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## Canada – UK Study Tour: The Science of Age-Supportive Built Environments

Welcome Remarks

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London and Edinburgh, UK  
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## Partnership: Shared Interests, Perfect Timing

- ❖ The Partners:
  - ❖ Institute of Aging, Canadian Institutes of Health Research
  - ❖ British High Commission – Science and Innovation Office (Toronto)
  - ❖ UK Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) programme KT-EQUAL
  - ❖ Canadian High Commission, London
- ❖ Introduction to CIHR and the Institute of Aging
- ❖ Our Mobility in Aging Strategic Initiative
- ❖ Objectives of the Canada – UK Study Tour

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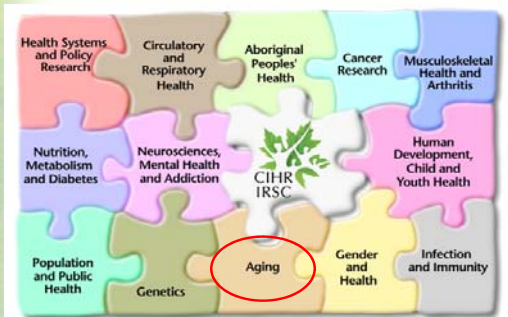
## Canadian Institutes of Health Research (est 2000)

*“To excel, according to internationally accepted standards of scientific excellence in the creation of new knowledge and its translation into improved health for Canadians, more effective health services and products and a strengthened Canadian health care system...”*

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## CIHR – Institutes



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## Institute of Aging: Mission

The fundamental goal of the Institute of Aging is the advancement of knowledge in the field of aging to improve the **quality of life** and the **health** of older Canadians.



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## Mobility in Aging Strategic Research Area

- ❖ Launched in 2005
- ❖ To address research and knowledge translation needs within the range of *intrinsic* and *extrinsic* challenges (from biological to environmental) associated with Mobility in Aging.
- ❖ Challenges:
  - ❖ CIHR is a health research funding agency
  - ❖ few researchers and decision-makers linked to extrinsic factors, such as transportation, housing and community design, applications of technology and other aspects of the built environment have identified with the CIHR-IA Mobility in Aging initiative.

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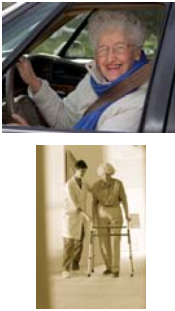
**CIHR IA - Mobility in Aging**  
The objectives

1. Raise awareness of the importance of Mobility in Aging (MiA) for the well being of older adults;
2. Identify target areas for training, research and knowledge translation activities in MiA;
3. Identify issues and questions of importance to the users;
4. Promote collaboration among CIHR's traditional and nontraditional (e.g., housing industry, transportation, and telecommunication) communities;

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**MiA: Funded Research Projects (sample)**

- ❖ The effect of high doses of vitamin D on muscle and mobility in frail older persons
- ❖ The design of intelligent walkers to enhance mobility
- ❖ Determinants of physical inactivity among older adults in rural Atlantic Canada
- ❖ Is a recent history of multiple falls an early indication of cognitive dysfunction? An observational study of older fallers and non-fallers



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**The Challenge...**

- ❖ Pockets of significant Canadian research expertise on extrinsic factors related to MiA
- ❖ Little opportunity for collaboration or transfer of knowledge either among these groups or with relevant external stakeholder communities
- ❖ Yet, Canada has been an international policy leader in the WHO Age-Friendly Cities movement, now seeking scientific underpinnings to enable accreditation and evaluation

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**The Opportunity**

- ❖ UK research councils implemented key research programmes relevant to design of age-supportive physical environments
  - ❖ EPSRC EQUAL (Extending Quality Life) Initiative; EPSRC SUE (Sustainable Urban Environments) Programme
  - ❖ New Dynamics of Ageing (NDA) programme - unique collaboration among five UK research funding councils
- ❖ Enabled practical policy and implementation guidance and novel scientific, technological and design responses
- ❖ EQUAL Initiative = influencing regulations, codes and standards.
- ❖ SPARC- Strategic Promotion of Ageing Research and KT-EQUAL – Knowledge Transfer for Extending Quality Life have concentrated on dissemination and capacity building.

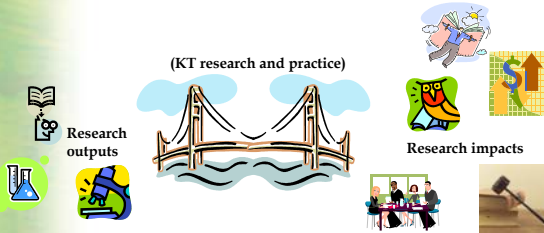
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**Objective: Canada – UK Study Tour**

- ❖ To enable exchange of Canadian and UK expertise and experience in:
- ❖ Research underpinnings of age-supportive design of the built environment
- ❖ Knowledge-transfer among researchers and decision-makers including design and construction professionals, planners, and thought-leaders in industries such as transportation, town and country planning, housing, and technology.

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**Knowledge Translation (KT) is the bridge between discovery and impact**



KT is about making a difference

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**Research to "Action":  
Enhancing Knowledge Translation**

- ❖ Collaborative research, action-oriented, co-production of knowledge, engaging researchers and stakeholders (end-users)
- ❖ Involves integrating stakeholders into the entire research process
- ❖ Stakeholders include:
  - Investigators from different disciplines, teams, countries
  - Policy makers, decision makers, research funders, the public, clinicians, media




**Outcomes of this kind of KT?**

**Together, researchers and stakeholders can be involved in:**

- ❖ Shaping research questions
- ❖ Deciding on methodology
- ❖ Collaborating on data collection and tools development
- ❖ Interpreting study findings
- ❖ Crafting message and disseminating research results
- ❖ Moving results into practice




**Acknowledgments**



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- UK Hosts:
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  - Catharine Ward-Thompson, ECA

