

News from Israel – Jul 2010 - Activities
Submitted by Sara Carmel – ILC-Israel

1. Conferences and Workshops

- A Panel on **Doctor-Patient Communication in the hospital** for first year medical students and the public took place on April 15, 2010 at the Faculty of Health Sciences of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev.
- The Israeli Launch of the Charter for the Rights of Older People in Clinical Trials took place in Beer Sheva on April 7, 2010 with a presentation by Prof. Peter Crome from Keele University in England. Prof. Crome presented the problem and summarized the results and conclusions of the European PREDICT project, and explained the need for changes in the ways clinical trials are managed in order to include more elderly.

2. Projects in the community -ESHEL

- ESHEL (The Association for the Planning and Development of Services for the Aged in Israel) has established numerous community programs for enhancing the well-being of elderly Holocaust survivors. Examples of these unique programs are: 1) a mobile dental clinic traveling around the country and serving over 1000 elderly Holocaust survivors; 2) a program for community dwelling elderly who live alone to offer social activities to small groups of elderly in the home of a host family. The meetings are often held in Russian (the language of many of the survivors living in Israel). 3) Many day centers offer social support and cultural meetings focused on the special needs of elderly survivors, where the programming is supervised and funded by ESHEL. For more information on these and other programs of ESHEL, see: www.eshelnet.org.il

3. New research groups and projects in Israel

- A study of multifaceted interventions for reducing the detrimental effects of care-giving to dementia patients among older primary care-givers. The study will be financed by the Israeli Ministry for Pensioners' Affairs. Investigators for this study are: Dr. Danit Shahar, Dr. Tzvi Dvoletzky, Dr. Yaacov Bachner, Dr. Yael Netz and Prof. Sara Carmel.
- Autobiographical memory and well being in later life. The study will be financed by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. Investigators for this study are: Dr. Yaakov Bachner, Prof. Noam O'Rourke (of Simon Fraser University in Canada) and Prof. Sara Carmel. The first stage of the study is meant to validate the instrument in Hebrew. The second stage of the study will apply a model of reminiscence and well-being to two groups (Canadian and Israeli) of elderly survivors of the Nazi Holocaust in order to compare how memory of an early trauma affects their later well-being.
- This year, the **Bergman Prize in the field of aging** was awarded to the group, headed by Prof. Vadim Fraifeld, from the Center for Multidisciplinary Research on Aging (CMRA) researching "Determinants of Aging and Longevity". The prize was given by the Israel Gerontological Society for the outstanding study on the biology of aging. The group is searching for the factors that determine longevity. It was found that genes controlling life span act in a cooperative manner. This finding allowed the development of a new concept – "Longevity Network".
- KSERA- This is a new project under EU's FP-7 led by Technical University, in Eindhoven with partners in Holland, Italy, Germany and Austria, The project will allow COPD patients to manage their care with use of a robot, for human interaction, sensors to monitor body functions, and a call center. Maccabi Health Services will be a test site and provides clinical and IT expertise. The project website is: <http://www.ksera-project.eu/>
- HELP- Project under AAL (Ambient Assisted Living) led by Telefonica, Spain with partners in Spain, Italy, and Israel. Parkinson patients will receive a special intra-oral device to allow for

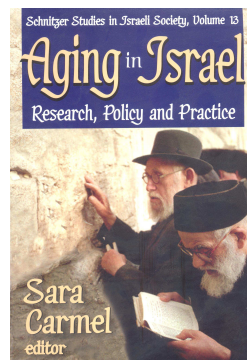
drug release to control tremors, with a signal being sent to a remote call center to alert for health events. **Maccabi Health Services'** role will be similar to that in the KSERA project.

4. On-going research projects in aging:

- End-of-life care: Attitudes, preferences, and behaviors of the public, elderly, parents to children in the ICU, cancer patients, formal caregivers (physicians, nurses, social workers) of severely-ill and dying patients and informal care givers (family members) of severely-ill and dying patients. Prof. Carmel continues to analyze data and present results from her studies on these issues in national and international conferences.
- Evaluation of health services: Prof. Carmel has continued to supervise a number of evaluation studies of services provided at the Home Hospice, long-term care and hospital services for cancer patients by the Clalit Health Services and Maccabi Health Services.
- Dr. Yaakov Bachner and Prof. Carmel are analyzing data as part of a study, supported by Maccabi Health Services on: "The association between physicians' communication styles and satisfaction, self-rated health and utilization of health services among elderly cancer and stroke patients".
- Shirley Alon and Prof. Carmel started a new study "Life review at the end-of-life: An evaluation of a structured intervention." This study will evaluate the effects of a guided life review on psychological wellbeing of terminally-ill young and old patients. It is financed by The Israel Ministry of Health.
- Since July 2008 Dr. Danit Shahar has been conducting a study supported by the Maccabi Research Institute in Israel of Prognostic indexes for appetite and their influence on anorexia of old age.
- A large national research project entitled "Patterns of coping with health losses and successful aging: A longitudinal study (4-year) of elderly Israelis." The study is being conducted by Prof. Sara Carmel in collaboration with Prof. Victoria Raveis, of the Center for Research in Aging of the School of Public Health, Columbia University, and financed by The US-Israel Bi-National Science Foundation. A smaller on-going study on the same subject is in progress - financed by the Rochlin Foundation and Maccabi Healthcare Services.

5. Publications:

- A new book, entitled Aging in Israel: Research, Policy and Practice, edited by Sara Carmel, was recently published as part of the Schnitzer Studies in Israeli Society.



- The Center for Research on Aging of the Myers-JDC-Brookdale Institute, one of our partner institutions in ILC-Israel, recently published an important study "Holocaust Survivors in Israel: Population Estimates, Demographic Health and Social Characteristics, and Needs. The report is available as PDF file at:
http://brookdale.jdc.org.il/_Uploads/PublicationsFiles/553-10-Holocaust-Survivors-REP-ENG.pdf
The executive summary is available at
http://brookdale.jdc.org.il/_Uploads/PublicationsFiles/553-10-Holocaust-Survivors-ES-ENG.pdf
- MASHAV (Planning for the Elderly – A National Data Base) in collaboration with the Myers-JDC-Brookdale Institute and ESHel, partner institutions in ILC-Israel have published a pamphlet on Israel's Elderly – Facts and Figures 2009. The publication may be downloaded at:

<http://www.jointnet.org.il/mashav/eng/publications.php?cat=19&incat=0>

6. International cooperation

- Prof. Carmel continued to serve as a consultant on research tools for the European Community-funded PREDICT study, conducted by several countries on participation of the elderly in clinical trials. The Israeli Launch of the Charter for the Rights of Older People in Clinical Trials took place in Beer Sheva on April 7, 2010. (see above)
- Prof. Norm O'Rourke and Dr. Yaakov Bachner – A Collaborative Canadian Israeli study – see above.
- Prof. Carmel is a member of COST project of the European Community on health and ethnic minorities and continues to be actively involved in their projects through correspondence and academic meetings.
- The Centers' activities and Prof. Carmel's international activities in the area of aging brought about the recognition of the Center for Multidisciplinary Research in Aging (CMRA) as an internationally accredited research center by The International Associations of Gerontology and Geriatrics (IAGG).