



Lakehead
UNIVERSITY

Centre for
Education and Research
on Aging & Health

Executive Report 2019-2021

Knowledge ♦ *Collaboration* ♦ *Action*



Intro



Since 1993, the Centre for Education and Research on Aging & Health (CERAH,) Lakehead University, has received annual funding from the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-term Care (MOHLTC) and the North West Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) to organize and deliver gerontology education related to aging, seniors' mental health, palliative care, and other aging-related matters.

With an aging population, many older adults are choosing to age in their own homes. Aging at Home aims to support seniors to "age in place", while maintaining independence and remaining connected to their community. CERAH works to network with community partners to achieve this goal.

CERAH also works directly with people living with dementia and seniors with mental health conditions, their families, supports, and system partners. CERAH conducts research that tells people's stories in ways that challenge traditional discourses of aging, dementia, and mental health. CERAH enhances community capacity through partnerships, knowledge translation, and innovation to better support and care for those with lived experience of dementia and to support seniors' mental health.

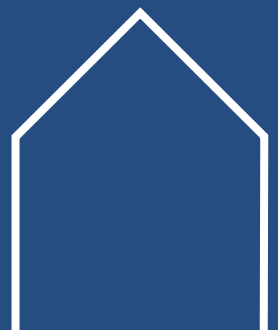
One of our key priority areas at CERAH is Indigenous Peoples' health and aging. We conduct culturally relevant research and education in collaboration with Indigenous peoples that responds to communities' needs. In terms of special project funding, 2019-2021 saw contracts from Indigenous Services Canada's (ISC) Ontario Region, Manitoba Region and Atlantic Region to deliver palliative care education for front-line health and social care providers working in Indigenous communities across Ontario, Manitoba, and Atlantic Canada Home and Community Care programs.

CERAH has also been centrally coordinating and delivering interprofessional palliative care education in Northwestern Ontario, providing a number of palliative care educational events throughout the year. These events are organized for health care personnel throughout Northwestern Ontario with a particular focus on providers working in the community or in long-term care. Events are organized and delivered based on identified local needs, and in partnership with other organizations to deliver additional courses and events on a partnership and/or cost recovery basis.

This report summary includes data from the fiscal years 2019-2020 as well as 2020-2021, as many normal operating processes during COVID were adjusted for the health and safety of our staff and the communities we serve. The following pages will detail select highlights of our Human Resources, Funding & Contracts, Community Impact, and Future Plans.

Like many organizations, CERAH struggled to pivot and adjust to the challenges of COVID-19. The leadership team of CERAH would like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of our staff members' hard work and dedication to their work and the contributions they make to our communities and the university.

Lakehead University respectfully acknowledges that its campuses are located on the traditional lands of Indigenous people. Lakehead Thunder Bay is located on the traditional lands of the Fort William First Nation, Signatory to the Robinson Superior Treaty of 1850. Lakehead University acknowledges the history that many nations hold in the areas around our campuses and is committed to a relationship with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit based on the principles of mutual trust, respect, reciprocity, and collaboration in the spirit of reconciliation.





MISSION

To conduct high quality knowledge translation, rigorous research and education to advance health and social care promoting the health & wellbeing of people aging across the life cycle.

Key priorities include:

Aging in Place | Dementia and Seniors' Mental Health | Indigenous Peoples' Health and Aging | Palliative Care

VISION

CERAH will be a recognized leader in education and research regionally, provincially, nationally, and internationally in the areas of aging and health.

VALUES

We hold an appreciation for the contributions and participation of all who work towards our vision

We espouse cultural humility in our daily practice and interactions with community

We aspire to contribute to reconciliation with Indigenous peoples

We embrace ingenuity, free thinking, creativity, and collaboration

We exemplify professional, ethical, and inclusive behaviour

We act from a place of compassion, dedication, integrity, and respect

We believe in being regionally responsive and promoting local capacity



Our History

THE BEGINNINGS

Northern Education Centre for Aging & Health


The Centre for Education and Research on Aging & Health originated as the Northern Education Centre for Aging & Health (NECAH). NECAH was established in 1991 with special funding from the Ministry of Colleges & Universities to develop and deliver educational programming in aging and health to interdisciplinary health care professionals in northwestern Ontario and Lakehead University students in the health professions.

NECAH applied for and received funding from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care for an education program in palliative care (1992) and geriatric health (1997). These service contracts continue today and are the core income of the Centre.


From 1991 to 2004, NECAH became a well-established and vibrant unit of the university. It made significant contributions to the development of gerontology in Northern Ontario, playing a key role in bringing gerontology studies to Lakehead University, while offering a northern perspective on aging and health.

2004 TO TODAY:

The Centre for Education Research on Aging & Health



To reflect the increased focus on research since its inception in 2004, NECAH was renamed the Centre for Education and Research on Aging & Health (CERAH). With a mission to advance health and social care for an aging population and promote the health and well-being of older people, CERAH continued to bring together health care professionals, community partners, leaders, educators, researchers, students, caregivers and older adults in a collaborative effort to conduct research about the aging process and its relation to health and well-being.



CERAH uses collaborative interdisciplinary approaches to develop and administer a wide range of research and continuing education programs. Today, CERAH has a well-established reputation at regional, national, and international levels for innovative and evidence-based programming and research in aging and health.

DIRECTOR

Dr. Kathy Kortés-Miller



Dr. Andrew P. Dean, Vice-President, Research and Innovation, is pleased to announce the recent appointment of Dr. Kathy Kortés-Miller as the new Director of the Centre for Education and Research on Aging & Health (CERAH) effective July 1, 2021.

Dr. Kortés-Miller took over from Dr. Elaine Wiersma, who expertly served as Director of CERAH since 2016. Dr. Wiersma thanks the Centre's staff, community partners, research affiliates, students, and University administrative support that allowed CERAH to thrive. She will be staying on a leadership role as Associate Director.

Dr. Kortés-Miller, Associate Professor in the School of Social Work, has a passion for palliative care and improving the end of life care for all. She has served as CERAH's Associate Director since 2020. Her research is interdisciplinary and collaborative, contributing to a broad range of fields of study including: social work, palliative care, end-of-life, interprofessional education, LGBTQ+, caregiving and gerontology.

She was a long-standing member of the board of directors for Hospice Northwest, and in 2020 joined the board for Roots to Harvest. She is the author of *Talking About Death Won't Kill You*, published by ECW Press in 2018.

Dr. Kortés-Miller brings much to the role of Director with her administrative experience, excellent scholarship, and commitment to improving the care provided at the bedside and in the community. She looks forward to continuing to build on CERAH's reputation for excellence in research and education to enhance health and well-being for an aging population.

In 2020, Dr. Kathy Kortés-Miller received a SSHRC Partnership Engagement Grant to carry out research on "COVID-19 #Not Just A Visitor: Caregiving in long-term care during lockdown."

Human Resources

During 2019-2021, CERAH employed eight core staff on annual contract renewal. The funds for salaries come from education contracts and research. CERAH also employs research assistants, project assistants and education facilitators on a fixed-term basis, depending on projects and research grants. Opportunities are also available to students and research affiliates. This past year of 2021 also was Dr. Wiersma's

final year of leading our Centre in the role of Director, and the staff of CERAH is grateful for her leadership and guidance throughout her tenure, particularly during the challenges of COVID. We are thankful for all she has taught us and for the contributions she has made to the CERAH, scholarship and our community. We are grateful that she will continue to be closely involved in the work of the Centre and provide continued support and leadership in the role of Associate Director.

8+

CORE
STAFF

13

ADDITIONAL
STAFF

5

STUDENTS

6

RESEARCH
AFFILIATES



Funding & Contracts

In addition to the annual MOHLTC and LHIN base funding, in 2018 CERAH recieved additional funding for two programs: ◇ Community Behavioural Supports +36,000 ◇ Dementia Cafe +50,296

St. Joseph’s Care Group increases annual funding to +25,000 for the ongoing organization and facilitation of the Regional Behavioural Supports Program.

2019-2021 also saw contracts from Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) Ontario, Manitoba, and Atlantic regions to deliver palliative care education to front-line health and social care workers in Indigenous communities across provinces, which was delivered in collaboration with Indigenous organizations and communities.

In 2019, Project Manager and PhD candidate Holly Prince published the journal article

“Improving end-of-life care in Indigenous communities: Embracing the concept of two-eyed seeing in the delivery of culturally relevant education.”

~ Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association.

 **10**
Project & Education Contracts

Between April 1st, 2019 and March 31, 2021, CERAH held ten project and education contracts and seven one-time special project contracts including educational initiatives, community enhancement projects, training programs, and technology enhancement.

7 
One-Time Special Project Contracts

Other Programs Include:

- ◇ **Stories of Social Isolation During COVID-19** shared through
- ◇ **CERAH Website** cerah.lakeheadu.ca
- ◇ **Dementia Dialogue Podcast** dementiadialogue.ca
- ◇ **Curriculum development for several areas of interest**



From 2019-2021, Research Affiliate projects received 26 research grants from various academic and public health bodies, including Lakehead University, the Public Health Agency of Canada, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, and Canadian Institutes of Health Research. CERAH researchers were involved in two studies:

1 Promoting Just and Inclusive Decision-Making Toward Palliative Care Goals for Long-Term Care Home Residents with Dementia and Their Care Partners

A three-year study led by Dr. Nisha Sutherland to explore and promote end-of-life decision making for people with dementia in long-term care homes. Objectives including the creation of a video to shed light on fair practices and policies. Other researchers including Carlina Marchese as Project Manager and PhD student Katelyn Wheeldon.

“

Dr. Nisha Sutherland, assistant professor in the School of Nursing and research affiliate at the Centre for Education and Research on Aging & Health, is exploring and promoting end-of-life decision-making for people with dementia living in long-term care homes.

2

Building Capacity for Meaningful Participation by People Living with Dementia

A multi-year cross-Canada partnership between University of British Columbia and Lakehead University as well as affiliated community organizations aiming to make communities more inclusive of dementia with sustainable opportunities for meaningful participation.

Led by Dr. Elaine Wiersma, Carlina Marchese is the Research Coordinator and graduate students assisting the project are Emilie Gaudet and Lindsay Watt.

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Building Capacity for Meaningful Participation by People Living with Dementia, is a cross-Canada partnership between researchers at the University of British Columbia and Lakehead University



A special thank-you to our funders during this time...




Regional Behavioural Supports Education Funding & Contract(s)



Community Behavioural Supports & Dementia Café: A Place to Belong

Living Well with Dementia: Creating Dialogues of Hope



Share, Network and Learn: Adult Day Programs and Assisting Living Programs in northwestern Ontario) Creativity and Imagination: Enriching the Lives of People Living with Dementia and/or Frailty



Physician and Interdisciplinary Palliative Care Education

Technology Enhancement



Indigenous Services Canada / Services aux Autochtones Canada

ONTARIO REGION | MANITOBA REGION | ATLANTIC REGION

Palliative Care Education for Indigenous Communities: Supporting Capacity Development for Palliative Care Services





Dementia Cafe: *A Place to Belong*

This community based project is a space to foster and maintain a safe and inclusive social environment with opportunities for social connection and interaction for people with dementia, regardless of age or stage, and their care partners. Persons with early dementia and their care partners are also engaged to be volunteers for the Dementia Café and as members of the advisory committee for the project. Resources and information for support and inclusion are provided, and the Café meets three Sundays a month with the exception of July and August.

Since March 2020, with the exception of a few weeks in the Fall of 2020, the Café has been held virtually every week except for monthly meetings in the summers of 2020 and 2021. While attendance numbers have decreased during this time as many participants and volunteers were experiencing Zoom fatigue, we are pleased to share that we resumed weekly in-person cafés in October of 2021.

Educational Initiatives, Dissemination of Information & Publications

The research, outreach, and program delivery provided by CERAH contributes to a wider discussion on healthy aging and creative positive change in our communities. Our education activities are planned in conjunction with partners, and program delivery is a direct result of our community collaborations. CERAH has worked diligently to respond to educational needs by making events and information accessible via videoconference and/or by delivering education in regional communities.

CERAH staff and research affiliates also brought their dedication and experience into their communities in many roles. As advisors, collaborators, facilitators, and contributors, they took part in advisory committees, boards, and projects from neighborhood supports to international research initiatives.

Ultimately, CERAH's mission is to conduct high quality knowledge translation, rigorous research and education to advance health and social care promoting the health & wellbeing of people aging across the life cycle. CERAH is a recognized leader in education and research regionally, provincially, nationally, and internationally in the areas of aging and health, and we look forward to continuing this work alongside our staff, affiliates and community partners for the better health and future of our region.

**CERAH contributed to the following
National conversations and initiatives:**

Age-Friendly
Communities Hub,
Canadian Association
on Gerontology,
SSHRC Grant

Canadian Hospice
Palliative Care
Association

Canadian
Grief Alliance

Canadian Association
on Gerontology

BETWEEN APRIL 1ST, 2019 AND MARCH 31 2021,

CERAH supported:



5

Multi-Day Conferences



31

Webinars/Video Conferences



4

Booth Displays



30+

Accessible Online Courses, Sessions & Training Modules



WORKSHOPS

33 Multi-Day

11 Single Day

5 Half Day

23

Helped Prepare Journal Articles

4

Contributing Book Chapters

1

Preparing Technical Reports

30

Preparing Conference Presentations and/or Posters

1

Delivering Keynote Address



3

Seasons

of the Dementia Dialogue Podcast

LISTEN NOW AT www.dementiadialogue.ca



Lakehead
UNIVERSITY

955 OLIVER ROAD, BALMORAL STREET CENTRE
THUNDER BAY, ON P7B 5E1

EMAIL: CERAH@LAKEHEADU.CA

TEL: (807) 343-8010 EXT 7271

FAX: (807) 766-7222

cerah.lakeheadu.ca

