

# CHEPA news

Centre for Health Economics and Policy Analysis

Informing Fair and Sustainable Health and Social Systems

Fall 2021

Founded in 1987, **CHEPA** is a world-renowned interdisciplinary health research centre at McMaster University that fosters excellence in policy-relevant research, education and service to inform fair and sustainable health and social systems.

## CHEPA Research



# Study supports 3rd jab for LTC residents

Research conducted at McMaster on COVID-19 immunity responses in Ontario long-term care facility residents informed the decision by the Ontario government and, recently the [National Advisory Committee on Immunization](#), to offer a third booster shot of COVID vaccine to long-term care and retirement home residents. The research was conducted by group that included [Andrew Costa](#), co-lead of the Canada's [Global Nexus task force on Long-Term Care Crisis Management and Renewal](#) and Schlegel Chair in Clinical Epidemiology and Aging. Their publication can be read [here](#) (pre-print).

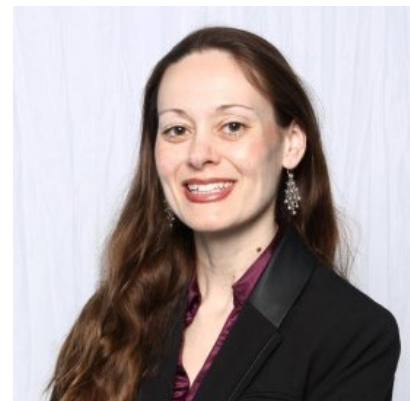


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## Grants

CHEPA members received a number of research grants recently, many of them involving projects related to the health and societal impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

[Elizabeth Alvarez](#) is among a large group of McMaster researchers including [Emma Apatu](#), [John Lavis](#) and [Lisa Schwartz](#) which received funding from the [Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada](#) (NSERC) for "*Encouraging vaccine confidence among pregnant and breastfeeding Canadians.*" She is also among a group that received a grant from the Rabdan



Academy to study *"Physical distancing policies and their effects on the epidemiology of COVID-19 in the UAE and Bangladesh: A multi-national comparative study."*

She is also supervising a research project funded by the Association of Ontario Midwives entitled *"How midwifery clients in Ontario access information to support infant feeding decisions: A cross-sectional survey."*

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**Laura Anderson** is principal investigator on two new grants:

She leads a team of co-investigators who received funding from the [Canadian Institutes of Health Research](#) (CIHR) to study the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on obesity and diabetes among adults participating in the [Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging](#).

The project, entitled *"[Understanding the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on obesity and diabetes among Canadians: a prospective population-based cohort study](#)"* received a CIHR Project Grant valued at \$742,050 over five years.

[Learn more](#)

She also leads a team that received a \$116,000 CIHR - ICR / [Cancer Research Society Partnership - Research Grant](#) for *"Identifying changes in cancer risk factors during the COVID-19 pandemic and predicting population risk."*

Smoking, alcohol, poor diet, and lack of physical activity are well established factors that increase a person's risk for cancer, and unintended changes



in these risk factors during the COVID-19 pandemic may have led to increased cancer risk. The overall goals of this study are to measure changes in cancer risk factors, identify populations at greatest risk, and predict how these changes may impact the future incidence of cancer.

[Learn more](#)



**Katherine Boothe** is co-Principal Investigator on "*Evidence and legitimacy in policymaking: lessons from crisis*," which was granted a \$88,000 [Social Sciences and Humanities Research](#) (SSHR\_CCRSH) Insight grant. Collaborators are **Julia Abelson** and **Elizabeth Alvarez**.



**Andrew Costa** and **Arthur Sweetman**, with co-applicants Ahmad von Schlegell and Manaf Zargoush, received a CIHR Operating Grant for a new research project entitled "*Using Facility Administrative Data to Inform Prevention and Improve the Clinical Management of COVID-19 Infection, Illness, Hospitalization for Nursing Homes and Retirement Homes*."



[Learn more](#)

**Hsien Seow** is developing a large education intervention aimed at improving access to community-based palliative care for Ontario's



Indigenous communities, with support of \$1.24 million in funding and the partnership of Indigenous Services Canada.

The intervention, called [CAPACITI](#)-FNIM, will include teaching and practical training that will empower existing community primary care providers in delivering home-based palliative approaches to care for First Nations, Inuit and Metis (FNIM) people, many of whom face the prospect of dying in hospitals far from their homes and loved ones.

[Learn more](#)



[Meredith Vanstone](#) is involved in several projects that receiving funding recently. She is among the investigators involved in “*Evaluating an educational intervention for improving provider recognition and response to IPV experienced by veterans and their families: A mixed method pilot randomized trial,*” funded by the Centre of Excellence on Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, as well as a study entitled “*Evaluating an educational intervention for improving residents’ recognition and response to child maltreatment – a mixed method acceptability and feasibility study with a pilot randomized trial,*” funded by a Medical Education research grant from the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada. Both of these two-year projects are led by principal investigator [Melissa Kimber](#), an assistant professor in psychiatry and behavioural neurosciences at McMaster.



Vanstone is also part of the [Three Wishes Project](#), which received \$30,000 from Physician Services Incorporated for "*Dying during the pandemic: Preserving compassionate end-of-life care with the 3 Wishes Project.*"

[Learn more about the Three Wishes project](#)



**Jean-Éric Tarride** is participating in a four-year research project funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) entitled "[\*Examining the Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic Response on Health and Functioning of Canadian Children and Youth\*](#)," led by [Kathy Georgiades](#), the David R. (Dan) Offord Chair in Child Studies & Associate Professor in McMaster's Department of Psychiatry and Behavioural Neurosciences. The research will identify mental and physical health impacts of the pandemic on Canadian children and their families, collect evidence to develop intervention strategies and inform mitigation efforts for future pandemics.



**Feng Xie** has been awarded €250K in funding from the [EUroQoI Foundation](#). The money will support two PhD research projects:

- "*Statistical methods for handling and analyzing EQ-5D-5L data in randomized clinical trials*," and
- "*Measuring and valuing health for children and adolescents in Ethiopia.*"



# Honours and Appointments



**Mitchell Levine** was elected a Fellow of the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences in September.

[Learn more](#)

## **Meredith Vanstone**

was appointed the Interim Assistant Dean of McMaster's Health Science Education Graduate Program.



# Labelle Lecture marks 30th years



The **Labelle Lecture** is presented annually in memory of **Roberta Labelle**, a founding member of CHEPA. Her unexpected death in 1991 occurred when broad recognition for her health economics research was beginning to emerge.

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the **Labelle**

**Roberta Labelle**

**Lecture.** It will be presented virtually by **Jay Shaw**, an Assistant Professor at the University of Toronto's Dalla Lana School of Public Health, on Wednesday, Nov. 10, at 3 pm.

He will discuss the role of health innovation in health systems and the issues that tend to be overlooked in discussions of health innovation, such as the relative lack of attention to the digital divide and social determinants of health. He will also outline an approach to health innovation that might do a better job at promoting inclusive changes in health care.

For information about registering to attend the lecture, please email [ramsay@mcmaster.ca](mailto:ramsay@mcmaster.ca).

[Learn more](#)



## CHEPA seminars

CHEPA holds a regular series of seminars by invited speakers on selected health research topics. All will be held virtually this fall. Scheduled upcoming seminars are:

- **Claire de Oliveira:** a Reader in Health Economics at the Centre for Health Economics and the Hull York Medical School at the University of York, U.K. "*The PSY-SIM model: using real world data to inform mental health care policy*" on Wednesday, Oct. 20, 12:30 - 1:30 pm.
- **Jim Dunn:** Chair of McMaster's Department of Health, Aging & Society.



"*Housing Policy and Health Policy: Intersections and Imperatives*," on Wednesday, Nov. 17, 12:30 - 1:30 pm.

- **Laura Anderson**: Associate Professor, Health Research Methods, Evidence, and Impact. "*The indirect consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic on obesity*," on Wednesday, Dec. 15, 12:30 - 1:30 pm.

To obtain a link to any of the seminars, please email [ramsay@mcmaster.ca](mailto:ramsay@mcmaster.ca)



## Students

The annual **New Frontiers in Health Policy** graduate students conference, which this year has the theme of *Building a Better Normal*, will be staged online as a weekly series of short sessions every Tuesday in November from 11 am to 12:30 pm EST. Each week will be dedicated to areas in health policy and research: economics, health systems and society, and political science.

The Call for Abstracts will remain open until Oct. 8, 2021. Submissions are welcome from all disciplines including political science, economics, sociology, health research methodology, public health, health professions, and health management.

[More information](#)

[Health Policy PhD](#) and/or other students who are supervised by CHEPA faculty and recently received fellowships and awards include:

- **Amina Jabbar**, a medical doctor and geriatrician, was awarded a [CIHR Health System Impact \(HSI\) Fellowship](#) for "*No quality without equity in the care of older adults with complex health issues*," (Developing a Theory of Change for the Evaluation of a New Inpatient Unit of Older Adults with Complex Health Issues). Her supervisor is **Andrew Costa**.
- **Augustine (Austin) Okoh** received a Labarge Scholarship in Aging Research for the study of "*A transdisciplinary approach to older adults' care in a Canadian primary healthcare setting: Exploring the possibility in an interprofessional education program*." He is supervised by Lawrence Grierson.
- **Chi-Ling Joanna Sinn** received a MIRA Post-Doctoral Fellowship in Aging

Research for "Developing a real-world framework for remote patient monitoring technologies that promote optimal aging." She is supervised by [Andrew Costa](#).



## COVID-19 Policies Working Group



**Elizabeth Alvarez** leads [The International COVID-19 Policies and Epidemiology Working Group](#). The group's [website](#) shares findings related to their project, such as research on the impact of physical distancing initiatives in various countries.

[See publications](#)

## Publications

### Journal Publications

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- Ghotra S, **Feeny D**, Barr R, et al. [Parent-reported health status of preterm survivors in a Canadian cohort.](#) *Archives of Disease in Childhood - Fetal and Neonatal Edition*. 2021. June 23.
- Hamadi H, Stallings-Smith S, **Apatu E**, Peterson B, Spaulding A. [Smoke-free policies and 30-day mortality rates for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.](#) *International Journal of Health Policy Management*. 2021. July 14.
- Hausmann JS, Kennedy K, Simard JF, Liew JW, Sparks JA, Moni TT, Harrison C, Larché MJ, **Levine M**, ... COVID-19 Global Rheumatology Alliance. [Immediate effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on patient health, health-care use, and behaviours: results from an international survey of](#)

- [people with rheumatic diseases](#). *Lancet Rheumatology*. 2021. July 22.
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