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General Updates

• CanWheel Think Tank

- When: June 9-10, 2011
- Where: Sheraton Centre Toronto

This year's annual CanWheel meeting will be held following the 2011 FICCAT conference in Toronto. International known researchers working in the area of power mobility will be featured. More details to follow soon!

- [CanWheel Website](#) is currently undergoing updates which will include adding the video footage of Alan Mackworth and Pooja Viswanathan, see Kudos for more information.

Introducing new members:

- Sandra McKay holds a post doc with Brian Maki at the Centre for Studies in Aging and works part-time as a consultant for VHA Rehab solutions as their Coordinator for Research & Evaluation. She will be helping with P1 and P2 in Toronto.
- Rosalie Wang, post-doctoral trainee with Alex Mihailidis in Toronto. She is currently with P1 and will be interviewing caregivers.

New RAs for P2:

- Lori Kennedy, OT assistant with a background in Human Kinetics is our Halifax RA.
- Valérie Lemay, MSc student with Francois will be the RA for Quebec City.
- Louis Machabée, PhD in Sociology will be our Montreal RA.
- Amanda Calvin, MPT is our Toronto RA
- Laura Titus, OT and post-doctoral trainee with Jan in London is our new RA for that site.

P1 Updates

P1 has continued to be very busy and productive. In December, a report entitled "Phase 1 Initial Report of Findings" was prepared by Laura Hurd Clarke, Krista Best, Alexandra Korotchenko, and Erica Bennett and circulated to the rest of the CanWheel team.

In January, Laura Hurd Clarke and Erica Bennett prepared and circulated an addendum to the December report. The addendum focused on the training levels and experiences of the participants in the interviews with power wheelchair users.

Three conference abstracts have been submitted for peer review for upcoming scholarly meetings. The first abstract was co-authored by





Alexandra Korotchenko and Laura Hurd Clarke and was submitted to GOWD (FICCDAT). The second abstract was co-authored by Krista Best, Ben Mortenson, and Laura Hurd Clarke and was submitted to RESNA (FICCDAT). The final abstract was co-authored by Alexandra Korotchenko and Laura Hurd Clarke and submitted to the British Society of Gerontology.

Ben Mortenson is taking the lead on preparing a manuscript based on therapist qualitative interviews.

Finally, Rosalie Wang officially joined P1 in January and has submitted ethics to Toronto Community Care Access Centre and begun to get the word out about P1's next step, namely interviews with caregivers. We are hopeful that all of Rosalie's recruiting efforts will soon pay off!

P2 Updates



Photo of P2 training in Montreal: From Left to Right: Paula Rushton, Laura Titus, Amanda Calvin, Louis Machabée, Valérie Lemay and Lori Kennedy.

P2 has been very busy in the past few months acquiring ethics at our six sites. To date, we have approval for the Vancouver, Montreal, and Quebec City sites, while London, Halifax, and Toronto are in progress. As part of our preparation to roll out the study at all six sites, we have had 5 new research assistants join our team. Welcome to Lori Kennedy (Halifax), Valérie Lemay (Quebec City), Louis Machabée (Montreal), Amanda Calvin (Toronto), and Laura Titus (London)! On January 17th and 18th we gathered in Montreal for an intensive 2-day training workshop for our newest members – an opportunity not only to share information about the project, but also a chance to get to know each other! ☺

As the pilot site, data collection has been going strong in Vancouver with 21 subjects enrolled. Along the way, we have 'lived and learned' and the protocols have been modified with input from the site leads. Quebec City and Montreal have begun to collect data with 1 and 4 subjects enrolled





respectively and the other sites will be starting soon! Stay tuned for our progress!

P3 Updates

Pooja Viswanathan is just about to start another round of user trials in Toronto. The new version of the chair features audio prompting to help the user navigate a path through a maze (e.g., "prepare for a right turn"), in addition to improved collision avoidance prompting features. While the trial uses an artificial maze, the plan is that the wheelchair would help navigate between rooms in a long-term care facility.

P4 Updates

No updates at this time

P5 Updates

Next meeting Feb 17, 2011 by teleconference to move forward on study design, scope, implementation timeline and budget issues.



The P5 team submitted a companion grant proposal on September 15, 2010 to CIHR entitled "Effectiveness and Impact of a Wheelchair Skills Training Program for Adult Power Mobility Users Under 60 Years of Age: a Randomized Controlled Trial". This proposal was not successful, the major problem being that the review committee did not accept the team's argument that doing a study on people < 60 yrs was necessary if we already had funding (CanWheel) for the same study on people 60 yrs and older. That being the case, we do not plan to resubmit at this time. However, this does provide a rationale for extending the age range for the P5 study into the younger population.

Other Updates

- Check out the latest issue of UBC Medicine magazine for an interesting interview with CanWheel researcher, Bill Miller [here](#).

Upcoming Conferences

- Festival of International Conferences on Caregiving, Disability, Aging and Technology (FICCDAT), will be occurring June 5-8, 2011. Health services providers, researchers, and persons with disabilities from around the world will gather in Toronto, Canada to explore issues facing aging populations, the roles and responsibilities of family caregivers and how new research findings and technologies are leading new and practical solutions. Conference information available [here](#).





- Association for the Advancement of Assistive Technology in Europe (AAATE) conference occurring on August 31-September 2, 2011 in Maastricht, the Netherlands. The AAATE is the interdisciplinary pan-European association devoted to all aspects of assistive technology, such as use, research, development, manufacture, supply, provision and policy. For more information visit [here](#).
- The ISG (International Society for Gerontechnology) and ISARC (International Symposium for Automation and Robotics in Construction) will join forces in 2012 to organize ISG*ISARC2012 on June 27, 2012 – June 29, 2012, an International conference on technology for the aging society. This conference will take place in Eindhoven, The Netherlands. More information available [here](#).

Kudos



- New Book! Meeko Oishi, Ian Mitchell and H. F. Machiel Van der Loos (Editors) of volume, "Design and Use of Assistive Technology: Social, Technical, Ethical, and Economic Challenges". This work features chapters from other CanWheel investigators such as Jan Miller-Polgar from UWO and Gary Birch from UBC. More info available [here](#).
- Video featuring Alan Mackworth and Pooja Viswanathan's on robot soccer, and AI in assistive mobility technology. This video was prepared for the UBC Celebrate Research Gala to recognize Prof. Mackworth's appointment as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada. Video available [here](#).
- Congratulations to Paula Rushton and Ed Giesbrecht for winning the best PhD posters at the Canadian Association on Gerontology conference in December.
- Congratulations to Rosalie Wang (P1 post-doctoral trainee) and Paula Rushton (P2 post-doctoral trainee) for defending their PhD dissertations last fall.

