

MONA AGEING AND WELLNESS CENTRE



Professor D. Eldemire-Shearer
Head

WORK OF MONA AGEING AND WELLNESS CENTRE (MAWC)

During the year under review, the Mona Ageing and Wellness Centre (MAWC) continued its mandate of improving the health and wellness of the older adult population nationally and regionally through novel ageing-related research, teaching and community outreach.

RESEARCH

Research activities in the MAWC for the year in review included:

- Dementia Study Component II, a community-based survey of 300 persons, 60 years and over to study dementia in Jamaica has been completed working closely with University of the West Indies, Dr. Peter Johnson, Elite Diagnostic Imaging Services and psychiatrist, Dr. Roger Gibson. The research was approved by the UHWI/UWI/FMS

Ethics Committee and data collection is complete and dissemination is underway. The project received funding from the National Health Fund. Eldemire-Shearer (PI) (\$6 million)

- **Sexual and Genitourinary Health Profile of Older Adults aged 50 years and above** – This project, funded by the Principal’s New Initiative Grant, is in collaboration with the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology (Dean, FMS) and the Department of Surgery, Radiology, Anaesthesia and Intensive Care-Section of Surgery-Division of Urology (Dr. William Aiken, Urology). The main aims of the project are to: a) identify the major gynaecological and urological issues for which older adults seek care, and b) document older adult’s perceptions and practices in relation to sexuality and ageing. This project will contribute to Mrs. Tyndale’s PhD. Data collection is complete. Analyses to fulfill the requirements of Mrs. Willie-Tyndale’s PhD are complete. Willie-Tyndale (PI) \$1.5 million.
- **Asthma Health-Related Quality of Life and its Determinants** – This represents collaboration between investigators from the Department of Community Health and Psychiatry and Dr. Norman Waldron from the Mona Ageing and Wellness Centre. Dr. Waldron’s role in this project included proposal and instrument development and he will focus dissemination of the Health-related Quality of Life of older adults with asthma and the psychometric properties of new instruments used in Jamaica. The project has received funding from the Principal’s New Initiative Grant. Ricketts-Roomes (PI) (\$1.5 million).

TEACHING

During the year of review, the Master of Public Health in Gerontology programme was not run because there were too few applicants. The two students who continued in the programme successfully completed their coursework and sat the MPH gerontology final exam (PUBH 6555). Both students passed two of the three final exams and will repeat the failed exam in November–December, 2017. There are nine applicants for 2017/18.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

An important component of the MAWC activities is community services for older persons, their relatives, caregivers, schools and communities in general. These activities continued with:

Computer classes

Computer classes for older adults continued with older persons attending and completing courses. The classes, which are offered at a minimal cost, are focused on introducing older adults to computers, typing documents, browsing the internet, creating and accessing email. In their assessment of the course and teachers, the seniors overwhelmingly thought that the content was excellent and delivered at an appropriate level. They assessed the teachers as being competent and patient. For the period under review 12 older adults attended classes for introductory and advanced computer skills.

Gym

This physical activity programme began in January 2014 in collaboration with the School of Physical Therapy, UWI and the Department of Community Health, Health Centre. In order to participate in the activities, persons aged 50 years and older need to receive medical clearance from their physician as well as sign a consent and photo-release forms. Older adults who are cleared medically and have signed the necessary forms undergo a screening process by physiotherapist, Dr. C. Gordon. This allows for individualized intervention. The exercise programme is overseen by Dr. C. Gordon and her colleague Dr. S. Williams, along with physiotherapy students in the clinical component of their programme. Mrs. Shelly-Ann Palmer-Matthews from MAWC also assists by leading some exercises.

Ageing-Related Information Dissemination

The Mona Ageing and Wellness Centre in keeping with its mandate of

providing current, accurate and evidence-based gerontology information for the public, continued in revising and introducing new brochures. This initiative is being led by Mrs. Julian McKoy-Davis.

The Mona Ageing and Wellness Centre has continued the online initiative of keeping the public informed with its Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/uwimawc> – to provide a mechanism of disseminating valuable information to the public on various topical issues. The web page also allows for mutual exchanges between the Centre and our stakeholders. This initiative is being led by Mrs. Douladel Tyndale.

The MAWC launched a new information dissemination project during this academic year; launching a Quarterly Newsletter that aims to provide information on relevant topics affecting older adults and public health systems. This initiative is being led by Dr. Norman Waldron. MAWC Quarterly Newsletters are circulated to the Mona academic community, stakeholders, for example, National Council of Senior Citizens, and to retired UWI staff.

OUTREACH

Older Adult Caregiver Programme

The Mona Ageing and Wellness Centre introduced three short courses which targeted caregivers, family members of older adults, older adults and persons interested in providing care for older adults.

Module 1 was Older Adult Caregivers' Training which was offered in partnership with the US based Centre for Outreach in Alzheimer's, Aging & Community Health (COAACH). This training was conducted two days per week, between August 16, 2016 and September 20, 2016. A total of 36 students (women) participated in the training. Some of the feedback from the participants were:

A really valuable course. Not only did I learn new things, but it confirmed some of the things I was doing instinctively but not sure about. (Participant 1)

The course was well planned. Presentations were practical and delivered professionally. Topics were relevant and areas well researched. (Participant 2)

This is an excellent programme and should be more advertised/accessible so that the nation on a whole can be more informed. (Participant 3)

The feedback from the participants was very useful and instructive in developing the second module of the training, Diabetes Management which was offered on October 25, 2016 – November 3, 2016. Nineteen (19) students from the 36 who participated in Module 1 were in attendance, with Module 1 being a pre-requisite for participation. This training was primarily hands-on and practical in that it taught participants how to take care of an older adult who has diabetes.

The third module was on End of Life Issues and was offered on January 19, 24, 27 and 31, 2017. This training had a general target audience, based on the fact that the issues are general and not specific to older adults. A total of fourteen persons participated in this training which addressed issues such as Estate Planning, Vital Documents and what to do if a loved one dies at home. No pre-requisite was required for this training.

We have received ongoing requests for an encore of the short course offerings. The three modular courses will be offered during the 2017/18 academic year as well as additional course offerings and other modes of delivery to accommodate persons who were not able to attend the scheduled sessions.

Day Centre

Unfortunately this initiative planned for 2016/17 is still on hold as no house has been assigned.

PAPERS PRESENTED

- **McKoy Davis, J., Eldemire-Shearer, D.,** and James, K. “Jamaica. The place of choice to live work and raise families; but who can

afford to retire? Retirement prospects and realities among Jamaicans 30-80 years old.” The Population Planning for Development in Jamaica Conference, Kingston, Jamaica. January 2017.

- **Willie-Tyndale, D. & Eldemire-Shearer, D.** “Multi-sectorial action for a life course approach to healthy ageing”. The Caribbean Preparatory Meeting for the Fourth Regional Conference on Ageing. June 2017.
- **Willie-Tyndale, D., Aiken, W., & Eldemire-Shearer, D.** (2017). “Sexual health among middle-aged and older women attending gynaecology and urology clinics in Jamaica”. The 21st IAGG World Congress of Gerontology & Geriatrics held July 23–27, 2017. San Francisco, CA, USA. and Geriatrics (IAGG) World Congress in San Francisco, California. July 23–27, 2017.
- **Eldemire-Shearer, D., McKoy Davis, J.,** “Disaster Management: Using a Focus Group Approach”. Presented at 21st International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics (IAGG) World Congress in San Francisco, California. July 2017.
- **Eldemire-Shearer, D.** “Retirement: life after”. Presented at Knutsford Court Hotel for The Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture & Fisheries retirement function. March 15, 2017.
- **Eldemire-Shearer, D.** “Women in Representational Politics: Safeguarding Wellness”. Presented at PCJ auditorium, 36 Trafalgar Road, Kingston 10 for Jamaica Women’s Political Caucus (JWPC) and the Rose Leon Memorial Trust: The Annual Rose Leon Memorial Lecture. March 6, 2017.
- **Eldemire-Shearer, D.** “Education within a Wellness Framework”. Presented at Church’s Teachers College Research Days, at 40 Manchester Road, Church Teachers’ College: Mandeville. February 23, 2017.
- **Eldemire-Shearer, D.** “Phases of Life”. Presented at Jamaica Suite, Phoenix Central for IWF Jamaica Chapter. February 14, 2017.
- **Eldemire-Shearer, D.** “Non-Communicable Disease: The Response”. Presented at Jamaica Conference Centre for MOH-4th Annual NCD. September 8, 2016.

PUBLICATIONS

Referred Journal Articles

- K Mitchell-Fearon, **D Willie-Tyndale, J McKoy-Davis, NK Waldron, D Holder Nevins, D Eldemire-Shearer** (2017). Health and Gender: What is the Situation with Older Persons and How Do We Address Health Care Needs? *West Indian Medical Journal Open*: 2017; 4 (1): Vol. 4 Issue 1, pp 1–6. DOI: 10.7727/wimjopen.2017.00.
- Gibson, R. C., **Waldron, N. K.**, Abel, W. D., **Eldemire-Shearer, D.**, James, K. & Mitchell-Fearon, K. (2016). Alcohol use, depression, and life satisfaction among older persons in Jamaica. *International Psychogeriatrics*, 29(4), 663-671. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1041610216002209>.
- Mitchell-Fearon, K., **McKoy Davis, J., Willie-Tyndale, D.**, Abdulkadri, A.O. & **Eldemire-Shearer, D.** (2017). The economic burden of hypertension among older persons: Lessons from a developing nation. *Journal of Public Health in Developing Countries*, 3(1): 347–357.
- **McKoy Davis, J. G., Willie-Tyndale, D.**, Mitchell-Fearon, K., Holder-Nevins, D., James, K., & **Eldemire-Shearer, D.** (2017). Caregiving among community-dwelling grandparents in Jamaica. *GrandFamilies: The Contemporary Journal of Research, Practice and Policy*, 4(1): 7–40.
- **Eldemire-Shearer, D.**, James, K., Gibson, R. Johnson, P. & **Willie-Tyndale, D.** (2017). Dementia among Older Persons in Jamaica: Prevalence and Policy Implications. *West Indian Medical Journal Epub ahead of print*. DOI: 10.7727/wimj.2017.133.
- **Willie-Tyndale, D.**, Holder-Nevins, D., Mitchell-Fearon, K., James K., Laws H., **Waldron N. K.** & **Eldemire-Shearer D.** (2016). Participation in Social Activities and the Association with Socio-Demographic and Health-Related Factors among Community-Dwelling Older Adults in Jamaica. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Gerontology*. December 2016, Volume 31, Issue 4, pp. 427–447

INCOME GENERATION

Denise Eldemire-Shearer, NHF Phase 2: Study to Determine Types of Dementia funded by NHF (\$6 million).

PUBLIC SERVICE

MAWC academic staff have served the public in various organizations nationally and internationally including:

Professor D. Eldemire-Shearer

- Chair, Health Research MOH Committees
- Member, PIOJ Health TWL/Vision 20/30 (Subcommittee of Health TWL)
- Member, 10 Year Strategic Plan Ministry of Health
- Member, UHWI Hospital Board
- Honorary Chair, Caribbean Community Retired Persons
- Member, Homeless Task Force Ministry of Health
- Patron, National Council for Senior Citizens
- Member, Central Health Committee
- Director Coordinator, Action Ageing Jamaica (formerly HelpAge Jamaica)
- Executive Director, Action Ageing Jamaica
- Member, International Federation on Ageing (IFA)
- Foundation Member, Caribbean Public Health Association (CARIPHA)
- Member, Medical Association of Jamaica (MAJ)

Dr. Norman Waldron

- Reviewer, McMaster Online Rating of Evidence (MORE)
- Editor and Contributor, *MAWC Quarterly Newsletter*
- Member, America Public Health Association

Mrs. Douladel Tyndale

- Member, Gerontological Society of America
- Member, HelpAge Jamaica
- Member, International Epidemiological Association
- Member, The UWI Ethics Committee
- Reviewer, *West Indies Medical Journal*
- Contributor, *MAWC Quarterly Newsletter*

Mrs. Julian McKoy Davis

- Member, HelpAge Jamaica
- Member, Gerontological Society of America
- Member, Technical Review Panel of the National Policy for Senior Citizens
- Board Member, National Council for Senior Citizens (NCSC)
- Member, Health Committee, NCSC
- Abstract Reviewer, Gerontological Society of America (GSA) 69th Annual Scientific Conference (August, 2016)
- Volunteer, GSA: New Orleans, Louisiana (November, 2016)

AWARDS

Denise Eldemire-Shearer

- February 2017 – Legacy Award for contribution to Elderly from Ministry of Labour and Social Security, National Council for Senior Citizens 40th Anniversary Awards; Showcasing Our Legacy: Promoting Intergenerational Solidarity
- October 2016 – Order of Jamaica, (the nation's fifth-highest honour); for outstanding advocacy for senior citizens