



## MONA AGEING AND WELLNESS CENTRE

Professor Denise Eldemire-Shearer – Head

### WORK OF MONA AGEING AND WELLNESS CENTRE

The Mona Ageing and Wellness Centre (MAWC) continues its multi-disciplinary approach to improving the health and well-being of the older adult population nationally and regionally through innovative ageing-related research, teaching and community outreach.

### CONSULTATION

The Mona Ageing and Wellness Centre (through Professor Denise Eldemire-Shearer) continued its work on the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) commissioned consultancy for the development of a National Strategic Plan for Ageing and Health in Jamaica. The consultancy is in an advanced state. Several consultations were conducted with key stakeholders from the Regional Health Authorities. Relevant desk reviews were also completed. There is a noticeable synergy between the current positioning of the consultancy and the Government's reform of its health care facilities and a renewed focus on health from a life-course approach. An Elderly Health Clinic has been proposed, which will align with the MAWC's mission to meet the needs of older adults specifically and emphasize the maintenance of intrinsic capacity among persons as they age.

### RESEARCH

A project, "Breast Cancer Burden and Screening Strategies in Jamaica" was started. The aim of the project is to determine the burden and subtype distribution of breast cancer in Jamaican women and to describe physicians' screening-related knowledge and practices towards women across age spectrums and with varying comorbidities. This project is being done in collaboration with Dr. Sonya Reid M.D., Haem/Oncology Fellow, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee. It was approved by the University

of the West Indies Ethics Committee and will be funded by the Ministry of Health Research Grant Awards to Dr. Kayon Donaldson-Davis (MAWC) \$1.5 million.

## 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 12 students for the 2018/2019 academic year. Six new students were enrolled in the Master of Public Health -Gerontology programme of which two were successful in all their coursework and final exams and are to be awarded the degree. The remaining four students are part-time students and will complete the programme by June 2020. The Post-graduate Diploma in Gerontology had six new students for the year under review. Four students were successful in all coursework and final exams and are to be awarded the Diploma. Below is a breakdown of the students who participated in the programme over the reporting period.

**Table 1:** Students registered in the graduate Gerontology Programme for Academic Year 2018–2019

	The Bahamas		St. Lucia		Jamaica		
Country	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time	Total
Post-grad Diploma	2	–	–	–	3	1	6
MPH	–	1	1	–	1	3	6

A new programme – Post-graduate Diploma in Geriatrics is being developed. The programme's main focus is to prepare Medical Doctors (Primary Care Physicians) for the specialized care of older adults. This programme will also act as the premier, centralized training interface for Geriatrics within the Caribbean. The programme will span 1 academic year (September to June) and be offered remotely for regional participants.

### Older Adult Caregiver Training Programme

Over the reporting period, Modules 3 and 4 in the Older Adult Caregiving programme were offered. Module 3, which focussed on Understanding Mental and Psychological Changes in Older Adults, was offered in November 2018 and attracted 33 participants. Module 4, End of Life Issues Training, was offered in July 2019. Sixteen persons participated in the training. The participants are very grateful for the training as it increased their level of awareness and understanding of ageing issues. Many express an

interest in undertaking further study for both personal and professional development. The proposed upcoming training is First Aid and CPR to be offered before December 2019.

## **COMMUNITY SERVICE & OUTREACH**

The MAWC continues to provide ongoing community support and services for older persons, their relatives, caregivers, schools and communities in general.

### **Computer Classes**

In spite of the regular requests for the scheduling of Computer classes, they were not held during the period under review as the student quota was not met. Contact information for all interested persons has been 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.

### **Gym**

The Gym was closed for a brief period because of termite infestation which caused major damage to the facility. It was reopened in October 2018. On average eight persons attend the gym on a weekly basis. As at July 2019, the gym had 31 members. Of the thirty-one members actively participating, fifteen are from Mona and August Town communities; others are from Church and community including groups Starlight Senior Citizen's Club, Caribbean Community for Retired Persons, University of West Indies community and Lupus Foundation of Jamaica. All members of the MAWC Gym are given consent forms and must receive medical clearance from their doctor before they can participate in any activities.

Members of the gym have expressed their gratitude for the facility because it has improved their health and has also provided a means of socialization and networking.

### **Outreach**

**2018:**

- International Day of Older Person – Health Fair, Thursday, October 04, 2018
- Christmas Treat – The Haven Nursing Home, Saturday, December 15, 2018.

2019:

**Health Fair**

- Church of the Firstborn Grace Gospel Hall, January 24, 2019
- Church of the Firstborn Gospel Auditorium, Tuesday, April 16, 2019.

**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 the 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**

- **Eldemire-Shearer D.** The Impact of Emergencies and Natural Disasters on Older Persons: An Age-friendly Approach. Presented at Rebuilding Puerto Rico towards a Healthy Aging Geriatric Program Department of Health of Puerto Rico, August 24, 2018.
- **Eldemire-Shearer D.** Non-Communicable Diseases & Dementia Findings From Jamaican Research. Presented at St. Kitts, March 2019.

- **Eldemire-Shearer D.** Caribbean Health Care Systems And Longevity: Evolution of Health Care and Ageing. Presented at Caribbean Actuarial Association 28th Annual Conference, Jamaica Pegasus Hotel, Kingston, Jamaica, 28th–30th November 2018.
- **Eldemire-Shearer D.** Lifestyle Choices for Healthy Aging. Presented at CariMed Conference, September 2018.
- **Eldemire-Shearer D.** Ageing in the 21st Century. Presented at The World Family Doctor Day Education Committee Family Doctor Day Conference, Alamba Inn, on May 18, 2019.

#### **Papers/Posters Presented At Scientific Meetings**

- **Donaldson-Davis, K., McKoy Davis, J., Willie-Tyndale, D., James, K., & Eldemire-Shearer, D.** Disaster Preparedness among Adults Over 60 years in Jamaica. Poster at the “Caribbean Strong: Building Resilience with Equity” Summit held at the Sheraton Hotel and Casino, San Juan, Puerto Rico, February 27–March 1, 2019.
- **McKoy Davis, J., and Eldemire-Shearer, D.** How do perceptions of financial preparation for retirement explain the relationship between financial preparation and retirement delay in Jamaica? Third Global Conference of the Mixed Methods International Research Association (MMIRA), Vienna, Austria. August 22–25, 2018.
- **Willie-Tyndale, D., James, K. McKoy Davis, J., & Eldemire-Shearer, D.** Predictors of Physician Advice on Diet and Physical Activity to Older Persons in Jamaica. Paper presented at the 14th Global Conference on Ageing of the International Federation on Ageing held in Toronto, Canada, August 8–10, 2018.
- **McKoy Davis, J., Eldemire-Shearer, D., and James, K.** Mirror, mirror, on the wall, have we prepared for old age at all? Retirement preparation and financial security among older adults in Jamaica IFA 14th Global Conference on Ageing, Toronto, Canada. August 8–10, 2018.
- **Eldemire-Shearer D.,** Dementia Prevalence In Jamaica. Presented at International Federation on Ageing (IFA) 14th Global Conference on Ageing, August 5–11, 2018. Poster presentation.
- **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. Poster presentation.
- **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. Poster presentation.

## PUBLICATIONS

### Refereed Journal Articles

#### 2019

- James, K., Thompson, C., **Willie-Tyndale, D.**, Holder-Nevins, D., Gibson, R., Johnson, P., **McKoy Davis, J.**, & **Eldemire-Shearer, D.** (2019). Performance and Receiver Operating Characteristics of the Mini-Mental State Examination Instrument in Detecting Dementia in a Rapidly Developing Country (Jamaica). *Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry and Neurology*. DOI: 10.1177/0891988719841722.

#### 2018

- **Willie-Tyndale, D.**, & **Eldemire-Shearer, D.** (2018). Correlates of Pelvic Floor Disorders in Women Fifty years and over Attending Out-Patient Gynaecology and Urology Clinics at a Tertiary Hospital in Kingston and St. Andrew, Jamaica. *West Indian Medical Journal* 67(5):376–381.
- Holder-Nevins, D., James, K., **McKoy Davis, J.**, **Willie-Tyndale, D.**, Thompson, C., & **Eldemire - Shearer, D.** (2018). Who Cares? Socio-demographic and Health Characteristics of Carers of Older Persons in Jamaica. *West Indian Medical Journal* 67(5):465–470.
- Thompson, C., James, K., Holder-Nevins, D., **Willie-Tyndale, D.**, & **Eldemire-Shearer, D.** (2018). Sinking Teeth in Dental Health of Older Adults in Jamaica. *West Indian Medical Journal* 67(5):480–487.

## PUBLIC SERVICE

MAWC academic staff members continue to 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 –

Member, Year Strategic Plan Ministry of Health

Member, UHWI Hospital Board

Honorary Chairman, Caribbean Community Retired Persons

Member, Homeless Task Force Ministry of Health

Patron, National Council for Senior Citizens

Member, Central Health Committee

Executive Director, Action Ageing Jamaica

Member, International Federation on Ageing (IFA)

Foundation Member, Caribbean Public Health Association (CARPHA)

Member, Medical Association of Jamaica (MAJ)

Member, Gerontological Society of America

*Mrs. Douladel Willie-Tyndale, PhD*

Member, Gerontological Society of America

Member, International Federation on Ageing (IFA)

Member, University of the West Indies Ethics Committee

Reviewer, *West Indian Medical Journal*

Member, HelpAge Jamaica

*Mrs. Julian McKoy Davis, PhD*

Member, Canadian Association of Gerontology

Volunteer, International Federation on Ageing Annual Conference Canada (August), 2018

Member, International Federation on Ageing

Reviewer, *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved*

Reviewer, *Grand Families: The Contemporary Journal of Research*

Board Member, National Council for Senior Citizens

Member, Gerontological Society of America

*Dr. Kayon Donaldson-Davis, B.Sc. MBBS*

Member, Gerontological Society of America

Member, Jamaica Medical Doctors Association