

MONA AGEING AND WELLNESS CENTRE



Professor D. Eldemire-Shearer
Head

WORK OF MONA AGEING AND WELLNESS CENTRE

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

CONSULTATION

The Mona Ageing and Wellness Centre (through Professor Denise Eldemire-Shearer) was commissioned by the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) to conduct a situational analysis and identify key strategic areas for development of a National Strategic Plan for Ageing and Health in Jamaica. The work involved a literature review and interviews with key stakeholders from

the Regional Health Authorities. The Family Health Unit of the Ministry of Health provided assistance with identifying and assembling the key stakeholders. The situational analysis and stakeholder consultations are complete.

RESEARCH

Research activities in the MAWC for the year under review:

Dissemination of findings from the Dementia Study Component II is underway. The study included 300 persons (60 years and over), and was designed to study types (patterns) of dementia in Jamaica. It was completed through partnership with Dr. Peter Johnson, Department of Radiology UWI, Elite Diagnostic Imaging Services and Psychiatrist Professor Roger Gibson from the Department of Community Health & Psychiatry UWI. The research was approved by the UHWI/UWI/FMS Ethics Committee. Collaboration continues with the Department of Radiology to observe the progress of cognitive impairment in persons from the Dementia Study Component II. The original 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, was in collaboration with the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology and Department of Surgery, Radiology, Anaesthesia and Intensive Care, Section of Surgery, Division of Urology (Dr. William Aiken). The aim of the project was to examine the sexual and genitourinary health of adults 50 years and older in the context of active ageing. This included an exploration of the attitudes and experiences of urologists and gynaecologists in relation to the provision of sexual and genitourinary health care. The research formed the basis of Mrs. Tyndale's PhD work which was successfully defended in an Oral Examination in March, 2018. Willie-Tyndale (PI) \$1.5 million.

Mrs. Julian McKoy Davis completed her study which investigated financial preparations for retirement among Jamaicans 30-80 years. In

addition to primary data, the study involved the use of secondary data from MAWC's 2012 nationally representative community-based survey of persons 60 years and older. The research formed the basis of Mrs. McKoy Davis' PhD work which was successfully defended in an Oral Examination in April, 2018.

Caregiving Study: This study is being done in partnership with the Department of Community Health and Psychiatry (Dr. Desmalee Holder-Nevins and Dr. Kenneth James). It seeks to develop a profile of caregivers to older persons in Jamaica, measure caregiver burden, and understand their caregiving experiences. Data collection was completed in 2017 and research papers are being prepared for submission to journals.

TEACHING

The graduate programmes in Gerontology which are delivered by MAWC in partnership with the Department of Community Health and Psychiatry had a total intake of 5 students for the 2017/2018 academic year. Four new students were enrolled in the Master of Public Health -Gerontology programme of which three were successful in all their coursework and final exams and are to be awarded the degree. One student failed one exam and will re-sit same in November–December 2018. One student from the 2015/2016 academic year completed outstanding requirements and is to be awarded the degree. The Post-Graduate Diploma in Gerontology had one student for the year under review. The student was successful in all coursework and final exams and is to be awarded the Diploma with Distinction.

Older Adult Caregiver Training Programme

The Mona Ageing and Wellness Centre provided an encore offering of its short courses in response to the support and requests from participants. The short courses are targeted at caregivers, family members of older adults, older adults and persons interested in providing care for older adults.

The first Module, Older Adult Caregivers' Training, was held in March

2018. Sessions were offered in the afternoon from 2:00–6:00 p.m. to be more accommodating to the schedules of participants. A total of 13 students (comprising 12 women) participated in the training. Module 2, Diabetes Mellitus Management was held twice weekly from July 5, 2018 to 19, 2018. A total of 19 persons participated. The training provided practical hands-on training for participants including checking vital signs, insulin administration and nutrition.

The training programmes continue to be relevant in meeting the needs of caregivers and family members by equipping participants with the requisite information and skills to care for their ageing older adults as well as providing insights in the ageing process that will assist participants as they themselves grow older. Plans are underway to offer two new courses in the programme: Understanding Mental Health and First Aid and CPR.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

MAWC provides community services for older persons, their relatives, caregivers, schools and communities in general.

Computer classes

Computer classes were not held during the period under review as the student quota was not met. Contact information for all interested persons was retained for future classes. MAWC intends to improve its marketing of the classes to increase intake. The classes are offered at a minimal cost and are focused on introducing older adults to computers, typing documents, browsing the internet, creating and accessing email. Past participants have lauded the class for appropriateness of content and expert delivery and instruction.

Gym

The physical activity programme was not offered during the period under review as the facilities underwent renovation. The programme is offered in collaboration with the School of Physical Therapy, UWI and the Department of Community Health, Health Centre.

Dissemination of Ageing Information

The Centre continued the online initiative of engaging the public through its Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/uwimawc>. This provides a platform for disseminating valuable information to the public on a variety of topical ageing issues and allows for mutual exchanges between the Centre and its stakeholders.

Emails providing relevant information on issues affecting older adults and public health systems are circulated to organizations including National Council for Senior Citizens, Caribbean Community for Retired Persons (CCRP) and to retired UWI staff. This initiative is being led by Ms. Annazika Watkins.

MAWC, in partnership with Pan American Health Organization, conducted a one-day Ageing workshop for health care workers in the North East Regional Health Authority (NERHA). The sensitization workshop was requested by NERHA and covered a wide range of topics addressing clinical issues, nutrition, communication, health services and the built environment. The workshop was held at the Annotto Bay Hospital in St. Mary on 14th August, 2018 and had 43 participants.

Day Centre

This initiative is still in the planning phase. Arrangements for the needed resources including physical infrastructure are yet to be finalized; primarily the allocation of a house promised by UWI.

PAPERS PRESENTED

Non-academic presentations

- **McKoy Davis, Julian.** Presentation at the 10th Annual Victoria Mutual Pension Management Seminar. Ageing in Jamaica. Spanish Court Hotel, Kingston Jamaica, September 28, 2017.
- **McKoy Davis, Julian.** Presentation at The Jamaica Legion Health Seminar. In commemoration of the International Day of Older Persons. The Retirement Journey – Its Personal. Curphey Place, Kingston Jamaica, September 30, 2017

Academic presentations

- **Eldemire-Shearer, D.** Ageing and the art of living: A doctor's prescription. Keynote address Connecting the Dots: Work. Life. Balance. Ageing. Teaching and Learning Complex, UWI, St. Augustine, Port of Spain, Trinidad, April 26–27, 2018.
- **Eldemire-Shearer, D.** Disaster Management: Using a Focus Group Approach. IAGG World Congress of Gerontology and Geriatrics 2017 International Association for Gerontology and Geriatrics World Congress. San Francisco, California, USA. July 23–27, 2017
- **Willie-Tyndale.** Ageing and society: Facilitating social participation and productive engagement among older persons. Connecting the Dots: Work. Life. Balance. Ageing. Teaching and Learning Complex, UWI, St. Augustine, Port of Spain, Trinidad, April 26–27, 2018.
- **McKoy Davis J., Eldemire-Shearer, D.,** and James, K. Financial Preparations for Retirement in Jamaica: A Mixed Methods Approach. Mixed Methods International Research Association Conference, Pretoria, South Africa. August 30–September 1, 2017.

Posters displayed

- **Eldemire-Shearer, D., McKoy Davis, J., Willie-Tyndale, D.,** James, K, Gibson, R., and Johnson, P. The Mini Mental State Exam as a screening tool for Dementia in Primary Care in Jamaica. The 2018 Research Days, The University of the West Indies, Mona. February 2018
- **McKoy Davis, J., Willie-Tyndale, D., Mitchell-Fearon, K., Holder-Nevins, D., James, K** and **Eldemire-Shearer, D.** Grandparents: Invaluable Family Resources. The 2018 Research Days, The University of the West Indies, Mona. February 2018

PUBLICATIONS

Refereed Journal Articles

- **Eldemire-Shearer, D., James, K., Johnson, P., Gibson, R., and Willie-Tyndale, D.** (2018). Dementia among older persons in

Jamaica: Prevalence and policy implications. *West Indian Medical Journal*, 67(1), 1–8.

- **Willie-Tyndale, D., McKoy Davis, J., Mitchell-Fearon, K., Holder-Nevins, D., James, K., Waldron, N. K. and Eldemire-Shearer, D.** (2018). What predicts health services utilization among older black men in Jamaica? *The Journals of Gerontology Series B Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*. DOI10.1093/geronb/gbx168

INCOME GENERATION

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

Julian McKoy Davis, Co-funding support from the Centre for Outreach in Alzheimer's, Aging & Community Health (COAACH) to facilitate the Older Adult Caregivers Training held on August–September 2016 (USD \$1,000.00 received March 2018).

PUBLIC SERVICE

MAWC academic staff members serve the public in various organizations nationally and internationally including

Professor D. Eldemire-Shearer

- Chair, Health Research MOH Committees, 2017–Present
- Member, PIOJ Health TWL/Vision 20/30 (Subcommittee of Health TWL),
- Member, 10 Year Strategic Plan Ministry of Health, 2016–Present
- Member, UHWI Hospital Board, 2016–Present
- Honorary Chairman, Caribbean Community Retired Persons, 2016–Present
- Member, Homeless Task Force Ministry of Health, 2016–2018
- Patron, National Council for Senior Citizens, 2017–Present
- Member, Central Health Committee, 2002–Present

Mona Ageing and Wellness Centre

- Director Coordinator, Action Ageing Jamaica (formerly HelpAge Jamaica), 1990–Present
- Executive Director, Action Ageing Jamaica, 1987–Present
- Member, International Federation on Ageing (IFA), 2014–Present
- Foundation Member, Caribbean Public Health Association (CARPHA), 1988–Present
- Member, Medical Association of Jamaica (MAJ), 1987–Present

Mrs. Douladel Willie-Tyndale

- Member, Gerontological Society of America, 2014–Present
- Member, HelpAge Jamaica, 2010–Present
- Member, International Federation on Ageing (IFA), 2014–Present
- Reviewer, *West Indian Medical Journal*, 2011–Present

Mrs. Julian McKoy Davis

- Member, Industry Lead Group for the Revision of the Geriatrics Competency Standards and Qualifications of the National Council on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (NCTVET), Jamaica, 2018
- Member, International Federation on Ageing, 2017–Present
- Member, Mixed Methods International Research Association, 2017–Present
- Reviewer, *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved*, 2017–Present
- Reviewer, *GrandFamilies: The Contemporary Journal of Research*, 2017–Present
- Member, Technical Review Panel of the National Policy for Senior Citizens, 2017–Present
- Member, National Council for Senior Citizens Board, 2016–Present
- Member, Health Committee, NCSC, 2016–Present
- Member, HelpAge Jamaica, 2014–Present
- Member, Gerontological Society of America, 2014–Present