

THE LOOP

The Foundation's Quarterly Update



Winter 2022



Dr. Rochon leads the future of geriatric medicine: Part 4 of 4

Every year, Dr. Rochon accepts a small number of students into the Women's College Hospital trainee program. In this four-part series, we introduce you to these innovative minds and give you a sneak peek at not only their research initiatives, but also what inspires them to pursue the field of geriatrics and where their future aspirations lie.



Parya Borhani

Part 4: Parya Borhani

Exploring the role of implicit gender bias among physicians on prescribing cascades in older adults.

My work with Dr. Rochon has been primarily related to studying prescribing cascades. This is the event where an individual is prescribed one medication, experiences a side effect related to that drug, which is often misinterpreted often as a new medical condition and thus treated with additional medication. Older adults are more susceptible to cascades which can be harmful as they can lead to inappropriate over-prescribing of medication and increase the risk of experiencing adverse drug reactions.

As a trainee, I joined the iKASCADE project with Dr. Rochon which involves researchers from many countries. The project aims to explore the experience, development and management of prescribing cascades in older adults through a sex and gender lens. As part of this project, I have helped design a study that aims to explore the impact of implicit gender bias among primary care physicians. We're interested in knowing if there is a gender bias from physicians that puts either older men or older women at a greater risk of experiencing these cascades.

[Read our full interview with Parya here:](#)

New grant cycle underway

The RTOERO Foundation is pleased to announce that we opened a new granting cycle on September 21, 2022. Our grant program was put on hold during the pandemic, but we are now very excited to relaunch the program. The foundation's grant application process is now entirely online, in partnership with SmartSimple, an online grants application and management system.

The overarching goal of our [annual grants program](#) is to identify and partner with creative, results-based organizations in order to address the most critical issues faced by our aging population. The RTOERO Foundation awards grants between \$10,000 to \$50,000 to projects that aim to improve seniors' health and wellness, promote social engagement for older adults and/or pursue innovative research in the field of geriatrics and gerontology.

The RTOERO Foundation would like to thank the generous support of SmartSimple for making our new online grant portal possible.

Women's Age Lab: A year in retrospect

The Women's Age Lab at Women's College Hospital, the first and only centre of its kind in the world, is celebrating its first year of impact. The lab is striving to transform the aging experience by using science to address the needs of older women, which have gone considerably unmet, until now.

Women tend to live longer than men, they are more likely to act as caregivers for family members, live alone and live in long-term care. They are also at greater risk of experiencing multiple chronic health conditions, being prescribed inappropriate medications and reporting feelings of loneliness and isolation. However, the unique care needs of older women remain in the shadows.

In its first year, Women's Age Lab has already created impact to drive health and social system change. They began tackling gendered ageism by launching a one-of-a-kind interactive module to educate on the importance of sex and age data in health research: [What Gets Counted Counts](#).

They have also worked on reimagining aging in place by developing their largest proposal to date for federal funding to improve aging in place for people living in Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORCs). Additionally, they built on their incremental, innovative and world-renowned research on prescribing cascades and partnered with six countries to optimize therapies and reduce drug harm among older adults. And they have established an Intersectoral Collaboration forum to

develop an issue-focused agenda on loneliness to promote social connectedness.

This is only a glimpse of the extensive work done by Women's Age Lab in the last year. Please go to www.womensagelab.ca to learn more about their work and impact.

Marie Cosgrove leaves an inspirational legacy



Anita Stillman and Marie Cosgrove

The RTOERO Foundation recently received a most generous bequest gift from Marie Cosgrove. The following story was sent to us by Dorothy Hollingsworth, District 23, in honour of her friend.

When advising my friend, Marie Cosgrove, a long-time secondary school teacher in the North York school system in the latter days of her life as to how some of the money from the sale of the house of her sister Anita, also a long-time teacher with the Durham Catholic Board of Education had bequeathed her, we decided one of the recipients of the proceeds should be the RTOERO Foundation.

Good causes deserve generous funding. Ontario educators should be proud of the Chair in Geriatric Medicine established in 2014 by RTOERO. The RTOERO Chair in Geriatric Medicine at the University of Toronto is held by Dr. Paula Rochon. Dr. Rochon and her group conduct research related to aging and older adults and the societal health challenges facing older adults.

To read Marie's full story, please click [here](#).

Donating to the RTOERO Foundation is easy and tax deductible



Did you know that 31% of annual charitable giving occurs in December, and 12% of all charitable donations are made in the last three days of the year? It's hard to believe we are already thinking about the end of 2022 but if you have considered donating this year, and haven't yet done so, now is the time to think about your year-end giving plans - and consider these important facts about the RTOERO Foundation when doing so:

RTOERO member fees are not allocated to the Foundation

We are sometimes asked if the Foundation is supported through a portion of RTOERO membership fees. The answer is no. RTOERO does provide in-kind support to the Foundation in the form of office space and shared human resources. RTOERO auditors have confirmed that this is a standard arrangement for an association that is the parent of a charity formed under its umbrella.

Our programs are sustained through fundraising

While RTOERO and the RTOERO Foundation are very closely integrated, the Foundation is a separate organization with its own Board of Directors, and an operating budget that is independent from that of RTOERO finances.

The continuation of our grant program therefore relies on the generous contributions we receive from individual donors as well as support from corporate partners. The Foundation's annual budget, including all funds available for granting is directly linked to the success of our fundraising efforts. It is through the generosity of RTOERO members that we are able to deliver on the promise of our mission to invest in programs, research and training to support healthy active aging for all Canadians.

Your donation is tax deductible

The RTOERO Foundation is a registered Canadian charity, and our charitable registration number is #848662110RR0001. We issue a tax receipt for every individual donation of \$20 or more.

Giving to the RTOERO Foundation not only benefits aging Canadians, but it's also a great way to maximize your tax credits. If charitable giving is still on your 2022 to-do list, your gift must be postmarked by December 31, 2022, to qualify for a tax receipt.

We thank you in advance for your generous support.

How loud is too loud?

Have you ever wondered at what point a loud noise is doing damage to your ears?

Sometimes it's obvious when we've been in an environment that's too noisy for too long because when we move to a quieter spot, we discover that we can't hear as well as we normally do – at least until our ears get a respite and are able to rebound from the onslaught of sound.

You've probably experienced this after being at a concert where decibel levels can often reach as high as 110 – a level that can potentially cause hearing loss in less than five minutes. To put that into context, a soft whisper is 30 dB and a normal conversation is about 60 dB. Most clinical experts agree that the harmful threshold is 85 dB.

When is too much, too much?

To get a better idea of how loud that actually is, here are the decibel levels of some common sounds we likely hear nearly every day :

- Gas-powered lawnmowers and leaf blowers:
 - 80 – 85 dB
 - Motorcycle: 95 dB
 - Approaching subway train, car horn at 5 meters, sporting events: 100 dB
 - Maximum volume on personal listening devices, TV, and stereos: 105 – 110 dB
 - Standing beside or near sirens: 120 dB

Minimize your risk

The extent of damage caused by excessive noise and the speed of onset depends on the length of your exposure to the noise, the sound level, your proximity to the source of the noise and your level of hearing protection.

The fact is, sometimes you simply can't avoid noise. When that's the case, always make sure to protect your ears. If that means wearing ear protection, popping in custom ear plugs or moving out of the noisy environment as often as you can to give your ears a break, do it.

3 simple rules to prevent hearing loss

While age-related hearing loss cannot be prevented, noise-induced hearing loss is preventable.

There are a few simple rules you can follow to protect your hearing health as much as possible, regardless of your age.



1. Protect your ears

If you must be in noisy environments, wear ear protection – no matter if you are at home, work or at a concert.



2. Follow the 60/60 rule

When you listen to music, do not exceed 60% of your device's maximum volume for more than 60 minutes a day.



3. Take a break

Take regular breaks when attending concerts or festivals where the sound levels are much higher than normal.

If you're wondering how your hearing has been standing up to the noise you experience every day, take advantage of a free, comprehensive hearing assessment.* If hearing aids are the right option for you, you can start your 30-day hearing aid trial** at a HearingLife clinic near you. HearingLife also offers custom noise protection earplugs, ask clinic staff for more information.

#LoveYourEars and visit [HearingLife](#) online or call 1-888-886-2230 to book an appointment for your free trial today.

Sinai Health/UHN Health Aging 101 Education Series

In the summer, we shared a survey with you to get input and feedback in order to help build a valuable webinar program with our partner, Sinai Health/UHN and Dr. Samir Sinha, Director of Geriatrics at Sinai Health and the University Health Network Hospitals.

The Healthy Ageing 101 Webinar Series is a free, virtual health education series open to all. Every month, September through June, a new topic related to healthy ageing is discussed. During the one-hour session, attendees will hear from an expert speaker and have the opportunity to participate in a 30-minute question and answer session.

Based in part on input from RTOERO members the Sinai Health team has developed important, relevant and valuable content in an effective and enjoyable format. Please visit <https://sinaigeriatrics.ca/healthy-ageing101/#tab-id-2> for the upcoming list of topics. Once registration opens, you will be notified via our communication or you can sign up to be part of the Healthy Ageing and Geriatrics Mailing List. Future sessions include:

- Advice on How to Approach Advance Care Planning and End-of-Life Conversations
- Balanced Diet, Balanced Life: How to Get the Most Out of Your Meals and Keep a Healthy Weight
- CRA Outreach Program for Older Adults 65+

Each session is recorded and posted on the website afterwards, alongside the slides presented by the speaker. Visit <https://sinaigeriatrics.ca/healthy-ageing101/#tab-id-3> to review previous session.

To sign up for the Healthy Aging and Geriatrics Mailing List, visit <https://sinaigeriatrics.ca/subscribe/>

For more information about the work of the RTOERO Foundation, please visit us on the [web](#).

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