

Welcome to the OSA's Research Rounds. We seek to both educate and inspire in this monthly compendium of research, publications, commentary and events about seniors in British Columbia and beyond. Please feel welcome to email us feedback and items to share.

Research Rounds



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BRITISH COLUMBIA

[The Influence of the Physical Environment on Residents With Dementia in Long-Term Care Settings: A Review of the Empirical Literature](#)

The Gerontologist

This paper presents a literature review focusing on recent empirical research in the area of physical environment in long-term care facilities. The authors conclude that greater recognition is warranted for creating physical environments appropriate and responsive to residents' cognitive abilities and functioning.

[Healthy Aging](#)

BC Medical Journal

This message from the President of Doctors of BC discusses the aging process in general as well as the role that medical practitioners have in promoting healthy aging.

[The purr-fect companion: seniors feel less lonely with a robotic pet](#)

Vancouver Coastal Health Research Institute

This article discusses a study conducted at the Short Term Assessment and Treatment Centre at Vancouver General Hospital whereby several patients were paired with robotic cats and dogs. All patients had varying stages of dementia and experienced symptoms of anxiety and/or agitation, loneliness and depression. Researchers believe that robotic animals can provide social, psychological and physiological benefits to people with dementia along with having the potential to reduce the amount of medication given.

CANADA

[Development and validation of an algorithm to assess risk of first-time falling among home care clients](#)

BMC Geriatrics

Currently, falls literature focuses on individuals with previous falls, so little is known about individuals who have not experienced a fall in the past. The purpose of this study was to derive and validate a prediction algorithm for first-time falls among home care clients who had not fallen in the past 90 days. The results of the study found that the algorithm is useful for predicting future falls.

[Chronic Pain in Canada: Laying a Foundation for Action](#)

Canadian Pain Task Force

The Canadian Pain Task Force was established in March 2019 to help the Government of Canada better understand and address the needs of Canadians who live with pain. Chronic pain is more common among older adults, females, Indigenous Peoples, Veterans, and populations affected by social inequities and discrimination. This report focuses on the current state of pain care, education, and research in Canada.

[Aging and Frailty in First Nations Communities](#)

Canadian Journal on Aging

This study is the first published overview of aging in a nationally representative sample of First Nations seniors. It is also the first application of a validated frailty index to describe aging experiences in First Nations communities. The study's findings reflected a medically complex population that often has limited access to health and health services and provided evidence that First Nations populations are experiencing age-related multimorbidity and functional challenges at younger ages than the general population of Canada.

[Relieving the Burden of Navigating Health and Social Services for Older Adults and Caregivers](#)

Institute for Research on Public Policy

This study presents the theory that growing numbers of older Canadians with chronic illnesses, disabilities and cognitive impairment are regularly discouraged by the efforts required to access and coordinate fragmented health and social care services. According to the author, navigation challenges and caregivers' burden are compounded by health and social care systems that are difficult to access due to overly restrictive eligibility criteria, convoluted application processes and other gatekeeping mechanisms.

[Barriers to respite: Why do caregivers of people with dementia not use respite services?](#)

McMaster University

Caregivers often experience very complex and painful moments. Studies revealed that they have to assume new complex roles and responsibilities, cope with challenging behaviours associated with dementia, and often feel isolated. Despite the burden and distress of these caregivers, many do not use existing respite services. McMaster University's Optimal Aging Portal has compiled research in this area and provided a list of resources for caregivers.

INTERNATIONAL

[Improving Care for Elders Who Prefer Informal Spaces to Age-Separated Institutions and Health Care Settings](#)

Innovation in Aging

This article makes policy suggestions for increasing access and usage of essential services, including developing attractive and appealing intergenerational spaces in which older community members can obtain services and dispatching caseworkers to public spaces where elders congregate. Furthermore, this article recommends improving exchanges between health care providers and older adults so that they feel recognized, respected, and cared for, which can improve health care outcomes.

[Lack of focus on nutrition and documentation in nursing homes, home care- and home nursing: the self-perceived views of the primary care workforce](#)

BMC Health Services Research

The purpose of this study was to investigate how a varied group of healthcare professionals perceive their own competencies within nutrition and documentation and how organizational structures influence their daily work and the quality of care provided. The results suggested that daily involvement and support of leaders and managers in articulating and structuring the importance of nutritional care and treatment and the subsequent documentation are critical factors.

[Making health care responsive to the needs of older people](#)

Age and Ageing

This commentary highlights the importance of health system responsiveness to older people living with complex health needs. The authors conclude that responsiveness is high when individual practitioners and clinical teams have the resources, decentralised authority, flexibility and autonomy to provide the care required.

[Meeting the social and emotional support needs of older people using aged care services](#)
Analysis & Policy Observatory

This Australian report explores the ways current aged care arrangements and processes of care work attend to older people's social and emotional needs and the policy, regulatory and organisational arrangements which would more effectively ensure provision of quality, whole-of-person care.

[Psychological correlates of multimorbidity and disability accumulation in older adults](#)
Age and Ageing

This article aimed to explore whether different psychological factors were associated with the rate of chronic disease and disability accumulation over time. The authors found that positive attitudes toward life in general and health in particular may be especially important in old age, when the cumulative effects of biological and environmental deficits lead to accelerated health decline.

[Disability incidence and functional decline among older adults with major chronic diseases](#)
BMC Geriatrics

The aim of this study was to investigate the pattern of functional loss among older adults with major chronic illnesses, and to compare their onset and ordering of disability with those of persons without such conditions. The author concluded that older Americans with major noncommunicable diseases face an earlier and steeper slope of functional decline.

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