



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

NEWSLETTER FROM THE CLSA PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS

No. 3

SUMMER 2008

Dear Colleagues

Over the last six months we have made significant progress preparing for the launch of the CLSA in the fall of 2008. We include below some highlights of the work completed over the past few months.

Updates

CLSA and Statistics Canada Collaboration

Statistics Canada has completed their Pilot study for the Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) Cycle 4.2. As part of the CCHS pilot, Statistics Canada, at the request of the CLSA, asked participants to give written consent for the release of their contact information and their CCHS survey responses to the CLSA. CCHS participants who consented are being contacted to participate in the CLSA pilot to provide insight into developing and refining the interview process for the upcoming 'full' CLSA study.

Pilot Survey

Over the winter, the CLSA team worked to prepare for the launch of the CLSA pilot survey. We have finalized the pilot questionnaire, which will be administered to 276 participants.

Activities of Theme Working Groups in Preparation for the CLSA

The Clinical Theme Working Group, led by *Dr. Christopher Patterson* (McMaster University and Hamilton Health Sciences) has finalized almost all of the disease ascertainment algorithms. These were

presented to the Co-PIs in April, and approved for inclusion in the CLSA comprehensive examination. These algorithms are in the process of being validated against standard clinical diagnostic criteria.

The Psychology Theme Working Group, led by *Dr. Holly Tuokko* (University of Victoria) has completed a series of validation studies. These validation studies were, in part, funded by the British Columbia Network on Aging Research. The purpose of the validation studies was to investigate the psychometric properties of a number of measures (e.g., the Mental Alternation Test and the Tenacious Goal Pursuit and Flexible Goal Adjustment Scale). As a result of this validation work, two manuscripts are in preparation. Two other validation studies are close to completion: one on the language invariance of selected neuropsychological battery used in the Canadian Study of Health and Aging; and, the other on the structural and factorial validity of the Andresen CES-D short form. In addition to finalizing our materials for the questionnaire package, this working group also derived a preliminary disease algorithm for diagnosing dementia and cognitive impairment based on the relevant cognitive measures selected for CLSA.

The Social Theme Working Group, under the leadership of *Dr. Margaret Penning* (University of Victoria), is currently preparing a report of their activities over the past year. Coordinators *Dr. Guiping Liu* and *Laura Funk* have completed analyses of the National Population Health Survey data, as part of a validation study of the Medical Outcomes Study Social

Support Scale. A manuscript is currently being prepared.

The Social Theme Working Group partnered with the Psychology Theme Working Group and, with help from funding from the B.C. Network for Aging Research, completed data collection for a pilot validation study through the Centre on Aging's Survey Research Centre. The Social Theme Working Group has assessed the validity of social participation (activities, group membership, and frequency of participation) and loneliness (UCLA and de Jong Gierveld Loneliness Scales) measures. They collected information from telephone interviews with ~245 adults aged 45 and 85 (follow-ups were also conducted to assess test-retest reliability). Manuscripts related to this validation work are currently in preparation.

The Health and Lifestyle Theme Working Group, led by *Dr. H  l  ne Payette* (Universit   de Sherbrooke) has finished the validation of a nutrition screening tool and the Short Diet Questionnaire. The latter is already available in French. As for the nutrition screening tool, the Group proposes to use the SCREEN II, a fully validated tool that is appropriate for adults 45 years and older. A French version will be available shortly. The Health and Lifestyle Working Group has also prepared instructions and tips for administering the tools.

CLSA Presentations

For recent publications and presentations, please visit www.clsa-elcv.ca.

CLSA Funding

Recently, the CLSA was funded by the CIHR and Institute of Aging for \$3.85 million to conduct the first follow-up of the CCHS-based inception cohort of 20,000 people between the ages of 45 and 85 by telephone interviews. The follow-up will be conducted between mid 2009 and mid 2010.

A grant application was also submitted to CIHR in June 2008 for the purpose of funding an emerging team

under CIHR's Mobility Initiative. Led by Dr. Parminder Raina, this is a comprehensive program of research that proposes to explore trajectories of mobility status, how these trajectories are associated with health and disease, and how mobility is related to the transition from function to impairment.

CLSA Fellowship

A funding opportunity for a CLSA Fellowship, provided by CIHR and led by the Institute of Aging, was announced in June 2008. The purpose of this CLSA Fellowship 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 of aging. The application deadline is **October 1, 2008**. For more information, please visit <http://www.researchnet-recherchenet.ca/rnr16/viewOpportunityDetails.do?view=search&prog=513&org=CIHR&type=AND&sort=program&sponsor=CIHR-3&next=1&resultCount=25&language=E>.

CLSA Fellowships have been recently awarded to two recipients, Allison Bielak (Title: It's Never Too Late to Engage in Lifestyle Activities for Successful Cognitive Aging) and Alexandra Fiocco (Title: Evaluating the Biochemical Markers of Optimal Cognitive Aging in a 10-year Longitudinal Study).

CLSA Staffing News

The CLSA team is happy to announce some new additions to the research staff. Josette Dupuis has joined the CLSA as a senior research associate with Christina Wolfson's research team at McGill University. Josette has worked with Dr. Wolfson as a Project Coordinator for nearly eight years on two different projects: "Study on unmet needs for community-based services for the elderly aged 75 years and over"; and the "MS Latitude Project". Josette is a McGill University graduate in library and information studies (MLIS). Josette has worked in research for over 20 years and is very enthusiastic about participating in the CLSA.

Natasha Clayton has joined the research staff at the McMaster University site. Her background is in marketing, management, and interviewing. Natasha has been working on the development and pretesting of the CLSA pilot questionnaire. She is also working with Josette Dupuis to develop an interviewer guide for the pilot questionnaire.

Judy Brown is the second new addition to the McMaster University research staff. Judy holds a PhD in Epidemiology and will be working closely with

Parminder Raina on the Canadian Foundation of Innovation infrastructure application.

Congratulations to Amélie Pelletier (Senior Research Associate with Christina Wolfson) on the birth of her son Vincent on February 18 at 7:32 am, weighing 8 pounds, 15 ounces. Tall too - 20.5 inches! Amélie will be on maternity leave throughout 2008 and we hope to see her rejoin the CLSA team in 2009!

Best wishes,

Parminder Raina
McMaster University

Susan Kirkland
Dalhousie University

Christina Wolfson
McGill University

The ongoing support of CLSA's work by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) and by Le Réseau québécois de recherche sur le vieillissement (Fonds de la recherche en santé du Québec/FRSQ) is gratefully acknowledged.



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

*Mark Oremus, PhD
National Program Manager
Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging
Department of Clinical Epidemiology & Biostatistics
McMaster University
DTC, 326
1280 Main Street West
Hamilton, ON L8S 4L8
Tel: (905) 525-9140, x 22437
E-mail: oremusm@mcmaster.ca*