

MONA AGEING AND WELLNESS CENTRE



Professor D. Eldemire-Shearer
Head

WORK OF THE MONA AGEING AND WELLNESS CENTRE

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

MAWC aims at forging research collaborations with national, regional and international institutions or organizations to create interdisciplinary teams that will best allow for an innovative gerontology research trajectory. Research activities in the MAWC for the year in review centred on the epidemiology, pathophysiology, biomedical (e.g. chronic diseases and geriatric giants), psychology and socioeconomic (caregiving, residential

care, leisure activities, family support) aspects of ageing. These research projects include:

1. Health and Social Status of Older Persons

In component I, a community-based survey of 2,943 persons, 60 years was completed in 2012. The project was funded by National Health Fund, The survey aimed to elucidate the health, social and economic status of older persons nationally with supportive qualitative data on caregiver issues. Anthropometric and biomedical assays were also completed on a subset of the sample. This project continues in the dissemination of information with several articles already published, accepted or submitted to peer-reviewed journals.

Component II, a community-based survey of 300 persons, 60 years and over is currently underway, working closely with an international radiologist, Dr. Peter Johnson, and a MRI facility and psychiatrist Dr. Roger Gibson. The goals of the project are to determine the types of dementia among a population of older adults with screen-positive and screen-negative cognitive impairment. The initial goal has been modified after the full funding for the project was not achieved. The analysis of the data and the recommendations emerging may point to major issues to be addressed and may recommend future policy directions and initiatives. Preliminary findings suggest that the study will also provide critical information on stroke and raised intracranial pressure. The research was approved by the UHWI/UWI/FMS Ethics Committee and has received funding from the National Health Fund. Eldemire-Shearer (PI) (\$6 million)

2. 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 (Professor Horace Fletcher, Dean FMS) and 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. Data collection for the first phase is complete and analysis has begun. This project will contribute to Mrs. Tyndale's PhD. Willie-Tyndale (PI) \$1.5 million.

TEACHING

Teaching is a core function of the MAWC. All members of the academic staff taught across all undergraduate and postgraduate programmes of the Department of Community Health and Psychiatry in subjects such as research methods, epidemiology, primary health care, health management and gerontology/geriatrics.

During the year of review, the MAWC in association with the Department of Community Health and Psychiatry continued in teaching in two programmes of Gerontology – Master of Public Health in Gerontology and the Post Graduate Diploma in Gerontology. These programmes are the only ones of their kind in the English-speaking Caribbean. There were two (2) students for the Master of Public Health in Gerontology and one (1) student in the Post Graduate Diploma in Gerontology.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

An important component of the MAWC activities is services for older persons, their relatives, caregivers, schools and communities in general. The MAWC community activities are geared towards providing services that improve the social, psychological and physical well-being of these groups.

Computer classes

Computer classes for older adults have continued with several groups of 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 20 older adults attended classes for introductory and advanced computer skills.

Gym

The Rotary Club of St. Andrew and the British High Commission sponsored the equipment for a gym for older adults on campus and in surrounding communities. An exercise 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 consent and photo-release forms. Older adults who are cleared medically and have signed the necessary forms undergo a screening process by physiotherapist Dr. Gordon. This allows for individualized intervention. The exercise programme is overseen by Dr. Gordon and her colleague Ms. Williams, along with physiotherapy students in the clinical component of their programme.

Information

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. The process will continue in identifying other important topics for brochure production. This initiative was led by Mrs. Julian McKoy-Davis.

The Mona Ageing and Wellness Centre, has continued the online initiative with its Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/uwimawc> - to provide a mechanism of disseminating valuable information to the public on topical issues in ageing. The web page also allows for mutual

exchanges between the Centre and our stakeholders. This initiative was led by Mrs. Douladel Tyndale.

PAPERS PRESENTED

- **Denise Eldemire-Shearer.** “Aging and Wellness in support of our work with women of all ages and stages in the different seasons of their lives”: Presented at Jamaica Baptist Women’s Federation, February 26, 2016.
- **Denise Eldemire-Shearer.** “Responsive Health Sector: Technology and Persons with Disabilities”: Presented at Centre for Disability Studies, March 17, 2016.
- **Denise Eldemire-Shearer.** “Retirement! A New Beginning”: Presented at Lifestyle Statin Planning Retirement Seminar, March 29, 2016.
- **Denise Eldemire-Shearer.** “Social, Psychological And Medical Issues Associated With Retirement”: presented at WIGUT pension Seminar, multifunctional room at the main library, April 22, 2016.
- **Denise Eldemire-Shearer.** “Ageing Successfully, Senior Citizens’ Talk”: Presented at Meadowbrook/Havendale Senior Citizens Meeting, Border Ave Community Centre, April 28, 2016.
- **Denise Eldemire-Shearer.** “Older Persons In Jamaica: What Health Professionals Need to Know”: Presented at Medical Association of Jamaica’s Opening, Ceremony held at the Jamaica Pegasus Hotel, June 2, 2016.
- **Denise Eldemire-Shearer.** “What Do Over 50 Years Olds Need And Why”: presented at Pharmaton Supplementation in the over 50 Brand launch, Grand Caribbean Suite, Knutsford Court Hotel, June 16, 2016.
- **Denise Eldemire-Shearer.** “Ageing: Developing Teaching Programme, UWI Jamaica”: presented at 68th Annual Scientific Meeting of The Gerontological Society of America, U.S.A, Orlando, FL, 18–22 November 2015.
- **Denise Eldemire-Shearer.** “Health and Wellness: The Changing Role For/Of Higher Education Administrators” presented at The

Association of Caribbean Higher Education Administrators 15th Annual Conference 'Higher Education Vulnerabilities: A Caribbean Response', July 7–9, 2016. Jewel Runaway Bay Beach and Golf Resort – St. Ann, Jamaica.

- **J. McKoy Davis**, D. Eldemire-Shearer, K. James. “Perceived Levels of Financial Wellness and Distress in Preparation for Retirement/Old Age Among Jamaicans 30-80 Years Old”. International Federation on Ageing 13th Global Conference, Brisbane, Australia June 21–23, 2016. Oral Presentation.
- K. Mitchell-Fearon, **J. McKoy Davis**, H. Laws, A. Abdulkadri, D. Eldemire-Shearer. “Can we Afford this Bill? The Economic Burden of Hypertension in Older Jamaicans”. Ministry of Health’s 6th Annual National Health Research Conference. Oral Presentation.
- **D. Tyndale**. “The Role of Primary Health Care Professionals in Detecting Abuse and Neglect. Caribbean Conference on Ageing, Elder Abuse and the Rights of Older Persons”. Roseau, Dominica, November 30–December 01, 2015. Oral Presentation
- **D. Tyndale**. “Sexual Health for Ageing Men. International Men’s Health Week”. National Council for Senior Citizens, Kingston, Jamaica, June 16, 2016. Oral Presentation.
- **D. Tyndale**. “Correlates of Pelvic Floor Disorders in Women 50 years and over attending Gynaecology and urology clinics in Kingston, Jamaica”. Paper presented at the 61st Annual CARPHA Health Research Conference held in Providenciales, Turks and Caicos Islands, June 23–25, 2016.

PUBLICATIONS

- K Mitchell-Fearon, **D Willie-Tyndale**, **N Waldron**, D Holder-Nevins, K James, H Laws, & D Eldemire-Shearer. Cardio-Vascular Disease and Cancer: A Dichotomy in Utilization of Clinical Preventive Services by Older Adults in a Developing Country. *Gerontology & Geriatric Medicine*, 1–12 (November, 2015).
- Asemota, **D Eldemire-Shearer**, **NK Waldron**, A Standard-Goldson.

Prevalence of Self-reported Urinary Incontinence in Community-dwelling Older Adults of Westmoreland, Jamaica. *MEDICC Review* 18, 1–2, (January–April 2016).

- **D Willie-Tyndale**, D Holder-Nevins, K Mitchell-Fearon, K James, H Laws, N Waldron, & **D Eldemire-Shearer**. 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*, (July 2016):1-21 DOI: 10.1007/s10823-016-9297-x.

Technical Reports

- **D Eldemire-Shearer**, “Multi-sectorial Action for a Life Course Approach to Healthy Ageing Draft’ Global Strategy & Plan of Action on Ageing & Health Brief” Prepared for the Ministry of Health Jamaica, for Agenda Item 13.4 (69th World Health Assembly, 23–28 May 2016, Geneva, Switzerland)

INCOME GENERATION

- **Denise Eldemire-Shearer**, NHF Component II: 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

- Fellow, Gerontological Society of America
- Member, International Federation of Ageing
- Patron, National Council for Senior Citizens
- Chairman, Caribbean Community of Retired Persons
- Director, HelpAge Jamaica
- Member, Central Health Committee – Ministry of Health

- Member, Medical Association of Jamaica
- Member, West Indies Medical Journal Editorial Board
- Member, Ministry of Health – Task Force Mental Health & Homeless
- Chairman, Sub-committee Homeless & Mental Health Homeless Task Force
- Member, National Steering Committee 10 Year Development Plan
- Member, University Hospital of the West Indies Board

Dr. Norman Waldron

- Programme Director, HelpAge Jamaica
- Reviewer, McMaster Online Rating of Evidence (MORE)

Mrs. Douladel Tyndale

- Member, Gerontological Society of America
- Member, HelpAge Jamaica
- Reviewer, *West Indies Medical Journal*

Mrs. Julian McKoy Davis

- Member, Gerontological Society of America
- Member, HelpAge Jamaica
- Member, Technical Review Panel of the National Policy for Senior Citizens
- Board Member, National Council for Senior Citizens

STUDENTS

The MAWC in association with the Department of Community Health and Psychiatry accepted two part-time (2) students in the Master of Public Health in Gerontology and one (1) student in the Post Graduate Diploma in Gerontology in this academic report. All students have progressed through their courses and the lone student in the Post Graduate Diploma in Gerontology will graduate this year. The other students will continue their education into the next year.