

IHPME CONNECT 06.2017

IHPME DIRECTOR STEINI BROWN ENTERS NEW ROLE AS DEAN OF DLSPH

For the past five years, Associate Professor Adalsteinn (Steini) Brown has been a constant presence at the Institute of Health Policy, Management and Evaluation (IHPME) and a steadfast leader to all within the department.

As Director, he has been at the forefront of collaborative partnerships and innovative changes that have expanded the reputation of the Institute as a place of engaging and groundbreaking research. On July 1, 2017 Professor Brown will be undertaking a new leadership role as Interim Dean of the [Dalla Lana School of Public Health](#) at the University of Toronto.

"I have been at IHPME for seventeen years," says Professor Brown, "first as a lecturer, then as an assistant professor, before I chose to move outside of academia and work for the provincial government. I was given the chance to come back and take the lead on the IHPME legacy, and I've seen the Institute through a lot of stages of its evolution. I have also had the opportunity to see its excellence."



Highlights of Professor Brown's tenure as Director have included the introduction of two new degree programs; the [MSc in Systems Leadership and Innovation \(SLI\)](#) and the establishment of the executive stream of the [Masters in Health Informatics program \(EMHI\)](#) both of which have seen dramatic growth in numbers over the past year, as has the [Quality Improvement and Patient Safety Program \(QIPS\)](#), which has also seen a maturation of its depth and growth.

"IHPME is attracting high quality, top performing academics," says Professor Brown noting the recent success of our Vanier scholarship recipients and the coverage of many of our faculty and students in the general media.

Two ongoing initiatives point to Professor Brown's commitment to innovative change and his ability to lead others in the growth of new partnerships. The [IDEAS \(Improving & Driving Excellence Across Sectors\)](#) quality improvement training program was co-led by Professor Brown and colleague Professor G. Ross Baker. It includes a partnership between [IHPME](#), [Health Quality Ontario](#), [ICES](#) and six faculties of medicine across Ontario. "This is the first large scale program to build quality improvement capability in Ontario, delivered through an innovative partnership with the faculties of medicine and the key quality and health data agencies in the province," says Baker.

A second initiative is the [Health Barrie Project](#), co-led by Professor Brown and colleague Professor Ross Upshur. "I think the greatest achievement of the Barrie project is its very existence," says Upshur, "it is a bold project that seeks to bring together the talents and skills of primary care ([Barrie and Community Family Health Team](#)) and public health, (through the [Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit](#))." Going forward, the [Health Barrie Project](#) could be an exemplary model for other municipalities to adapt to work toward healthier futures.

More on the next page...

“Steini has demonstrated superb leadership skills in bringing this together, and creating trust among the partners,” says Upshur.

With growth and success there will always be a few challenges, but Professor Brown knows the key to addressing any issue is a firm resolve to reinforce the strengths of the Institute and build upon the vision of the University of Toronto’s newest faculty.

“There is a compelling academic vision at work,” says Brown of the Dalla Lana School, which is why he chose to negotiate the transfer of IHPME as it came under the faculty in 2014. “There was a potential for synergy and an ability to maintain the elements of leadership and entrepreneurial spirit, which are integral to the IHPME brand and identity,” says Brown.

As for his new role as Interim Dean, Professor Brown is looking forward to working with all of the faculty, and students within the Dalla Lana School of Public Health. Supporting faculty and focusing on the student experience is something that Professor Brown hopes will foster further growth, and innovation throughout the school and all of its institutes and divisions.

“I’m planning to do a lot of listening at first,” says Professor Brown, “listening for opportunities to build on strengths and focusing on an aspirational vision that excites faculty.”

FINDING A VOICE: FIRST YEAR PHD STUDENT SARA SHEARKHANI WINS CANADA CARES AWARD



Upon meeting Sara Shearkhani, one can’t help but be in awe of her drive and determination, as she juggles a busy and at times tumultuous schedule. Constantly on the go, she is in the midst of her first year as a PhD student

in the [Health Services Research Program at the Institute of Health Policy, Management and Evaluation \(IHPME\)](#). Much of her time is also spent on the volunteer initiative [Family Caregivers Voice](#) which she co-founded in 2014 alongside Carole Ann Alloway. Her hard work and dedication was rewarded on May 6, 2017 when Shearkhani was presented with the [Canada Cares](#) Caregiver award recognizing caregivers for their outstanding dedication and commitment.

At age twenty-eight Sara Shearkhani’s world was turned upside down when her husband aged just thirty-two, was diagnosed with cancer of the brain and required intensive care for a growing tumor. She and her husband were new to the country, having just immigrated in order for Shearkhani to complete her PhD in economics. Now it seemed as if everything had come to a halting stand still. “I remember feeling very depressed after the cancer diagnosis,” says

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Shearkhani, “it was like a part of my life was over and all of these ideas I had, about how our life was going to be, just disintegrated.”

Knowing she wanted to work as a researcher, but lacking in experience and unable to continue with her studies, Shearkhani took on a job as a conference events researcher, and was lucky enough find herself working on events relative to the healthcare sector. It was in this role that she was first introduced to [Patients Canada](#), an organization geared towards championing health care change that matters to patients. After receiving support from the organization Shearkhani knew that she too wanted to give back and help others in situations similar to her own.

“In my mother-tongue we don’t really have a word for caregiver, so it was not a term I was familiar with and it was not something I thought to identify myself as,” Shearkhani explains. It was only after volunteering with [Patients Canada](#), that Shearkhani learned the term “caregiver” came with its very own rights and responsibilities.

Encouraged by those individuals who offered her support within the organization, Shearkhani decided it was time to tell her side of the story, because often, caregivers are overlooked when it comes to the journey of an ill patient. Shearkhani’s [personal piece was published by The Globe and Mail in June 2014](#), and shortly after its publication she began to receive countless letters from individuals who connected with her story. One such individual was Carole Ann, and it was through their correspondence that the idea for [Family Caregivers Voice](#) came to fruition. “We started as a support group but soon realized that we needed to do more; we chose to focus on educating caregivers on their journey and healthcare professionals on the caregivers’ role, encouraging them to value these individuals as members of patient’s care teams,” says Shearkhani.

From its early beginnings, [Family Caregivers Voice](#) has set its sights on educating caregivers about their journey, the stages of caregiving, and most importantly the issue of caregiver burnout. “A lot of caregivers are really appreciative of my honesty when we conduct presentations, especially with respect to the issue of burnout, and how it affects the caregiver and care-receiver relationship,” notes Shearkhani. The volunteer initiative conducts presentations in healthcare organizations or provides support to caregivers over the phone, whatever is most needed.

Along with other group members, Shearkhani initiated a request to the [University of Calgary’s O’Brien Institute](#) to take part in [PaCER training](#) (patient engagement research) the goal of which was to complete a patient engagement research study. With the support of [Saint Elizabeth Health Care](#), Shearkhani and her group members managed to create a PaCER chapter in Toronto. They completed certification and published their findings entitled “[Uncovering the Experiences of Patients and Caregivers as Couples](#),” in 2016.

For Shearkhani, winning the Canada Cares award, was an important recognition, one that she says made her feel as if she was home. “In 2015 I received the Face of Change award

from [The Change Foundation](#), and at that moment I felt that this was a significant move in recognizing family caregivers as part of the healthcare team. Now, winning this award from [Canada Cares](#) a few years later feels even more momentous because I know there are now additional groups who are thinking about caregivers and taking the time to offer them recognition; it marks, I feel, the end of my personal journey as a caregiver.”



Shearkhani and the Hon. David Onley

Shearkhani hopes that [Family Caregivers Voice](#) will move into its next phase as a not-for-profit organization in the next year, and continue its work in educating others and changing the care culture, especially for caregivers. However, she will have to leave much of that work to her co-founder Carole Ann, as Shearkhani focuses on her new venture, completing her PhD.

“Someone told me once that I didn’t ever write about my experience as if there was a silver lining,” says Shearkhani, “but today I can say that my husband’s cancer diagnosis was perhaps a blessing. I changed my career path because of this experience, choosing to study health services research, and now I am able to continue my PhD, in a department I truly care about. It has changed me and who I have become for the better. And that is in fact, the silver lining.”

NORTHERN CALLING:

MHI STUDENT EMBARKS ON PRACTICUM PLACEMENT TO THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

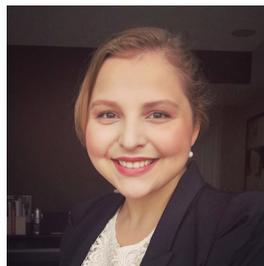
As part of the [Masters of Health Informatics program \(MHI\)](#), students are required to complete a practicum placement over the course of a four month period, within the first year of their study.



MHI student Allie Margaret May is currently in the Northwest Territories working as a consultant alongside the Canadian Government on the development of a strategic framework for territorial health exchange. “The big goal for the Northwest Territories,” says May, “is to allow people to receive efficient, effective, and patient-centered care within the comfort of their own communities.” One way to enhance this is through the eConsult model, where patients would not be

required to travel from rural locations into the city in order to see specialist physicians. “The most important aspect of implementing eConsult’s in the North, is that the process should be simultaneously standardized yet malleable enough to fit the unique needs of the territory’s thirty-three communities,” May explains.

A flexible process that would fit the needs of the community is what makes the eConsult model a desirable one for rural areas. As a result, there is further potential for this model to be scaled up to support larger population areas.



For May, the MHI program is a career change, as she has moved from providing acute care in an urban setting, into a different spectrum of the healthcare system. “I was a cancer research nurse before and I had many patients travel to Toronto solely to participate in specialized clinical

trials,” says May, “I witnessed the impact that medical travel had on their health – physically, mentally and emotionally – and I knew that we could do better for these patients.” For May this opportunity is about making a bigger impact on health care delivery and patient outcomes. “As a nurse I can affect the lives of 5-10 patients per day” she says, “but as a health informatician, I can use technology as a force multiplier and improve health outcomes for thousands of patients.”

It is for this reason May knew the practicum and the MHI program were the right choice for her. As she continues her four month placement, we invite you to view her blog [Into the North: A Health Informatics Experience](#), and get a glimpse of her work (and amazing photos), as a new health informatician in the field, while she seeks to improve health information exchange in the North.

AWARDS

MHI ALUMNA RECEIVES LOUISE LEMIEUX-CHARLES AWARD



Lauren Bell (C) with IHPME Alumni President Lee Fairclough (L) and IHPME Director Adalsteinn Brown (R)

"I've always had an interest in technology as a means of delivering innovative health care," says Lauren Bell, a graduate of the [Masters of Health Informatics program](#) at IHPME, "I've also seen how technology can be used as a vehicle to solve complex challenges in the health care system."

Bell is the Institute of Health Policy, Management and Evaluation's 2017 recipient of the Louise Lemieux-Charles award, honouring emerging health systems leaders. Her dedication to advancing changes in the health system was paramount in her previous role working for the [Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care](#). As a lead for the Health Strategy and Investment Branch (now Digital Health Program Branch), of the ministry, she was involved in supporting the development of a digital health strategy for the province of Ontario. "We were primarily focused on hospital information system (HIS) renewal, because there was a critical mass of hospitals who needed to upgrade their current HIS to a newer platform," says Bell.

The goal of the strategy was to find a way to support hospital's in making these upgrades in a coordinated manner that also considered a broader vision for the future. That included managing these critical systems, on a provincial scale to support integrated care for patients. Working with an internal team, as well as consultants from the [PwC](#) and stakeholders, Bell supported the province's Hospital Information Systems Renewal Advisory Panel through an intensive six month process in order to develop recommendations for the province. Upon completion of their work, the panel had recommendations in hand spanning the areas of partnership, procurement, clinical adoption and outcomes. "Before the recommendations were even released we had begun to see hospitals taking deliberate action as a result of the clear commitment to this topic by the panel and the ministry," says Bell, "in particular, hospital clusters were forming and more joint purchasing decisions were being explored." Bell continued to support auctioning early recommendations, one of which supports the ability of hospitals to leverage existing technology as part of a cluster model vs. returning to market for new technology, and therefore maximizing the value of existing investments.

When asked how she came to be interested in health informatics, Bell notes it was shortly after she finished her undergraduate degree and was working at St. Michael's Hospital that she first became aware of where her career path might take her. "I was working on a community based research project involving the deployment of electronic medical record information technology for marginalized populations," says Bell, "and I found the impact of our efforts quite fascinating, having not previously had the opportunity to be exposed to the discipline of health informatics."

Bell enrolled in the MHI program at IHPME when it was only in its second year of operation, which she feels was in fact quite beneficial. "I think the earlier cohorts were really

able to help shape the direction of the program, as health informatics was emerging as a recognized profession" says Bell, "and we continue to be mentors for the newer students as they embark on their own career paths."

Now in her new role at [Health Quality Ontario](#), Bell is looking forward to continuing her role as an emerging leader and focusing on the quality agenda with her digital health strategy expertise in hand. "I am excited about the opportunities that are now available to collaborate on the digital health agenda, and inject some of my prior knowledge and experience into new implementation contexts," she says.

The Louise Lemieux-Charles Award recognizes leaders like Lauren Bell, because of their passion and dedication in improving healthcare decision making and management. "It is an honour to receive this award," says Bell, "and it is wonderful that there is a commitment to recognize emerging leaders, and foster their growth. I hope to continue to use my informatics knowledge to pursue leadership roles in the health sector, while continuing to support others who are just beginning their careers."

3 IHPME STUDENTS RECEIVE PRESTIGIOUS VANIER SCHOLARSHIPS

The results of the [Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarships \(Vanier CGS\)](#) were declared on May 30 and IHPME is proud to announce that three of their students have successfully been named Vanier Scholars.

The recipients are: Alainna Jamal for, "The relationship between hospital water environments and human infection by antibiotic-resistant gram-negative bacteria in intensive care units," Daniel Pincus for, "Understanding and improving wait times for hip fracture surgery in Ontario," and Tim Rappon for "Acute Care for Elders Strategy - Sustainability and Sustainment Study (ACES-SSS)."

The Vanier CGS were created by the Canadian government to further establish Canada's commitment to retain world-class doctoral students. Out of fifty-six scholars awarded, three are from IHPME, a wonderful testament to the high quality of our students, their supervisors and the work they are undertaking in the field of health services research.

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FACULTY APPOINTMENTS

New Faculty

Kelvin Chan – Assistant Professor, Status
Shiran Isaacs – Adjunct Lecturer
Anne-Marie Malek - Adjunct Lecturer,
John Marshall - Professor, Status
Myla Moretti – Assistant Professor, Status
Mayvis Rebeira – Adjunct Lecturer
Idan Roifman - Assistant Professor, Status
Agnes Wong - Professor, Status
Mohammad Zubairi – Assistant Professor, Status

Renewal Faculty

Ada Andrade – Assistant Professor, Status
Katie Dainty – Assistant Professor, Status

PHD SUCCESS

The University of Toronto's School of Graduate Studies recently completed the first phase of their 10,000 PhD's Project, which looks to determine the current employment positions of 85% of the 10,000 plus individuals who have graduated from the University of Toronto with a PhD between 2000-2015. The summary report for the Institute of Health Policy, Management and Evaluation lists the findings for our PhD's with respect to their location, tenure track position, gender and employment sector. To view the summary report, please select the link below:

[PhD Summary Report](#)

Recent Successful PhD Defenses

Clinical Epidemiology

Chris Wallis, PhD
Thesis Topic: *Clinically Significant Prostate Cancer: Biological and Epidemiological Observations to Improve Cancer-Free and Survival Metrics*
Date: April 13, 2017

Victoria McCredie, PhD
Thesis Topic: *Processes and Structures of Care for Critically Ill Patients with Acute Brain Injury*
Date: May 2, 2017

SUPPORT IHPME

The Institute of Health Policy, Management & Evaluation, as part of the Dalla Lana School of Public Health, is the first Canadian public health school to launch its own fundraising campaign. With the support of our generous donors, our Boundless Campaign will enable IHPME to continue shaping training and research in health systems, management and policy.

For more information on how you can get involved, give annually, create a named fund, or consider the School in your estate planning, please contact **Annette Paul, Director of Advancement** at annette.paul@utoronto.ca or visit [IHPME Donate](#) or [Support/Campaign](#). Thank you for your support!

IHPME IN THE NEWS

Are New Ethics Rules Needed to Guide Research with Patient Collaborators?

Prof. Don Willison and PhD Student Sara Shearkhani op-ed in Healthy Debate: <http://healthydebate.ca/opinions/ethics-research-patient-collaborators>

Is Ontario's Youth Pharmacare Proposal Just a Symbolic Gesture?

Prof. Danielle Martin, points to better access to contraception for young women as a real benefit. Full Story: <http://www.cmaj.ca/content/189/21/E756.short?rss=1>

PUBLICATION

[Ho J W, Kuluski K, Im J](#). "It's a fight to get anything you need" – Accessing care in the community from the perspectives of people with multimorbidity. *Health Expect*. 2017; 00:1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1111/hex.12571>

Lee TM, [Tu K](#), Wing LL, Gershon AS. Identifying individuals with physician-diagnosed chronic obstructive pulmonary disease in primary care electronic medical records: a retrospective chart abstraction study. *npj Prim Care Respir Med*. 2017 Dec 15; 27(1):34. <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41533-017-0035-9>

Lee TM, Ivers NM, [Bhatia S](#), Butt DA, Dorian P, Jaakkimainen L, et al. Improving stroke prevention therapy for patients with atrial fibrillation in primary care: protocol for a pragmatic, cluster-randomized trial. *Implementation Science*; 2016 Dec 3; 11(1):159. <https://implementationscience.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s13012-016-0523-2>

IHPME STORY CAMPAIGN

The Institute of Health Policy, Management and Evaluation has been the leading management and evaluation program in health services and health care research for the past 70 years.

From its early inception as the Department of Health Administration in 1947 to its current role as a leading institute, IHPME has been making progressive changes in research and leadership for many years.

We invite you to share your memories, stories, and snapshots of your time at IHPME, as we compile a collage of stories to showcase our growth and engagement with our community.

To share your story, image or text, please email: ihpme.events@utoronto.ca

Note: Materials will be shared via IHPME social media and will be presented for display at this year's Moonshot celebration on October 24, 2017.

EVENTS

U of T Talks: Dying for Change - How to Heal Canada's Healthcare System

June 8 | 7:00pm - 9:00pm | Telus Centre for Performing and Learning, Mazzoleni Hall | \$20-\$25

Presented by the Institute of Medical Science, *U of T Talks* aims to promote inter-disciplinary learning and networking through a symposium catered to everyone within all four School of Graduate Studies (SGS) divisions - Humanities, Social Science, Life Science, and Physical Sciences.

This year, join us in discussing our national pride: Canada's universal healthcare system. Explore the strengths and shortcomings of our current model. Discover if and how we can implement critical changes to secure health care for all

Canadians. Our featured speakers include Neil D. Fraser, President of Medtronic, and Dr. Danielle Martin, a family physician who is a strong advocate for better, universal healthcare and who famously testified at the US senate in 2014 on what the United States healthcare system can learn from other countries.

Health Innovation For All Conference

June 10 | 8:30am - 4:30pm | Medical Sciences Building, 1 Kings College Circle | \$20

Presented by the UTIHI Open School Canadian Chapter

The event is open to all students and professionals in various health disciplines. This Canadian student-run conference will be simultaneously hosted in Toronto and Vancouver. We will bring together 400 students and health professionals to explore how we can work together to improve health care using systems-thinking to achieve health equity. The day will include professional and patient keynote speeches, a panel discussion with quality improvement experts, interactive workshops that highlight innovations in healthcare, and will conclude with a storyboard reception.

Join us in building a better future health care system!

[Register Online](#)

Dalla Lana School Council

June 15 | 3:00pm - 5:00pm | HS 208

The final DLSPH council meeting for the academic year will take place on June 15. Members of the IHPME community are welcome to attend.

Clinical Judgment: Multidisciplinary Perspectives, A Symposium

June 22 | 9:00am - 5:00pm | HS106 | Free

[Registration required](#)

A symposium featuring perspectives from philosophy, psychology, the humanities, medicine, and medical education research.

Talks:

Ross Upshur (University of Toronto) with Benjamin Chin-Yee (University of Toronto) – "Clinical Judgment: Surveying the Philosophical Landscape"

Benjamin Djulbegovic (University of South Florida) – "Rational Clinical Decision-Making: Implications for Overtreatment and Undertreatment"

Luis Flores (King's College London) with Jonathan Fuller

(University of Toronto) – “Clinical Judgment: The Bayesian Approach”

Peter Schwartz (Indiana University) – “Clinical Judgment about Disclosure: Should Patients be Told their Comparative Risk?” For a full list of panel presentations, please visit the [event page](#).

Ruggles Lecture in the Philosophy of Medicine: Reframing the Problem of Vaccine Hesitancy

June 23 | 5:15pm - 6:50pm | HS 610 | Free

Lecture by Maya Goldenberg (University of Guelph)

[Register Online](#)

NAO Lecture Series: Martin McKee

July 6 | 12:00pm - 1:30pm | HS 610

Access and Quality: The Performance of Health Systems Worldwide

The second NAO lecture presents Martin McKee, Professor at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, & Research Director of the European Observatory on Health Systems.

NOTEWORTHY:

IHPME Senior Fellow Dr. Ted Witek recently chaired a Scientific Symposium at this year’s [International Conference of The American Thoracic Society](#) in Washington DC. The symposium, *Optimal Integration of Innovation in Respiratory Care and Public Health*, was based largely on his IHPME Thinktanks conducted with PhD Candidate Julianna Yi. Other speakers in Witek’s symposium included Dr. Natasha Leighl from Princess Margaret Cancer Center, Dr. Mark Fitzgerald from University of British Columbia, Dr. Jean Bourbeau from McGill, and Dr. Bart Celli from Harvard.

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

CIHR Start-Up Grant Fellow Recruitment

Two post-doctoral positions are available with IHPME and North York General Hospital.

[Post-doctoral Fellowship - Health System Impact](#)

[Post-doctoral Fellowship - Multi-morbidity/Fragmentation of Care](#)

Closing Date: June 15, 2017

GREEN CORNER

As we move into the warmer and hopefully sunnier months of the year, the Institute of Health Policy, Management and Evaluation is pleased to announce the launch of their Environmental Committee’s Green Initiative spearheaded by Professor Fiona Miller. This initiative seeks to teach members of the IHPME community about the changes they can make to ensure IHPME is operating in a more sustainable and environmentally friendly manner.

Upon completing the [Green Office Self Assessment Tool](#), IHPME is currently operating at the level of a sprout. However, with just a few small changes, you and every member of the community can help us reach the level of a tree, which signifies a green office. A list of recommendations will be forthcoming, but in the meantime if you have ideas about how to help us become a greener office, contact one of our [Green Ambassadors](#). And stay tuned to the Green Corner every month for new updates on how IHPME is building a sustainable community.



this is a green office

WE’D LIKE TO HEAR FROM YOU

We’re pleased to receive submissions of 400 words or less for consideration in upcoming editions. If you’d like your event listed, please send full details.

Contact: rhonda.cockerill@utoronto.ca and rebecca.biason@utoronto.ca