

The Future begins now: Co-designing a Virtual Reality Simulation Program with and for Dementia Caregivers

A Knowledge Summit hosted by the VR-SIM Carers Initiative,
funded by National Research Council Canada and the Canadian Institute of Health Research



DATE: June 24, 2024

LOCATION: Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences, 700 Gordon St., Whitby, ON

Morning session may be accessed at:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82068202118?pwd=xNYmPNpP8sw4oGqWCWmk52QcMHJiAy.1>



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KOSCHITZKY CENTRE
for Innovations in Caregiving



Message from Dr. Amer Burhan & Dr. Mary Chiu



Welcome to Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences and our inaugural VR-SIM Carers Knowledge Summit!

In our rapidly advancing world, the intersection of technology and caregiving holds immense potential. Through the innovative use of virtual reality (VR), we aim to provide dementia caregivers/care-partners with practical skills and insights that can significantly enhance the quality of care for individuals with dementia. This program offers a unique opportunity for users to immerse into scenarios commonly encountered by dementia caregivers, allowing for hands-on practice and engagement.

Our commitment to excellence in dementia care is reflected in the diverse expertise gathered for this Summit. Experienced family caregivers / care-partners, leading professionals in dementia care, and technology innovators will come together to share their knowledge and experiences. This collaborative environment fosters a rich learning experience, ensuring that participants leave with both practical skills and a deeper understanding of how technology and VR may be better leveraged to enhance dementia care.

We hope you enjoy today's Summit. Consider staying in touch, and joining us in this exciting journey of learning and innovation – you may follow us on our website: www.vrsimcarers.ca

Together, we can advance the field of dementia care, making a meaningful impact on the lives of those we care for and their families.

Virtual Reality Simulation Training Program for Dementia Caregivers (VR-SIM Carers)

Acknowledgement

Funders



National Research
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Canadian Institutes
of Health Research

Instituts de recherche
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Key Partners and Collaborators



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Ontario Shores
Centre for Mental Health Sciences



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Knowledge Users

Ron Beleno, Irene Rubinstein and Carla Velastegui and all caregivers and stakeholders who have provided valuable input.

Highly Qualified Personnel & Coordinator

Refka Al-bayati, Krystina Clarke, Cole Craven, Anahita Joshi, Emily O'Hara, Erica O'Hare, Hayah Siddiqui, Andrei Torres, Minoos Yazdani



Check out our website
or
email us:

vrsimcarers@ontarioshores.ca



Ontario Shores Parking Details

Please check your email for Parking PIN, shared with participants via the email address you provided at the time of Registration.

This PIN will be keyed into the Parking Kiosk after you have parked your vehicle.

Guest Parking available in lots A, B, D and E.



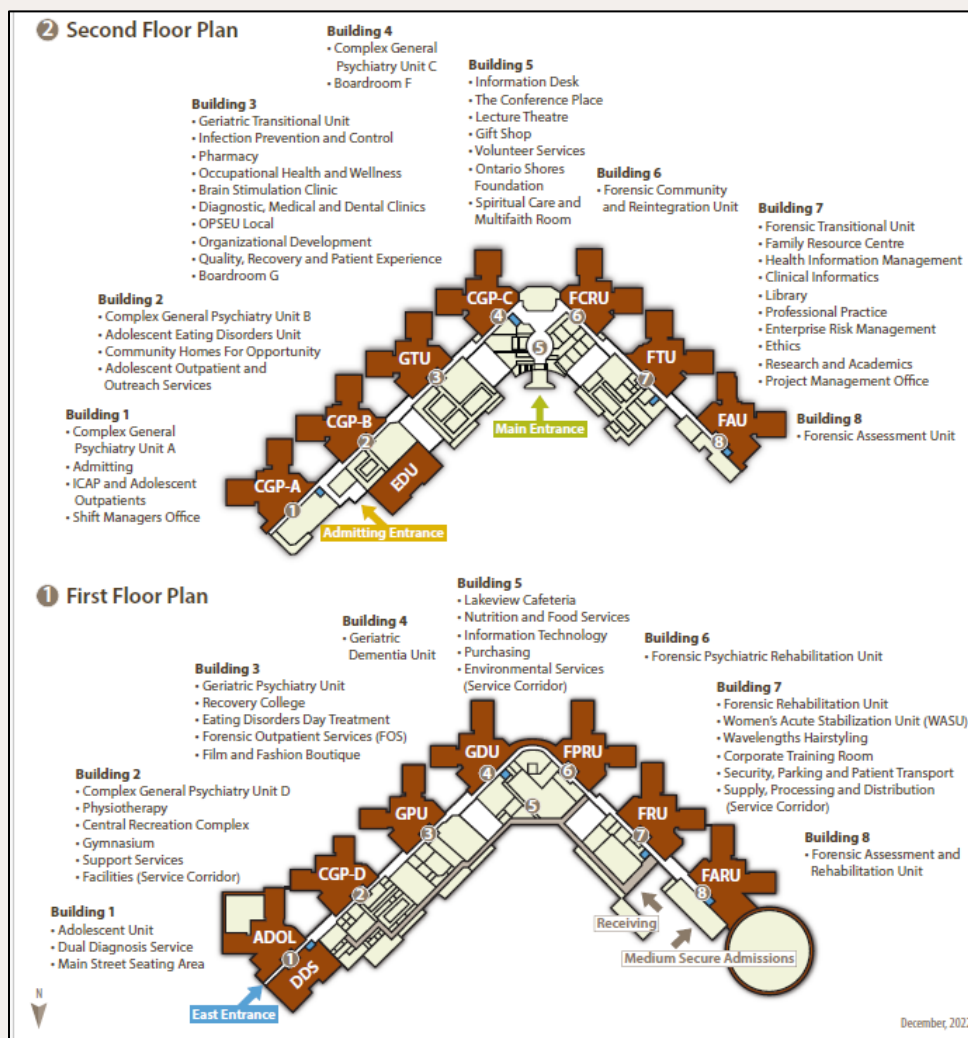
Ontario Shores Floor Plan

Summit events and activities will be held in **Building 5 Level 2**

Lecture Theatre can be found to the left of the Main Entrance and accessed via the Lobby

Conference Rooms can be found to the right of the Entrance and can be accessed via the Lobby

Washrooms, including accessibility washrooms, may be found in the Conference Place, or to the left of the Main Entrance prior to reaching the Lobby.



Ontario Shores Wi-fi Access

The Guest Wi-Fi service is available for all to use. Service Users can self-register by using their name and email address. Upon registration and acceptance of the Terms of Use, users will instantly be provided their login details on their device. It will also be sent to their email address for further reference. Users will receive immediate access to the network.

How to Register

1. On your device, locate the wireless settings to search for the Guest Network: “Ontario Shores Guest”
2. Upon connecting, you may need to navigate to your browser, or a pop-up will be presented with the Captive portal for registration.
3. Enter your name and email address, and click and accept the terms of use. Click “Register” to receive your credentials
4. Upon hitting the “Register” button, you will then be presented with your login credentials
5. Click on the “Log In” button to get connected. You should be redirected to the ontarioshores.ca home page and are now connected to the internet
6. You can retrieve your credentials through the email address that you provided. The email will come from clearpass@ontarioshores.ca

* **Your Name:**

Please enter your full name.

* **Email Address:**

Please enter your email address.
This will become your username to log into the network.

* **Confirm:**

I accept the [terms of use](#)

Register

* required field

Already have an account? [Sign In](#)



Programme

Arrival, Informal Networking & Light Breakfast - 8:30 to 9:00 a.m.

Land Acknowledgment and Welcoming Remarks - 9:00 to 9:15 a.m.

- **Mr. Ron Beleno** (Co-Chair of VR-SIM Carers Caregiver Advisory Committee; Moderator of today's event)
- **Ms. Carla Velastegui** (Co-Chair of VR-SIM Carers Caregiver Advisory Committee)
- **Dr. Heather McNeil** (National Research Council Aging in Place Program Advisor)
- **Dr. Amer Burhan** (Ontario Shores Physician-in-Chief & Endowed Chair, Applied Mental Health Research)

Panel Discussion - 9:15 to 10:30 a.m.

Virtual Reality as an AgeTech Tool, "Showcasing VR in Canada – Research to Clinical Application"

In this panel discussion moderated by **Mr. Ron Beleno**, Canadian VR researchers and innovators will showcase a sample of VR innovations designed for and with dementia caregivers/care-partners and persons living with dementia, and discuss the implications and positive impact these tools would have on dementia care.

Panelists:

- **Dr. Lora Appel** (York University, caregiVR)
 - **Mr. Tyler Redublo** (The Centre for Aging + Brain Health Innovation, CABHI)
 - **Dr. Marie Savundranayagam** (Western University, Be-EPIC VR study)
 - **Dr. Raheleh Saryazdi** (Trent University Durham/UHN, VRx@Home)
 - **Dr. Winnie Sun** (Ontario Tech University, VR Reminiscence Therapy)
- (Recorded presentation by **Ms. Joey Wong**, University of British Columbia's IDEA Lab led by **Dr. Lillian Hung**)

COFFEE BREAK - 10:30 to 10:45 a.m.

Live Demonstration of VR-SIM Carers Prototype - 10:45 to 11:45 a.m.

We begin this session with a dialogue with **Dr. Joel Sadavoy** (Sinai Health System), where he will discuss the vision and the clinical principles used in the Reitman Centre CARERS Program. **Mr. Michael Smith** (National Research Council Canada) will briefly discuss the technological considerations made during development of the preliminary prototype VR-SIM Carers. Following the live-demonstration with our guest caregiver **Ms. Maria Vilas** (Founder, Santé Mentale en Avant), **Mr. Ron Beleno** will facilitate a discussion with Dr. Sadavoy, our Trainees and the audience.

Remarks by Dr. Luca Pisterzi (VP Research, Alzheimer Society of Canada) – 11:50 a.m. to 12 noon

LUNCH - 12 to 1 p.m.

(Weather permitting, 20-minutes guided walk by the lake at 12:40. Interested individuals may meet at foyer)

Breakout sessions (Meet at Lecture Theatre) – 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Conference attendees will be assigned into breakout sessions where they will be guided by trained team members to don VR-headsets, to test our "Apathy" scenario, and to provide feedback via a focus group discussion.

Closing Remarks by Dr. Phil Klassen (VP Medical Affairs and Research, Ontario Shores) - 3:15 p.m.

Official end of all Summit activities - 3:30 p.m.

Virtual Reality Interventions Featured at Summit

VR-SIM Carers

Principal Investigators & Leads
Michael Smith, Dr. Amer Burhan,
Dr. Mary Chiu



**Advancing Reminiscence Therapy through
VR Application to Promote Social
Connectedness of Persons with Dementia**
Principal Investigator: Dr. Winnie Sun

Be EPIC-VR, CARE Lab

Principal Investigator:
Dr. Marie Savundranayagam



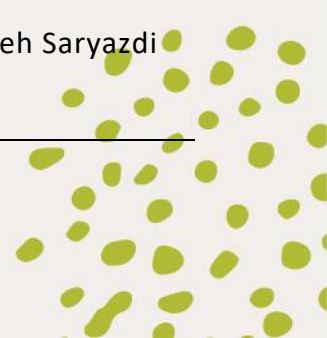
caregiVR, Prescribing VR
Principal Investigator: Dr. Lora Appel

Innovation in Dementia & Aging (IDEA) Lab

Principal Investigator: Dr. Lillian Hung



VRx@home Pilot, CHAT Lab
Principal Investigator: Dr. Raheleh Saryazdi



Acknowledgement

VR-SIM Carers Investigators and Collaborators:

Dr. Amer Burhan, Dr. Mary Chiu, Nushi Choudhury, Dr. Adam Dubrowski,
Dr. Bill Kapralos, Dr. Kristina Kokorelias, Dr. Tarek Rajji, Dr. Joel Sadavoy,
Dr. Adriana Shnall, Michael Smith, Dr. Lynn Zhu

Partners:

National Research Council Canada

Ontario Tech University

Sinai Health System

The Koschitzky Centre for Innovations in Caregiving at Baycrest Centre

Toronto Dementia Research Alliance

Summit Program Team (2024):

Mary Chiu, Erica O'Hare, Hayah Siddiqui, Minoo Yazdani, Anahita (Annie) Joshi

REB-Approved Dementia Caregivers Studies

VR-SIM Carers

Building a Dementia Caregiver Virtual Reality Skills-Building Program with your input!

VR-SIM Carers Initiative

VR-SIM Carers is a Collaborative Research and Development Initiative aimed at gathering dementia caregivers' feedback to inform the design of a skills-training program in Virtual Reality (VR) environment!

Our Goals

- 1 Building resilience in dementia caregivers as they learn how to be more effective in their role.
- 2 Improve the quality of relationship between caregiver and the person living with dementia

Check out our website!



Get in Touch
vrsmcarers@ontarioshores.ca



AGEduX



YORK UNIVERSITY
Ontario Shores
Centre for Mental Health Sciences


CAREGIVERS NEEDED FOR RESEARCH STUDY

We are looking for health care practitioners and personal support workers to help us in developing an empathy training module for the caregivers of people living with dementia. The feedback session on the training module will be held in Ontario Shores Room # and take 30-60 minutes. A questionnaire will also need to be completed. You may be asked to attend a focus group to discuss the training module. We will improve the training module based on the provided feedback. The focus group will be conducted via Zoom and will take approximately 60-90 minutes.

If you are interested, please reach out to Gabrielle Hollaender at (905) 922-6559 or hollaendergabrielle@gmail.com. **Thank you!**

This study has been reviewed by the Ontario Shores - Abilities Centre - Grandview Kids Joint Research Ethics Board (#23-016-B)

Reitman Centre CARERS Program (Inpatient Study)



Reitman Centre CARERS Program

Sinai Health System's Reitman Centre CARERS Program is a specially designed, 8-week group program that provides caregivers with the support and training they need to provide care to older family members with a diagnosis of Alzheimer's or another form of dementia. Three key areas of caregiver skills-building and training are addressed:

1. problem solving,
2. communication and
3. behavioural management and emotional impact of dementia caregiving.

Weekly virtual sessions are 2 hours in duration, with 4 to 6 participants engaged in interactive discussion and exercises coached by trained clinicians.

Reitman Centre CARERS Study at Ontario Shores

Ontario Shores is collaborating with Reitman Centre to bring their CARERS Program to our caregivers whose family members are inpatients at our hospital. The Program will be led by trained Ontario Shores clinicians and will consist of 8 weekly virtual sessions, over secured, Zoom video-conferencing platform).

Caregivers will receive **tailored dementia education**, and will be introduced to **problem-solving therapy** adapted specifically for dementia caregivers. **Communication training through simulation** will be also provided to support effective communications with persons living dementia. Participants will interact with live, simulated patients to practice different approaches to manage behaviours expressed by persons living with dementia (e.g. resistance to care, repetitive questions).

CARERS participants are invited to our Research Ethics Board-reviewed study and help us understand how the CARERS Program impact you in your caregiver role.

BE A PART OF OUR CARERS STUDY! REB number: 21-020-B

For more information please contact:
Dr. Mary Chiu (chiu@ontarioshores.ca) or
Annie Joshi (ajoshi@ontarioshores.ca)

