

Brightest Minds: Dr. Christina Wolfson



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When the vision for the Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging (CLSA) was presented to the research community in 2001, it was in response to a critical need for high-quality data on the aging population. Since then, a team of more than 160 researchers and collaborators worked together to develop and launch the CLSA. In June 2014, the first data from the study became available for researchers.

One researcher who has provided leadership throughout all the stages of study implementation is Dr. Christina Wolfson, a McGill University professor and medical scientist at the Research Institute of the McGill University Health Centre.

Trained as a biostatistician and epidemiologist, Dr. Wolfson is a fellow of the American College of Epidemiology. Her research interests lie in the epidemiology of neurodegenerative disorders including: dementia, multiple sclerosis, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, Parkinson's disease and epilepsy.

Dr. Wolfson also maintains a methodological and statistical research program, the goals of which are to improve the design and analysis of epidemiological studies. She is a CLSA co-principal investigator and leads CLSA initiatives on neurological conditions and veterans' health. She is also the director of the Statistical Analysis Centre (SAC) and chair of the Data and Sample Access Committee.

As SAC director, Dr. Wolfson oversaw the development of the CLSA DataPreview Portal, which provides researchers with the information they need to understand the data and apply for data access. Her team at the SAC are responsible for ensuring the data collected in the CLSA are cleaned, prepared for analysis and distributed to approved researchers.

"It is essential that the CLSA data be made available to the research community as soon as it is feasible while protecting participant confidentiality. The entire CLSA team are working hard to meet that goal," Dr. Wolfson said.

Events:

CAG2014: Landscapes of Aging, the 43rd Annual Scientific and Educational Meeting of the Canadian Association on Gerontology: <http://CAG2014.ca> - October 16 – 18, 2014, Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada