

A message from the CLSA research team

It's been a busy year for the Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging (CLSA). This fall, we began the rollout of our latest wave of data collection, Follow-up 4.

To those of you who have been contacted, thank you for taking the time to speak with us over the phone, complete a web survey, welcome an interviewer into your home, or visit us at one of our Data Collection Sites. We appreciate your commitment and ongoing contributions.

To those of you who haven't heard from us in a while, we will be in touch soon. As a reminder, there are approximately three years in between your interviews or visits. As you will read in this newsletter, we have introduced some new questions for all participants in Follow-up 4 and upgraded our equipment at the Data Collection Sites thanks to funding from the Canada Foundation for Innovation.

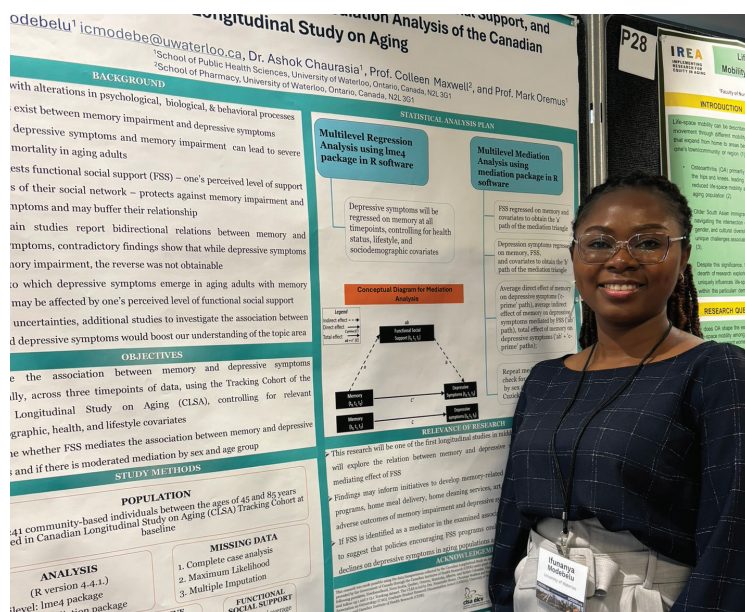
In 2024, we launched a new CLSA website to improve how we share information and findings with you. The new website includes summaries for more than 600 research projects underway, as well as fresh, reorganized content with a focus on the latest news and updates. You can also find information on all aspects of data collection – from instructional videos for the sleep trackers and mobility trackers to Frequently Asked Questions.

In this newsletter, you will read about the CLSA findings making headlines, discover how one trainee is examining the resilience of Veterans, and hear from a CLSA participant about the impact of exercise on his aging journey.

Thank you again for your ongoing participation in the CLSA. We look forward to connecting soon! Remember, you can always reach out to us if you have a question about your participation.



The Operations Council gathered in Burlington, Ontario, to plan for the launch of Follow-up 4 in July 2024.



Dr. Ifunanya Modebelu, a master's student in Public Health Sciences at the University of Waterloo, presented her CLSA research at the Canadian Association on Gerontology conference in Edmonton, Alberta, on October 25, 2024.

Participant Spotlight



Michael, 75, is a retired communications professional and former journalist. He stays active by participating in Fit Fellas, a renowned fitness program for older men in West Vancouver. Michael (right) is pictured with his brother, Peter (left), a fellow Fit Fellas participant.

“My advice from being reasonably successful in maintaining an active lifestyle is, for men in particular, to simply keep trying things. For instance, I just started two weeks ago going swimming at the West Van pool early in the morning, 6 a.m., two times a week. I think as one gets older you have to fight that sense of “Oh, I’m too tired” or “Oh, that seems like a lot of work.” I think there are rewards for maintaining your interests and your willingness to try different things. It does take an effort to keep that up, but it goes full circle and means that you’ll stay healthier longer.”

If you are interested in being featured in a future CLSA newsletter, contact us at info@clsa-elcv.ca or by phone at **1-866-999-8303**.

What’s new in Follow-up 4



The latest wave of data collection will introduce new questions about ageism experiences and cannabis use. Participants who visit Data Collection Sites will now undergo echocardiograms to examine the structure and function of the heart (left photo), a new eye test to assess contrast sensitivity (middle photo), and a smell test to better understand how smell changes as we age (right photo).

Does how we pay for home care affect our individual health and health services outcomes?

A collaboration between the CLSA and Health Data Research Network Canada is facilitating researcher access to linked CLSA data to explore the relationship between aging and health-care utilization. Dr. Aaron Jones, an assistant professor of Health Research Methods, Evidence, and Impact at McMaster University, is studying how CLSA participants are accessing public and/or private home care and seeking to understand the differences between participants who are accessing public care, private care, or both. He hopes to shed light on how the use of public and private home care influences future health-system use such as hospital admissions, emergency department visits, or admissions to long-term care homes.



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Resilience is all about adaptability – how you persevere during challenging or difficult times. Studying resilience in the context of COVID-19 could potentially help us understand how different groups, including Veterans and Non-Veterans, adapted to the challenges of the pandemic.

Jessica Dekker

M.Sc. student in epidemiology,
McGill University



How and why do some older adults adapt and thrive better than others in the face of challenges? Do prior life experiences, such as military service, play a role in developing resiliency at older ages?

Jessica Dekker, a master's student at McGill University, is using CLSA data to investigate pre-pandemic psychological resilience in older Veterans, examining how resilience manifests over time, and how it relates to pandemic experiences and health states.

12 ways to reduce your dementia risk

Dementia is on the rise in Canada. According to the Alzheimer Society, the number of Canadians living with dementia is expected to triple from just over half a million people in 2020 to 1.7 million people by 2050.

A 2020 Lancet Commission report found that more than 40 per cent of dementia cases worldwide can be prevented by modifying 12 risk factors throughout the lifespan. However, the impact of modifiable risk factors in Canada was unknown until recently.

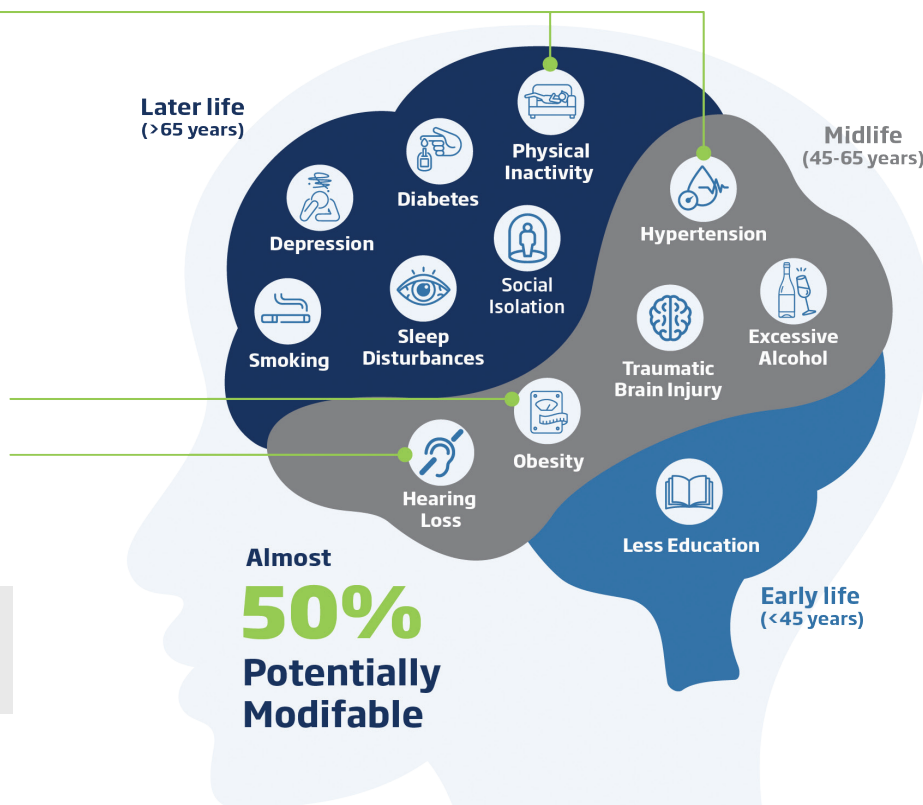
Researchers at Western University used CLSA data to examine modifiable risk factors that have the highest prevalence and strongest association with cognitive change in middle-aged and older adults in Canada. The research team found that up to half of the dementia cases in Canada are attributed to 12 modifiable risk factors, and that implementing

strategies to increase physical activity and promote effective management of hearing health, obesity, and hypertension have the greatest potential to mitigate a large proportion of those dementia cases.

The research was published in *The Journal of Prevention of Alzheimer's Disease* in June 2024.

Increasing physical activity and effectively managing your hearing health, weight and blood pressure have the greatest potential to reduce dementia cases in Canada

Learn more:
clsa-elcv.ca/dementia-risk-reduction/





Loneliness increases risk of age-related memory loss

A University of Waterloo research team examined four combinations of social isolation and loneliness and their effect on memory in CLSA participants over a six-year period. These combinations included being socially isolated and lonely, being only socially isolated, being only lonely and being neither. According to the study, loneliness had a greater negative impact on memory than social isolation, though both present a significant risk to the aging population. Read more:

clsa-elcv.ca/memory-loss



Exercise more, sit less to manage frailty and hypertension risk

A recent study using CLSA data suggests moving your body more through regular exercise and sitting less can help keep both heart disease and frailty at bay as we age. The study analyzed data collected from CLSA participants at baseline and first follow-up. Dalhousie University researchers found sitting less and participating more in strenuous exercise may be feasible interventions for reducing the prevalence of frailty and high blood pressure. Read more: clsa-elcv.ca/exercise



Do older adults who live alone feel less satisfied with their lives?

University of Toronto researchers analyzed data from approximately 12,000 CLSA participants aged 65 and older to understand the relationship between life satisfaction and living alone. The study revealed that what matters for Canadian older adults' life satisfaction is not living alone per se. Rather personality-based social dispositions play a key role in how older adults feel about living alone. In addition, the role these dispositions play tend to differ between Canadian-born and immigrant older adults.

Read more: clsa-elcv.ca/living-alone

CLSA Events

In 2024, the CLSA hosted online events for participants across the country. CLSA participant webinars provide an update on research activities and findings. Our next participant webinar will take place in early 2025 for participants living in Atlantic Canada. Visit: clsa-elcv.ca/participant-webinars.

Keep in Touch

CLSA interviews are scheduled every three years – a lot can change during that time. Please let us know if you have moved, changed your telephone number or email address since you were last contacted by us, or have any new contact information that you can share.

We also invite you to add an alternate contact to ensure we don't lose touch with you. We may contact your alternate contact should we be unable to reach you. Visit our online form or contact us by email or phone to update your details.

 Web: clsa-elcv.ca/update-your-details

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