

## Master Class – Innovations in the Care of Dementia Carers

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The Cyril & Dorothy, Joel & Jill Reitman Centre for Alzheimer's Support and Training at the Sinai Health System was designed to address the needs of carers as a primary focus and to respond comprehensively to their needs. At the Reitman Centre, it is acknowledged that carers play a primary role in dementia care and that dementia cannot be managed successfully without consideration of the needs of both the carer and the individual with the disease: the carer - care recipient dyad. At the Reitman Centre, the adoption of the dyadic model has necessitated a shift in focus to include the carer as a primary target of assessment and intervention.

The Reitman Centre CARERS Program (RCCP) is an evidence-based clinical intervention designed to meet the emotional and skill-building needs of dementia carers. "CARERS" stands for Coaching Advocacy Respite Education Relationship and Simulation, an acronym that highlights that the intervention is designed specifically to address the needs of dementia carers. It integrates proven group-based psychotherapeutic, clinical and educational techniques with an innovative hands-on experiential method employing professional simulated patients. This evidence based intervention has been proven to improve carers' competence, coping skills, self-perceived caregiving burden and ability to manage challenging situations they encounter at home.

The success of the RCCP and its demonstrated efficacy stimulated the development of a number of novel strategies to reach a broader and more diverse population of carers, persons with dementia and the professionals who care for both partners in the dyad. In a series of steps, each building on the ones before, the Reitman team has designed an array of technological solutions to reach individual carers and to teach health professionals to implement our interventions. The masterclass will include background about caregiving, the approach to carer assessment from the dyadic perspective, research demonstrating the efficacy the RCCP, the process and efficacy of our scaling strategies and the development and adoption of technology based communication methods for both clinical care and knowledge translation.

### **Master Class Objectives:**

- Participants will be introduced to the dyadic model of dementia care and an array of therapeutic interventions and educational approaches with broad application in dementia treatment and knowledge translation.
- Participants will learn techniques for using therapeutic simulation and technology with an elderly population
- Participants will learn about the integration of online, real-time training programs in the effective transfer of knowledge and skills to multi-disciplinary teams of health professionals in the community

- Participants will reflect on the possible application and integration of the methods presented at their own institutions or programs

## Presenter Biographies



**Dr. Joel Sadavoy, Director, The Cyril & Dorothy, Joel & Jill Reitman Centre for Alzheimer’s Support and Training, Mount Sinai Hospital**

Dr. Sadavoy is professor of psychiatry and the inaugural chair holder of the Sam and Judy Pencer and Family Chair in Applied General Psychiatry at Mount Sinai Hospital and the University of Toronto.

He is Director of the Cyril & Dorothy, Joel & Jill Reitman Centre for Alzheimer’s Support and Training, head of Geriatric Psychiatry, and head of Community Psychiatry services at Mount Sinai Hospital. Throughout his career, Dr. Sadavoy has maintained an active clinical practice in geriatric psychiatry, and his primary delivery, psychotherapy, personality disorders as applied to the elderly and access to mental health care for ethno-cultural seniors.

He has co-edited or written 9 books and manuals in geriatric psychiatry including being senior editor of the 3 editions of Comprehensive Textbook of Geriatric Psychiatry, author of Psychotropic Drugs for the Elderly (2004) and senior editor of “Treating the elderly with Psychotherapy: the scope for change in late life (1986). He is a past- president of the International Psychogeriatric Association and was founding President of the Canadian Academy of Geriatric Psychiatry.

Dr. Sadavoy has served on the board of directors of the American Association for Geriatric psychiatry, Canadian Psychiatric Association, International Psychogeriatric Association and as an Advisor to the Council on Aging of the American Psychiatric Association.

Among his numerous awards and recognitions, he has received the President’s Award of the International Psychogeriatric Association for distinguished achievement in geriatric psychiatry (2010), the Canadian Academy of Geriatric Psychiatry award for outstanding contributions to geriatric psychiatry in Canada (2006) and the International Psychogeriatric Association Field Award for Contributions to Geriatric Psychiatry (1999). He currently sits on the new subspecialty committee designing the process and structure of the newly approved geriatric psychiatry subspecialty in Canada.



**Dr. Virginia Wesson, Staff Psychiatrist, Department of Psychiatry, Sinai Health System**

Following her residency, Dr. Wesson completed a fellowship in geriatric psychiatry in the Department of Psychiatry, University of Toronto. She sees patients of all ages but works primarily with geriatric patients and their families at The Cyril & Dorothy, Joel & Jill Reitman Centre for Alzheimer’s Support and Training.



**Dr. Mary Chiu, Researcher, Sinai Health System**

Mary Chiu is a qualitative Researcher based out of Sinai Health System in Toronto, with an Associate Scientist appointment with the Lunenfeld-Tanenbaum Research Institute, and an academic appointment with the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Toronto. Her research interests lie within geriatric psychiatry, specifically the social psychology of older adults and the concept of psychological resilience in the context of informal caregiving and dementia. Her primary research aim is to identify individual level factors and community-level factors that promote resilience and effective coping by exploring the interactions within and across these levels using a socioecological framework applied to informal carers. Her secondary research aim is to identify components of group psychotherapy programs that make them effective and relevant for informal carers. Mixed methods research is employed in her work.

Together with co-PI Dr. Joel Sadavoy, she is currently overlooking a series of research studies funded under CIHR's Canadian Consortium on Neurodegeneration in Aging, with the goal of understanding the psychosocial experiences of individuals juggling employment and taking care for individuals with dementia.

**To register for this Master Class, click [here](#)**