

ADDRESSING THE KNOWLEDGE GAPS FOR B12 TESTING AND THE PREVALENCE OF B12 DEFICIENCY IN LTC HOMES IN ONTARIO

Kaylen J. Pfisterer, University of Waterloo.

Contact: kpfisterer@uwaterloo.ca

Brief Description of Research or Project: The goal of this work is to address the knowledge gaps of: current policies and protocols in place for B12 testing in a random sample of LTC homes across Ontario, and the prevalence of B12 deficiency in a convenience sample of LTCs through analysis of retrospective cohort data. In addition, potential associations between vitamin B12 status and indicators of frailty will be explored. This work aims to inform best-practice guidelines, future education on the importance of B12 testing and treatment for the maintenance or improvement of quality of life, and future interventions aimed at improving quality of life for older adults living in LTC, retirement or community. **Why is this research important to profile at the Research Day 2014?** This work aims to disseminate: the importance of vitamin B12 for maintaining health, current protocols for testing and treating vitamin B12 deficiency in Ontario long-term care (LTC) homes, prevalence of vitamin B12 deficiency in a sample of LTC homes, and potential associations between vitamin B12 levels and key frailty indicators. This work provides an excellent opportunity for knowledge transfer between residents, front-line caregivers, policy makers, students and researchers on the importance of vitamin B12 in older adults and current treatment protocols across Ontario. Results from this work have the potential to impact policy and practice by addressing knowledge gaps relating to protocols, policies and procedures for vitamin B12 testing and treatment. Results may also inform future education and policies for enhancing quality of life for residents living in LTC.