognition	Depressive symptoms
Nutrition	
Dietary supplements	Nutritional risk
Food safety	
Work and Retirement	
Reasons for retirement	Retirement planning
Labour Force	

The next steps prior to its implementation in June 2008 are:

- Refinement of the questionnaire by CLSA researchers, based on stakeholder input (May 2007);
- Focus groups convened across the country by Statistics Canada (May/early June 2007);
- Finalization of the questionnaire, based on focus group feedback (mid-June to early fall 2007);
- Pilot-testing of the questionnaire by Statistics Canada (fall 2007).

Our sincere appreciation goes to all our CLSA colleagues who have committed their time and expertise to ensure an end product of high quality.

Comprehensive CLSA

- The CLSA Clinical Theme Working Group, led by *Dr. Christopher Patterson*, is currently finalizing the clinical protocol as well as developing disease algorithms, and it is anticipated that the full Working Group will be convened towards the end of June 2007 to refine the algorithms.
- The Psychology, Health and Lifestyle and Social Themes Working Groups are working towards completion of instruments for the full CLSA. It is expected that a full set of tools will be ready in fall 2007.

Letter of Intent (LOI) on Behalf of the CLSA to the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI)

In response to the most recent CFI Call for Proposals for the funding of clinical research initiatives, a consortium of cohort studies has submitted an LOI (April 20, 2007) to the CFI Clinical Research Initiative for infrastructure funding.

Strategically positioned as part of the large-scale population research consortium endeavour known as *CanLife*, the requested infrastructure support for the CLSA will be an integral component of a national platform for high quality, multidisciplinary cohort studies covering the life course, from infancy through late adulthood. Invitations for full proposals will be issued by CFI in mid-June 2007.

If invited, the deadline for the full proposal is the week of October 9, 2007.

Ethics, Legal and Social Issues (ELSI) Advisory Committee

The ELSI Advisory Committee was re-launched in late 2006 with the goal of developing consent documentation for the CLSA. The Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) engaged *Nola Ries*, a lawyer and professor in the areas of health law and privacy law at the University of Victoria School of Health Information Science and Faculty of Law, to develop a draft information package and consent form. Nola delivered a comprehensive set of documents based on active involvement of the committee members and the three Principal Investigators. The drafts will be available on the CLSA website in the near future.

The list of the members of the Advisory Committee is available on the CLSA website at www.clsa-elcv.ca.

Watch for a CLSA Fellowship Announcement in July 2007

A funding opportunity, provided by the CIHR and led by the Institute of Aging, is expected to be announced in June for a CLSA Fellowship in support of health measurement surveys. The purpose of this funding opportunity is to build and strengthen research capacity and expertise in Canada in health measurement studies with emphasis on the Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging and similar longitudinal studies.

Staffing Updates

New Colleague

On behalf of all CLSA researchers and associates, we extend a warm welcome to our new National Program Manager, *Tim Douglas*. Tim joined us on May 7, 2007 on an eighteen-month secondment from the Ontario Public Service. Tim's senior management experience includes service with UNESCO, the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, and the Ontario Ministries of Training, Colleges and Universities and Citizenship and Immigration, as well as with the former Health Evidence Application and Linkage Network (HEALNet).

CLSA Staff

- At McMaster University:
Tim Douglas, National Program Manager
Mary Gauld, Senior Research Coordinator
Roxanne Cheeseman, Administrative Assistant
Lauren Griffith, Senior Research Associate
Homa Keshavarz, Senior Research Associate
- At Dalhousie University:
Geoff Strople, Senior Research Associate
Camille Angus, Research Associate and Research Administrator
- At McGill University:
Jennifer Uniat, Senior Research Associate
Amélie Pelletier, Senior Research Associate
- At Canadian Institutes of Health Research
Gary Catlin, Director, CLSA

CLSA Working Group Staff

- At l'Université de Sherbrooke:
Véronique Boutier and *Carole Coulombe*,
Research Officers responsible for preparation
of Phase II validation studies
- At the University of Victoria (Psychology):
Ben Chou, Project Coordinator
- At the University of Victoria (Social):
Project Coordinator to be announced

CLSA Website

We shall shortly be reviewing and updating the CLSA website, www.clsa-elcv.ca. Changes to come include a revised CLSA overview, the Summary of Findings of the CLSA Phase I Feasibility Studies, and a revised list of contact details for members of the CLSA Working Groups. We also anticipate making a number of the CLSA Phase I Technical Reports available on the site.

To ensure that we provide an informative and engaging website capable of meeting your needs effectively, we encourage you to take a look at the site and send your comments and suggestions to the National Program Manager, Tim Douglas.

Best wishes,

Parminder Raina
McMaster University

Susan Kirkland
Dalhousie University

Christina Wolfson
McGill University

For further information and to provide your feedback and input for forthcoming Newsletters and for the CLSA website, please contact:

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Inspiring Innovation and Discovery

