

WOMEN IN MANAGEMENT SRI LANKA - CANADA CHAPTER (WIM CANADA)

"COVID-19 FACTS AND INFO"

AGENDA FOR JAN 9<sup>TH</sup> FROM 10AM -12 .30PM

QUESTIONS POSTED ON THE WEBSITE BY OUR COMMUNITY

**Introduction - Ramya Fernando, 10.00 - 10.10**  
**Dentist, Vice President Health and Wellness - WIM Sri Lanka - Canada Chapter**

PANELISTS

**Dr. Lakshmi Ravindran**, Staff Psychiatrist at Centre for Addiction & Mental Health and Assistant Professor, Department of Psychiatry University of Toronto

**Dr. Nishardi Waidyaratne-Wijeratne**, Assistant Professor Department of Psychiatry Queens University and Consultation-Liaison Psychiatrist

**Dr. Piyanjali de Zoysa**, Professor in Clinical Psychology Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo

**Dr. Ranjith Chandrasena**, Scientific Director, Chatham Kent Clinical Trials Research Centre; Adjunct Professor, Western & McMaster Universities

**Dr. Lucky Fernando**, Retired Chief of Psychiatry, Woodstock, London Ontario

**Dr. Arun Ravindran**, Staff Psychiatrist at Centre for Addiction and Mental Health and Professor of Psychiatry, University of Toronto.(will not be present due to a prior appt.)

Q AND A SESSIONS

**Section 1: Adult students - local and foreign - Premila & Dileeni 10.10 - 10.40**

**Panelists: Dr. Lakshmi,**

**One question by Premila is directly based on Dr. Lakshmi's presentation & CAMH info.**

**Section 2: Young school age children - Lakmini and Nadeera 10.40 - 11.10**

**Panelists: Dr. Piyanjali and Dr. Nishardi**

**Section 3: New Immigrants - Shehan 11.10 - 11.30**

**Panelists: Dr. Nishardi**

**Section 4. Senior's & specific health concerns - Lionel and Shiroma 11.30 - 12.00**

**Panelists: Dr. Chandrasena and Dr. Fernando**

**Section 5. Vaccinations – Dilrukshi, Shiroma and Dr. Abeytunge 12.00 - 12.30**

**Panelists: Dr. Fernando, Dr. Chandrasena, and Dr. Piyanjali**

---

**SECTION 1 –Adult students –undergraduate and postgraduate 10.10 - 10.40**

**Premila Sathasivam - Manager Human Anatomy Program, University of Guelph**

**Question: For Dr. Lakshmi Ravindran**

strategies and coping mechanisms.

I work closely with undergraduate and graduate students both local and international. As we are all aware students attending College Diploma Programs and University Degree Programs have been severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic situation. Many of our international students have not been able to go back home; students have lost their part-time jobs that helped support their education & accommodation; Students are struggling financially, and they face extreme loneliness, they lack very crucial social interaction & they fear getting sick.

**1. What advice would you give despairing students to alleviate anxiety and prevent a mental breakdown or depression?**

**Dileeni Weerasinghe – Professor, Guelph-Humber University**

**Question: For Dr. Lakshmi Ravindran**

I come across many International students who are dealing with undue stress and anxiety due to the pandemic.

**1. How can I help them and guide them? Some practical advice would be appreciated.**

**Lakmini Serasinghe - Owner and Manager of an Education Centre in Toronto****Questions: For Dr. Piyanjali de Zoysa**

Due to COVID majority of our students are taking classes online and not going to school. Due to the lack of interaction with their peers, students have increased anxiety & depression.

1. How can we as teachers & parents help our students/children during this time?
2. How can I or my staff members support our student's families if any of the family members have been infected with COVID and ask us for assistance? What should be the procedure we should take?

**Nadeera Jayaratne - Sales Executive, mother of two and new immigrant in 2020****Questions: For Dr. Nishardi Waidyaratne-Wijeratne**

1. Due to virtual learning and excessive use of digital screens, can it lead to signs of autism in children? Or develop an increased risk for other mental deceases? If a child suffers from such symptoms, how can a parent ensure the excessive screen time to not to be a triggering cause for autism?
2. How can parents who work from home provide assistance or encourage young children to be more independent within a virtual learning environment.
3. Are there any specific symptoms, parents need to be aware of in order to understand developed anxiety within younger children? How can parents not miss such symptoms.

**Acknowledgment of Dr. Lakshmi Ravindran leaving us due to a prior commitment.****SECTION 3 - New Immigrants**

11.10 - 11.30

**Shehan Perera - Sri Lankan Lawyer and new immigrant to Canada in 2020****Questions: For: Dr. Nishardi Waidyaratne-Wijeratne**

"Currently there is a great influx of immigrants into Canada amidst the pandemic at a time where job markets are adversely affected and many survival jobs are lost". Therefore, it is reported that there a number of immigrants experiencing anxiety & depression.

In light of the above

1. What is the definition of clinical depression in layman's terms? How important is it to identify depression at an early stage and what are the signs associated with it that a spouse, partner, co-worker or friend can pick up quickly to avoid major disaster?
2. Starting over in a new country can be quite challenging. What precautions can one take to avoid anxiety and depression?

**SECTION 4 - Senior's & specific health concerns**

11.30 - 12.00

**Lionel Dissanayake - Active Member of Canada Sri Lanka Seniors Association.****Question: For Dr. Chandrasena**

Many seniors live with a son or daughter and their family in the same house. As a result of COVID one or the other works" from home involved in conference calls that demand complete silence free from disturbances. Even the washing of a plate or opening a faucet becomes a disturbance. In such a situation a senior living there undergoes mental distress. In the summer it may be possible for him/her to stay outside but not in the winter.

**How could such a situation be addressed so as not to cause pain and anguish to either or both?**

**Shiroma – Secretary, Canada Sri Lanka Association (CSLA)****Question: For Dr. Fernando**

1. What can I do to help a senior who has started getting very nervous about the virus, he lost weight and has anxiety but refuses to do anything about it.
2. Based on the reports. Diabetics are more susceptible to the virus. What are the nutrition and vitamins I can add to my daily intake being a diabetic?
3. If I contract Covid-19 virus are there any long term effects to me?

**Acknowledgment of Dr. Nishardi Waidyaratne-Wijeratne leaving us due to a prior commitment.**

**Dilrukshi Rajaguru - Secretary, Canada Sri Lanka Women's Association (CSLWA)**

**Questions: Dr. Fernando**

1. Is it a must to take the Covid-19 vaccine?
2. Can we survive without administering the vaccine?
3. If we take it once, do we have to take it annually like the flu-shot?

**Additionally, questions asked by other participants:**

**Lakmini:**

1. Is the COVID vaccine safe for infants and children?
2. What food & nutrients should be given to children during this time to help them be healthy?

**Shiroma:** How long is the Vaccination effect valid for?

**Dr. P.K.Abeytunga - Retired Senior Public Executive, actively involved in Sri Lankan community matters.**

**Questions: For Dr. Chandrasena,**

1. The efficacy of Pfizer and Moderna vaccines is around 90% and the efficacy of Astra Zeneca/Oxford vaccine is 70%. Does it mean that depending on the vaccine received, of those who have been vaccinated, there is a chance that up to 5% or 30% could still potentially be not safe? If so, how soon will it be possible to relax safety guidelines?
2. If you have had asymptomatic or mildly symptomatic COVID-19, is it still necessary to get the vaccine?
3. Is there a possibility that currently developed vaccines may not be effective against a new mutation of COVID?
4. Question 4 - If you have had allergies, is it safe to get vaccinated? Under what conditions is it not safe to get vaccinated?

## **Wrap up**

**Dr. Chandrasena to give a brief summation of "Covid-19 Facts and Info"- 5-10mts.**

## **Vote of Thanks**

**Devika Jullian Anthony  
President**

**WOMEN IN MANAGEMENT SRI LANKA – CANADA CHAPTER.**