

*1st*  
**WORLD**  
CONGRESS



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**ON HEALTHY AGEING**

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# AGING IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

## How different will it be?

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# OVERVIEW

- Demographic imperative
- Aging in place
- Chronic conditions and self-management
- Occupation and active aging
- Occupational Therapy



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# DEMOGRAPHIC IMPERATIVE

- Decrease in birth rates world wide
- More adults living longer
- Few younger adults available to sustain the work force, health and social systems and family care
- Increased urbanization with jobs moving from agriculture to manufacturing, construction and services, and a change in family living arrangements



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# The 'New' Older Adult

- Better educated and better informed because of available media information
- Distrusts authority and is individualistic with a sense of entitlement
- Is goal oriented and embraces technology
- Is more aware of alternative health approaches



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# AGING IN PLACE

- The desire and ability to live in one's own home and community - wherever that might be - for as long as confidently and comfortably possible with home and community services to support this aim.
- What is different are the services provided in well-resourced countries versus the cultural norms in less-well resourced countries.

# Aging in Place

- Comfortable and supportive environment
- Convenience to services – health and social
- Proximity to family or extended electronic communication
- Safety and security
- Feelings of independence
- Familiarity of the environment



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# CHRONIC CONDITIONS AND SELF-MANAGEMENT

- With the changing demographic there are also an increase in the prevalence of chronic conditions
- Support requires a provider or health care team to enable the self-efficacy necessary for patients to deal confidently with their own range of emotional, physical, and physiological symptoms of their chronic disease

# Self-management

- At the heart of each self-management approach is an empowered patient with the skills and confidence to better manage chronic diseases , interact with the primary health care system and live a quality life.
- Self-management takes many approaches and makes use of technological advances in communication.



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# Aging Today

- Aging is not a medical condition nor is it pathological (Attitude change)
- Active Aging (WHO) (Healthy Aging), the process of optimizing opportunities for health, participation (occupation) and security in order to enhance quality of life as older adults age.

# Healthy (Active) Aging

- Maintaining a sense of purpose and a zest for life
- Adapting to change
- Physically and socially active
- Connected to community and loved ones
- Engagement in meaningful activity to self and society



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# Role for Occupational Therapy

- Focus is on enabling occupation which is the ability of individuals to participate in a meaningful and productive life within the environment in which they live.
- Through aging in place, chronic condition self-management and active aging paradigms.

# Enabling Aging in Place

- Determine appropriate supportive housing,
- Advocate for utility and home repair subsidies, for enhanced neighbourhood health and social service infrastructure, and for one-stop community care options.
- Environmental modifications.
- Age-friendly cities
- Provide education programs on healthy aging, preventing falls, energy conservation, work simplification, pain management

# Aging in Place Evidence

- Education at home and minor home modifications decrease ADL difficulties, improved quality of life and reduction in falls.
- Prevention of further disability by narrowing the gap between abilities and the environment.



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# Chronic Condition Self-management

- Self management includes education, on how to better manage their symptoms, adhere to medication regimens and how to maintain functional ability
- Relaxation, joint protection, energy conservation, fatigue management, exercise, involvement in meaningful and useful activities
- Face to face or through social media or the internet

# Chronic Condition Self Management Evidence

- The evidence demonstrates that persons enrolled in a self management program improved their health and reduced their use of health services
- Older adults who are enrolled in a self management program have a better perception of their quality of life

# Chronic Condition Self-management Evidence

- Self management helps to improve the quality of life for the older adult and gives older adults the skills to manage their lives in the face of a chronic condition/disease/illness
- Older adults understand and make informed decisions about their health and engage in healthy behaviours.



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# Active Aging

- The engagement in a variety of activities that are meaningful such as volunteering, paid work, assisting in the family, maintaining self-care and continuing education through which older adults contribute to the society and community in which they live.
- Promoting inclusive work environments that support older workers.

## Active Aging Evidence

- Vigorous habitual physical activity increases and maintains health, reduces fatigue and falls, increases self-efficacy, reduces pain, increases functional ability.
- Meaningful activity that is productive and engages the older adult, decreases isolation, increases social participation and improves physical and mental health.



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# Summary

- Aging in the 21<sup>st</sup> century will be different as the current demographics and the attitudes of older adults are beginning to demonstrate today.
- Active participation in life among older adults is enabled by occupational therapy promoting the use of occupation within the paradigms of aging in place, productive aging and chronic disease self-management which focus on the health and social aspects of aging.