ILC Israel: Biennial Activity Report: 2016 – June 2017

Our People in the Steering Committee:

Prof. Sara Carmel – Chairperson of the Ben-Gurion University of the Negev Center for Multidisciplinary Research in aging, and President of ILC-Israel
Dr. Yaakov Bachner – Former Director of the Master’s Program in Gerontology, Department of Public Health, Faculty of Health Sciences, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (BGU)
Prof. A. Mark Clarfield – Head of the International Medical School, Faculty of Health Sciences, BGU
Prof. Tzvi Dwolatzky – Head of the Geriatrics Department – Rambam Medical Center, Haifa
Dr. Vadim Fraifeld – Department of Microbiology and Immunology, Faculty of Health Sciences, BGU
Prof. David Galinsky – Former Head of the Department of Geriatrics at Soroka Medical Center, and Faculty of Health Sciences, BGU
Prof. Jacob Kaplansky – Department of Pharmacology, Faculty of Health Sciences, BGU
Dr. Itzik Melzer – Department of Physical Therapy, Head of Recanati School for Community Health Professions, Faculty of Health Sciences, BGU
Prof. Shraga Shany – Department of Biochemistry, Faculty of Health Sciences, BGU.

Highlighted Events

On April 19th, 2017, ILC Israel and The Center for Multidisciplinary Research in Aging of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev held its semi-annual conference. This year’s conference topic was “Innovations and challenges in gerontology and geriatrics: The effects of the Holocaust on the health and well-being of survivors and their offspring (children, second, and third generation).”

This multidisciplinary conference was a great success with an estimated 200 attendees present. Topics of discussion shared two main focuses – “Late effects of the Holocaust in the mirror of research,” and “Late effects of the Holocaust in the treatment field.”

Presenters and attendees came from all over Israel, and included faculty and students from Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Bar-Ilan University, and the University of Haifa, as well as members of the Israel Ministry of Health, and members of 'Amcha' - a non-profit organization with the goal of providing psychological and social services to Holocaust survivors and their families.

Research highlights

Most Recent Studies:

Five new major research projects were initiated in 2016 (supported by the Israel-America Foundation):

1. Gut microbiota correction as a potential treatment for Parkinson's Disease, led by Prof. Vadim Fraifeld.
2. Use of feeding tubes in patients with end-stage dementia: The Israel perspective in the wake of a reform in health policy, led by Prof. Mark Clarfield & Prof. Tzvi Dwolatzky.

3. Relative reliability, absolute reliability and concurrent validity of the Narrow Path Walking Test in people with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, led by Prof. Itzik Melzer & Dr. Marc Gotkin.

4. Effects of the use of movement monitoring on physical and cognitive function and subjective wellbeing of older people without major neurocognitive disorders, led by Prof. Sara Carmel, Prof. Yaacov Bachner, Prof. Tzvi Dwolatzky & Prof. Itzik Melzer.

5. Active euthanasia and physician assisted suicide in Israel: Attitudes of older persons, social workers and gerontologists, led by Prof. Sara Carmel & Prof. Yaacov Bachner.

Ongoing Studies:
1. Patterns of coping with losses and successful aging: A longitudinal study of a national sample of elderly Israelis (Supported by United States-Israel Binational Science Foundation – BSF, the Ministry for Senior Citizens, and the Sonia and Abraham Rochlin Foundation)

2. Autobiographical memory and well-being in later life (Financed by International Opportunities Fund: Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada – SSHRC)

3. The effects of a guided life review on psychological wellbeing of terminally-ill young and old cancer patients (Supported by The Israeli Ministry of Health and Aid to the Oncological Patient Foundation)

4. Well-being of old community dwellers and residents of sheltered housing: A comparative study (financed by the Sonia and Abraham Rochlin Foundation and The Ministry for Senior Citizens)

5. Determinants of the will-to-live of Israeli older adults (Supported by The MINERVA Foundation)

6. Open communication about illness and death between caregiving spouses of terminal cancer patients

7. Israeli centenarians: Health status, psychosocial characteristics, and special needs (Supported by the Sonia and Abraham Rochlin Foundation and the Israel Ministry for Senior Citizens)

8. Caregivers’ experiences with community dwelling parents versus assisted living residents (Financed by the Ministry for Senior Citizens)

9. Effects of early and late retirement on cognitive functions (Supported by the Berlin Demography Forum)

10. Health risks of primary caregivers to severely ill patients: Awareness and preventive treatment among primary care physicians and primary caregivers (Financed by The Israel National Institute for Health Policy and Health Services Research)

11. Application of the will-to-live scale to daily practice with older adults. (Financed by Sol Leshin Program for Collaboration between UCLA and BGU).
Plenary lectures:

In February 2016, Prof. Carmel participated in the ILC-GA panel on "Labor Force Participation in Israel" at the 5th Berlin Demography Forum, ESMT European School of Management and Technology, Berlin, Germany.


Selected Refereed articles in Scientific Journals:

Members of the center are identified in bold:


