

Master Vitality and Ageing

On ageing research and scientific leadership

YEARBOOK
2018-2019



Leiden University
Medical Center



Universiteit
Leiden
The Netherlands



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INTRODUCTION

Dear students,

After a year of hard work you've completed the Vitality and Ageing master's programme. From the start in September, we have enjoyed our shared interests in ageing and in older people. We are very proud that you as students have written/made this yearbook of memories.

You have learned a great deal about the biological, individual and societal perspectives on vitality and ageing. Of course, this year was not only filled with learning theory: you did many kinds of communication activities, varying from interviewing older persons to leading a press conference about a crisis situation. You have even designed your own escape rooms during the serious game. In addition to studying theory and learning skills, you went on orientation visits. Our study trips to Cologne and Brussels were really a lot of fun!

From the start, we were impressed by your interests, energy and talents. We saw you develop from students to young professionals. Seeing this enormous individual progress, we are very proud of our students in 2018-2019. We wish you all a colourful career in our greying society!

On behalf of the master's team of Vitality and Ageing,

Prof. dr. Jacobijn Gussekloo | director of the master

Dr. Arko Gorter | coordinator of the master



INTERGENERATIONAL EDUCATION

Working together with the Vitality and Ageing students is amazing!

By Amber Schoenmakers

“The collaboration between young professionals and older people is essential during the development of the Master Vitality and Ageing entrepreneurs.”

Margriet van Rees is a member of the elderly board of the LUMC, and a member of the council of elderly of the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sports. With great pleasure, she participates as a knowledge expert regularly in the master's during the academic year.

She finds the intergenerational education of Vitality and Ageing a fantastic method to prepare young professionals for the challenges of the ageing population. The participation of older individuals during the development of future entrepreneurs is essential to get a deep understanding of the relevant topics and values. Besides, it supports younger people in creating their own vision regards getting older.

The way the master's prepares their students to develop innovations, new policies and research designs in co-creation with older people is a leading example, according Margriet van Rees. “This intergenerational method is what the society needs to achieve demand driven population health management.”

Demand driven health management is increasingly important, because the people who are starting to get older now, age differently than the current oldest old. She elaborates: “The younger generation of older people are ageing more vitally and have busy lives. For example: the younger older individuals travel all over the world, are active in volunteering and taking care of grandchildren. And when I come home after a busy day, I like to relax and watch Netflix all night.” In addition, this younger generation of older individuals should be more conscious about maintaining their health and vitality for the upcoming 25-30 years. A question she asks herself regularly is: “How will people and society deal with these extra years, and how can we support older people in creating new challenges and remaining independent?”

Take home message

This demand driven health management is Margriets' take-home message for all the Vitality and Ageing alumni: “The greatest added value that older individuals have, is at the drawing tables. You should continue to work together with the ageing population.” Emphasize on this during your career, and be conscious of the consequences for the society as a whole. ■

“Good luck Vitality and Ageing alumni of the 2018-2019 cohort! I really enjoyed working together with you!”



Dear master *Vitality and Ageing* Alumni,



The great adventure you started in September 2018 has now ended! For me personally, this has been an adventurous year as well as being BVA course coordinator for the first time.

The most important highlights of BVA 2018/2019:

- Almost all students passed the BVA course!
- All students safely returned from the Cologne study trip.
- A record amount of coffee was consumed during the course.

The pleasure has been all mine to guide you in your journeys to learn you about the biological mechanisms of vitality and ageing. Don't get me wrong, after these 10 weeks all of you have become true ageing biologists.

I wish you the very best of luck during your future careers as an ageing professional.

All the best,

Raymond Noordam PhD

Course Coordinator Biology of Vitality and Ageing



The first course of the year: Biology of Vitality & Ageing

An interesting deepening subject or an overwhelming wave of new words and biological systems

By Lies Vreugdenhil

The first two weeks of the master Vitality and Ageing did not reflect the eight weeks that started after that. During the first two weeks of the course Future Perspectives, we got to know each other, listened to a variety of lecturers that gave us a little taste of what was to come for the year, we started practicing our skills like presenting and finished up with a social event: a boat tour with our new workgroups through the canals of the beautiful Leiden. However, after the introduction weeks, it was time for us to start with the real deal: Biology of Vitality and Ageing.

The course of Biology of Vitality and Ageing, or BVA for short, aimed to learn us all about the biological processes of ageing on cell level, how environment and lifestyle could influence the process of ageing and how different kinds of research models could help us in further understanding the biological mechanisms of ageing and vitality. Our beloved teacher Raymond Noordam took us along into his biology adventure and would teach us all about how our bodies grow old, in just a time span of 8 weeks – and with great success.

Since we all had done different bachelors, we all started out with a different basic knowledge regarding biological processes. While some of us can dream all the steps of replication, transcription and translation, others thought that proteins were only something that could be found in food, and did not know that our body also consists of proteins. For students with a more biological background the basics were quite clear, yet others really had to start from the bottom. Nonetheless, BVA really had something to offer for all the students: creating a basic understanding of all the processes for those who had no biological background, up to the details of research and how a MRI scan exactly works for those who could use an extra bit of challenge. Raymond is our living advertisement if we talk about BVA. At the student fair we saw him talking to possible new students, explaining why the course of BVA was absolutely doable for every student, no matter their background. Something he would often say, and you might have heard him say this yourself, was *“This year, we even had a student that did not know what DNA was and they also succeeded the course, so you will be able to do it as well.”* We have a bit of advice, Raymond: If your career in biology ever gets stuck, you should go into sales! 🏠

I think I speak for almost all of the students when I say that the study trip to the Max Planck Institute in Cologne was the highlight of the BVA course. On Sunday evening, after checking in to the hostel/hotel, we started off with a walking tour through Cologne, which ended at a Brauhaus where a nice dinner was waiting for us. One important lesson we learned in the Brauhaus, is that it is custom to place your coaster atop of your glass if you did not wish to receive a new beer. If you want to get to know more details about this important lesson, ask one of the alumni of 2018-2019. The next morning – feeling all awake, fresh and fruity of course – we went to the Max Planck Institute by bus, where we were warmly received. We attended several lectures on research topics that were currently going on, and were allowed to see how research on fruitflies and *C. elegans* worms helped in understanding the processes of ageing. Moreover, we learned about new innovations that will be developed in the upcoming years. Think for example of the insulin via the nose! All in all, the visit to the Max Planck Institute in Cologne really added to our understanding by showing a lot of the topics that we heard about during the lectures, in practice.

Closing up, I think that no one was as enthusiastic about this course as Raymond himself. His enthusiasm, dedication and commitment made it so much easier and fun for all the students to learn about the interesting topic of the Biology of Vitality and Ageing. This course was very interesting and a great way to start of our Masters year! ■



Rayray: Drosophila under the microscope!

📍 Max Planck Institute

📍 VAsstudent and 54 others liked this

VAsstudents: Never forget that smell!



RdP: Woop woop 🍻

📍 Brauhaus

📍 VAsstaff and 21 others liked this

ST: Don't forget to put your coaster on your glass 🏠



The job is not as sexy as before

Dr. Victor Chel

Head of training for geriatric medicine specialists

By Dide de Jongh

“The job is not as sexy as before.”

We need more doctors specialised in geriatrics, because of the increasing ageing population. Luckily we are living in The Netherlands! The education of geriatric medicine abroad is not nearly as successfully organized as in our little country. Unfortunately, geriatric medicine is not a very popular choice for medical students; why? I am hoping doctor Victor Chel, educational headmaster of the geriatric medicine department in Leiden, can provide some answers. I knock on the door of Victor Chel's office, with in my hand my prepared interview. When he opens the door, the sun shines through the large windows of his office. He shakes my hand with a friendly smile and offers me some coffee. Now, I am ready to start the interview.

“I want to know what connects people. And, I want to remove the things that separate people.”

“Imagine people talking to each other that they have to go to Leiden for the best education. Sentences like if you studied in Leiden, then you are an excellent doctor!”

Struggling with a ‘cheesy image’

Since 1990, geriatric medicine has been acknowledged as a specialism for medical doctors. Around this time, doctor Chel was working as a doctor in a nursing home. The new specialization struggled with a ‘cheesy image’. Why do young doctors think this way?? Mister Chel found out that in the past, everybody who was interested in this new specialization got accepted. He explains that this happened, because they were happy that people were interested at this new specialization, so everybody just got accepted.

Now, he is happy to tell me that the bar is rising and the selection of the specialisation is getting stricter. Chel proudly says: “the negative image is going down and the positive image is going up”.

Affinity with the older population

Doctor Chel was interested in the older population from an early age on: as a teenager he already worked as caregiver in a nursing home. The thing he likes most about older individuals, is that they have a bright and interesting life story. Also, he explains, doing very little can already mean a great deal to an older individual: it does not have to be complicated at all.

Leadership style

Doctor Chel is leading a team of teachers, interns and general practitioners in training. He indicates that one of the ways to create job satisfaction for his team is by stimulating academic development and innovative ideas. Therefore, he always encourages his team to do something extra. Moreover, being ‘easily approachable is very important to mister Chel. He emphasizes that it is important to create an environment in which employees feel welcome to work in.

Future perspective

Doctor Chel's biggest goal is to improve the education system in Leiden for future geriatric doctors compared to the other universities of the Netherlands. I left his office with a smile on my face. I am very positive about the future of geriatric medicine. Hopefully, this specialisation will become a more popular choice for medical students. ■



*What others
have with babies;
I have with
elderly*

Josine Engels MSc

Vitality and Ageing alumna, Coach and researcher

By Odile Vermeulen

*“I wanted to make
this change.”*

Josine Engels, Vitality and Ageing alumna, works as a Quality of Life (QOL) coach and qualitative researcher. She works both jobs with immense pleasure and determination. Since her teenage years she has been fascinated by older people and has savoured working with them. “What others have with babies, I have always had that with elderly,” she says while laughing.

When working with older people Josine has faced several things that are – according to her – problems in elderly care. One of those problems is the lack of attention given to the preferences of the older people. Josine laments erosion of the personal aspect in caregiving. She experienced that nurses want to give more personalised care, but do not know how to!

*“We are all doing
it together.”*

*“You can really build
relations and make
things change, make
improvements.”*

“I wanted to make this change” she says with great conviction.

Nowadays she provides the nurses with tools to provide more personalised care. About her function as a QOL coach she firmly states: “It’s more like coaching, you don’t take over.” As a QOL coach she pays special attention to the behaviour of nurses towards residents, and helps them to improve interactions with the residents. She does this to ensure that residents enjoy the highest quality of life possible. Moreover, she wants to be a changemaker on different levels. Therefore she is involved in several so-called learning groups in which representatives of different elderly care organisations come together to learn from each other’s approaches. By doing this, she hopes to improve the care that is provided in other elderly care organisations as well.

You could say Josine is a true leader, since she is the coach of 10 wards consisting of approximately 10 nurses and 10 residents each. According to her, a good leader is someone you can count on, trust and feel safe with. This clearly describes her leadership approach. She strongly states: “You need to know what is going on and you need to be visible, be involved.” Besides, she sees all her colleagues as equals and does not like hierarchy: “We are all doing it together,” striving to deliver the best care and ensuring the highest possible quality of life for the residents.

By being a QOL coach and researcher in nursing homes, Josine is working on the life goal she set for herself as a teenager. As a take home message, she wants us to know that “good research and policy are not made behind the desk but are made in practice.” And this defines how she works and what she loves the most about her job. “You can really build relations and make things change, make improvements,” she says with a generous smile on her face. ■



An international trajectory that is leading the LUMC to a privileged place in Europe

Prof. dr. Pancras Hogendoorn
Dean of the LUMC

By Alessandra Gonzalez Avila

“Being the chair is a fun job.”

The LUMC has been the witness of the marvellous journey of Pancras Hogendoorn: after evolving from a medical student to a pathology specialist, the next step in his career was becoming a pathology professor and researcher. After some years of local and international working experiences, he achieved the position of Dean in the executive board of LUMC, where he has been working on innovative solutions for a little over seven years.

As a science lover, he has always seen pathology as a bridge between fundamental research and medical practice. Hogendoorn was enjoying the contacts with students and researchers in the field of pathology, when he was pointed out to be the next Dean. Making the decision to change the academic

“I’m happy with the team around me.”

“It is important what kind of atmosphere you create around your team, you need to lead by being an example and create an atmosphere of idealism.”

and clinical activities for those related to corporate strategy and administrative was a hard one. However – he says this with a smile on his face – ‘it is a fun job’.

Charisma, creativity, communication and courageousness are some of the qualities that make the Dean special. Another important skill is knowing when to delegate a task. He is aware that this does not only include giving instructions, it also comprises transferring responsibility and trust, as well as recognizing who did a good job. Prof. Hogendoorn is very proud of the team around him. Educational directors and other professional experts have helped him to direct a vast number of clinical, academic and research projects, among which those related to the ageing society.

Education is a cornerstone for Dean Hogendoorn in approaching the challenges of an ageing society. Proof of this, is the master program of Vitality and Ageing, which is unique and of added value to both students and teachers. In the research area, there are several projects ranging from fundamental questions on ageing cells, to the connection of these biological processes to the population. The facts that the older population is very diverse and suffers from complex problems such as multi-morbidity, keep him alert. He thinks that the ageing population has a major impact on how a university medical center as well as education and research should be organized. Next to that, here are two other major actions that help maintain the vitality of the older population; the Healthy University and a shift on the vision of the LUMC. These approaches are reflected in LUMC campus The Hague, of which he is very proud of.

Prof. Dr. Pancras Hogendoorn proves to be an admirable example of academic leadership, which is illustrated by his long career, both locally and internationally. He has a lot to teach to others, and his story is an inspiring one: I can now proudly say “I am part of the Leiden University team, the Dean’s team!”. ■



From academic to leader: vision for the LUMC

Prof. dr. Willy Spaan

Chairman Executive Board of the LUMC

By Claire Wang

“We all are aware of our responsibility to make sure older people get the proper care at the proper place and proper time. That doesn’t necessarily have to be at this institution.”

Meeting Prof. Willy Spaan, you may not have guessed that he is the person at the helm of the esteemed Leiden University Medical Center (LUMC). The first impression he gives is that he is genuinely interested in the person in front of him. Professionally, he is in a unique position to influence the future of healthcare education and research in the Netherlands.

Since 2015, Prof. Spaan has served as chairman of the Executive Board of LUMC. He is responsible for setting the strategic direction for the LUMC and for leading his team to adhere to it. In addition, in December of 2018, he was elected chairman of the Dutch Federation of University Medical Centers (NFU).

“You need people around you to trust you, support you, and you also need those people to be very critical of you.”

“I enjoy having people here who tell me that I’m completely wrong.”

Prof. Spaan proudly talks about the care teams at the LUMC and the care they provide to patients, including care for the elderly. However, to him, the LUMC should serve as a leader in the local network of health care services. He spends a lot of time building relationships with the surrounding hospitals, nursing homes, and GPs, etc. in order to ensure a smooth journey for the patient from primary care to hospital to the nursing home, if applicable. When asked about the increasing care demands from the elderly population in Leiden, he emphasizes that it is crucial to direct patients to where they are “best-off.” Increasingly, the LUMC needs to prioritize. As academic institutions, Prof. Spaan says, the UMCs should be the “last resort” kind of facility for complex cases and for acute care; they add the most value to the network by conducting research and educating health professionals.

Trained to be an academic researcher, Prof. Spaan never thought he would be doing what he does today. His journey as a leader started when he finished his postdoc as a molecular biologist in San Diego, California and received funding to build up a research group to develop vaccines in Utrecht. This became a success. In 1990, he became the chair of virology department at Leiden Faculty of Medicine, and a full professor by age 34. Gradually, he found himself drawn to administration because he enjoyed facilitating people.

Clearly, Prof. Spaan leads by example. By being very open to criticism, he fosters an environment that rewards openness and integrity among the people he works with. “In my room, people can really be offensive. There are no consequences attached to being critical about me. I enjoy having people here who tell me that I’m completely wrong,” he said with a smile.

In conclusion, Prof. Spaan sets an excellent example to follow your callings and respond to the needs of the society, particularly those of the elderly population, by doing what is right. ■



I've seen a lot, but I've changed a lot as well

Ingrid Parker

Location manager 'Huis op de Waard' of care organization Marente

By Rozemarijn Beemster

At a very sunny day in February I had the opportunity to interview Mrs. I. Parker, location manager of 'Huis op de Waard', part of care organization Marente. As I stepped inside the building I immediately noticed that everything was very new in the nursing home and that a lot of daylight came through the windows which created a very bright environment. A few moments later I met Mrs. Parker, a very energetic women who perfectly matched with the bright atmosphere of the nursing home.

We started the conversation by talking about her career. Already when she started with her education, she knew she wanted to do something in the healthcare. After a few job switches she ended at her biggest, most successfull

"Care should be arranged closer and more friendly."

position as healthcare manager at Marente. When she started at Marente she had a lot of ambitions as to improve the healthcare regarding the well-being and care of the patients. She thought that care should be arranged closer to the patients and more friendly. In the past ten years Mrs. Parker has revived three different nursing homes of Marente, both at financial and qualitative level. For me this sounds as a very big achievement which can only be reached with a lot of effort and passion.

In her current function as location manager, Mrs. Parkers sees herself as a leader, a natural leader. When she directs others, she always takes the qualities of her team members into account. However, sometimes she has to think out of the box. For her, success is reached when a nursing home gets a quality mark, when employees stay because they like the working atmosphere, or when the client council and the nursing home residents are satisfied. The two main obstacles she has experienced in her work in the healthcare sector are the shortage of employees and the amount of paperwork, struggles most healthcare employees have to deal with.

At this moment Mrs Parker has already stopped at Marente. Nevertheless, she still has great ambitions of which she hopes that her successor could put them into practice. She thinks there are a lot of things that can be changed in the nursing home itself to optimize the liveability and the accessibility.

In the future Mrs. Parker is going to set up her own coaching programme in which she wants to share her experiences in the healthcare with others. In this way she wants to improve the elderly care in the Netherlands. And how she thinks about the general future of the elderly in the Netherlands? According to her, cities should become more age-friendly by a cooperation of different stakeholders.

When I walked home after the interview I realized that there should be more energetic persons in the healthcare sector like Mrs. Parker. Hopefully the successor of Mrs. Parker will keep up her good work in the future. ■



*We want
to support
people*

Alzheimer Nederland

Julie Meerveld

Manager Representation of interests and Regional Aid at Alzheimer

By Anne Meerveld

“I’m typically a case of growing with the organization. Beforehand I didn’t think I would receive a leadership function.”

Nurse and health scientist Julie Meerveld has a tremendous heart when it comes to improving care for the vulnerable. At the moment, Julie is devoted to Alzheimer Nederland as manager advocacy for dementia patients and their informal caregivers. She has played a major part in the development of this organization and she aims to give dementia patients a voice. Thanks to the effort of 3.700 remarkable volunteers, the development of the ‘Alzheimer telephone’ for a sincere listener and the provision of information through campaigns, Alzheimer Nederland aims to give patients and their loved ones the best quality of life possible. Beside this wonderful vision, Alzheimer Nederland is committed to raise money for research to prevent, treat or delay dementia.

“I’m more of global frameworks. Within these it all needs to happen, and you can show me what you’ve came up with.”

“I think the beauty of Alzheimer Nederland is that we are an organization that observes what is needed at the moment and what is the most suitable way to organize this. Flexible.”

As a manager, Julie is responsible for several tasks and a variety of people. She leads the regional teams of employees, prepares annual plans, evaluates results and justifies finances. One of her most important tasks, she states, is to find out the needs of the volunteers that are necessary in order to provide support for patients and family. Likewise, she emphasizes the importance of recruiting information from patients and informal caregivers, the difficulties they experience and how they feel support is needed. Julie’s teams change in time, making her change her managing style as well. ‘I think the most important, and at the same time most difficult aspect, is to clarify to everyone where we are going, what the shared goals are.’

Healthcare is a dynamic and vivid sector, yet it can be hard to make a difference in this world. However, even the tiniest changes can be valuable. Therefore, people need to be committed and try as long as needed; eventually the effort will be rewarded. Regarding Julie’s effort, she can proudly say that there are 246 Alzheimer café’s all over the country and that more and more volunteers are standing up for the needs of dementia patients.

Although Julie already achieved crucial breakthroughs in the world of dementia, she still aspires to improve the guidance and support at home for these people. A major challenge, since the number of dementia patients is thought to increase while the number of informal caregivers is expected to drop. ‘Dementia is not part of the normal ageing process, but it’s a terrible disease with a serious impact on daily life. In this dynamic sector, we can use every support. So if you want to pick a challenging future, choose policy and help people with dementia and their informal caregivers.’ ■



Connector, coach & expert

Yolande Smit

Interim manager at Smit-management

By Yani Langenberg

"You need a bit of Florence Nightingale in your blood to work in health care."

On a sunny morning in March, I sat in the bustling breakfast area of a Berlin hotel and picked up the phone to call Yolande Smit, an interim manager for health care who took the leap to start her own firm at the age of 52. Picking up the phone with a bright-sounding voice, she seemed ready to take on any questions I could throw at her, and uniquely fearless in a way that seems to only radiate off of those who have found their calling in life.

Allow me to give you a brief introduction to the career of a successful female leader in health care who decided that "she could do better" – and did just that.

"If employees do well, high quality of care will automatically follow."

"I hope I can continue connecting, coaching and guiding young people in the world of health care."

Yolande Smit's career trajectory has been filled with a diverse collection of positions, but 'care' has always been a keyword. She held a variety of jobs in nursing as well as management, while simultaneously juggling her home-life as a single mother. Over the course of her career, Yolande's confidence – that she could contribute a singular perspective – grew ever stronger. And maybe more importantly, the variety of interim work is what kept things interesting for her after more than 40 years in the industry. She took the plunge and founded her own interim management agency, Smit Management, in 2010.

Why do you do what you do?

Ms Smit loves working with new team members in order to achieve their potential. Her message to the teams and organizations she works with is as follows: "If employees do well, high quality of care will automatically follow".

She is known for asking new teams confronting questions such as "why do you do what you do?" in an effort to inspire them to reflect on their motivation. One of the most essential elements in her approach is finding connection: between team members and their clients, within the team and within the larger context of the organization.

Ms Smit thinks everyone in health care should learn to listen. Sometimes that means that professionals need to put themselves in their clients' shoes: "If you can't get up by yourself and nurses keep saying they'll help you, but they never do, it becomes clear what something like that does to a person". Being a big believer of learning by example, ms Smit also sees opportunities for seasoned nurses: when the physical work becomes too demanding, they can divert their attention toward training young up-and-comers.

We concluded our conversation by talking about ms Smit's own plans for the future: "I hope I can continue connecting, coaching and guiding young people in the world of health care". After getting a sneak peek into her inner workings, my hope for ms Smit is that she's able to continue on her quest for improvement and effect a much-needed change in the way elderly care is organized: with quality of life as the top priority. ■



JPL: They see me rolling, they ageing...

📍 LUMC
❤️ J_Lo and 32 others liked this
AvdW: 🤖🤖



VAminor: Explaining why minor students are awesome

📍 CZ-4
❤️ liked by 45 people
LM: 🍷🍷
MdV: 🍷🍷



Salsaparilla: Press conference West Waalmond

❤️ liked by 49 people
Socialneighbourhoodteam: cooperating 🏠
Healthcenter: 🏠🏠



jvtVA: Christmas activity! 🎅🎁

❤️ MFLS and 28 others liked this
VAinternationals: fall down 7 times, stand up 8!
VAstudents: so much fun!



VAinternationals: Trying the cactus beer!

📍 Delirium bar, Brussels
❤️ VAstudents and 57 others liked this
RdP: What about some real beer 🍷



WG3: Lekker met de meiden lunchen

📍 van der Werff
❤️ AA, AM and 47 others liked this



debatinstituut: Debating with the V&A students

📍 CZ-4
❤️ debatinstituut and 38 others liked this

Dear master Vitality and Ageing Alumni,



I really loved working with all of you. My first real experience was during our Older Individual introduction session 'What is health?'. You had to rank the socially isolated Naïma, the divorced breast cancer patient Noni, the overweight Iwan who was happily in love, and the joking Alzheimer patient Sjaan according to their health and vitality. I enjoyed your respectful and active discussion, and my appreciation of you as a very nice and talented group of students further increased during the course. For example, I admired how you did cope with all creative sessions in which we simply asked you to take those coloured felt-pens and draw 'older individual journeys', concepts of brain games, prototypes and other weird stuff that was very new for all of you.

If I would have to rank my most vital experience with you, the top position would be taken by the session together with patients of the elderly council and how you did so very well in discussing your plans with them. I would be very curious to learn whether you will ever come across felt-pen sessions during your future career, but at least you are well prepared now! 🧐

Thank you all for the wonderful time, I wish you all the best!

Sandra van Dijk
PhD
Course coordinator Older Individual



And now, let's get creative: The Older Individual

The course with a hundred deadlines for videos and drafts where we searched for our 'inner plants'

By Michelle Zonneveld

Since we all became experts in the field of the biology of ageing, we went a little bit deeper into treatment plans in the course The Older Individual. A lot of different researchers came to tell us about their projects and about how to innovate care for older patients. Part of this course was designing our own innovation. I remember a lot of faces from the day we heard about the fact that we had to do this. I think everyone can remember thinking: 'How am I ever going to be able to do this?'. Luckily, we all did, and I am sure we learned more than only designing a tool for ageing people; we also learned how to deal with video software and how to sell your product to an audience!

The first half of the course took place before the Christmas break. The lectures and workgroups functioned as a sort of building-ground for the innovating that we were going to do after the holidays. We began by studying definitions of successful ageing and trying to place them in the context of our own cultures. Being a diverse group from multiple countries, it was interesting to hear what everybody considered "successful" from their personal

point of view. Next, we also dealt with some of the main issue's individuals run into as they become older: loneliness; social isolation; dementia. We learned what coping mechanisms are available for dealing with these issues. We even discussed the taboo surrounding sexuality at old age! Although this lecture was filled with laughter and seemed a bit odd, we all came to realize that sex is a basic human right to which everyone should have access, regardless of age.

One of the more interdisciplinary lectures from this course shed light on the narratives elderly use to describe their role in society. Also known as cultural narratives, older individuals can potentially lose their purpose in life following, for example, retirement. But what triggers them to think like this? Furthermore, why should elderly perceive themselves as purposeless, or sexually inactive individuals? We thoroughly discussed the fact that society might lead us to think in a certain way whereas we, ourselves, should take control of our own story! Not only was this a kind of wake-up call, it was also inspiring for us as students to begin "owning" our own story!

One of the most discussed topics in lectures are the geriatric giants. As previously mentioned, many of the innovations made by students were based on these problems commonly faced by elderly. This includes immobility, incontinence, intellectual impairment, but also falling (sorry for ending the alliteration!). You can imagine that dealing with these problems might make daily living activities very difficult! Furthermore, optimal treatments for these giants simply don't always exist... But what if someone feels they have suffered for long enough? And prefers to end their life before deterioration hits? This notion, also called self-determination, is a crucial part of living wills. Elderly were invited to our workgroups to present their living wills which also offered us the opportunity to ask questions. The main message from the elderly was: make sure to make your decisions before it's too late!



After the exam (which was the first computer-based exam in the LUMC!) and a lot of beeping sounds, we finally had our Christmas holiday! Following these nice two weeks off, we started the second half of the course. This period was dominated by the project which had been looming over us before the break: the innovation paper! We were challenged to invent an innovation, write an essay about it and make a video promoting the product or service. We also viewed multiple examples for inspiration such as the Izi-housing and IJsfontijn. ZonMW even invited us to discuss the process of innovating and practicalities that come along with it!

Aside from this project, the academic development line simulated a moral deliberation in each workgroup. Each given a different role, ranging from mediator to an older individuals' daughter, we discussed and debated about a moral dilemma concerning an elder person. Though challenging at times, it led to super interesting discussions. Some of us even took our roles quite seriously and emotions ran high!

The last phase of this period consisted of presenting our demo-product to a group of elderly in order to receive feedback. We then finished up our videos and papers, and some of us even had the opportunity to present the videos to the Elderly Council!

All-in-all, OI was a challenging course for the not-so-creative students amongst us. However, it provided a completely different perspective on elderly compared to the previous course. Gaining insight into the lives of older individuals and their problems will only make us better ageing experts! ■

Academic development: students become professionals



The course Academic Development stimulates students to develop competences in academic thinking, academic skills and personal/career development. I enjoyed to see you grow in all three aspects! You dived into philosophy and ethics to address your academic way of thinking. In debates and moral deliberations you were able to unravel discussions by appointing underlying principles and values. It was impressive to see! Academic skills were trained in workshops. During the programme, you followed workshops about communication and working in teams and organisations. In the leadership game, you put your skills into practice and were creative and original. The personal/career development was supported by mentoring and orientation visits. All of you started the Master's programme with ambitions and visions for the future. You followed your paths and used the orientation visits to broaden your perspective on your future working fields. Now you finished your Master's. I know for sure that you will find your way into the professional world!

Good luck!

Yvonne Drewes, PhD

Associate professor

Course coordinator Academic Development

Is living independently until old age possible?

Yes, it is – a visit to the IZI housing in The Hague

By Manik Kharismayekti

The increasing number of older people presents challenges for the government, organizations, health providers and communities. As students who learn about the older individuals and organizations in ageing society, we are required to play a role in answering these challenges. One of them is through technology. Technology can help older persons to stay independent and still establish social contact with their environment such as with family, friends, neighbours, caregivers or health providers.

To introduce the importance of technology in the elderly care, the master students of Vitality and Ageing, Leiden University had got the opportunity to visit IZI house in The Hague. Izi house, pronounced as 'Easy' house, is a model home to experience or showcase smart solutions to support the older people. We can find simple innovations like extra grip in the bathroom or handy kitchen stuff to complex innovations such as digital door bell camera, robot Tessa that gives support to demented people and lifestyle sensors that are able to record the daily activities and report them to health workers.

Izi house is a project initiated by The Hague municipality in order to create 'The Hague as a senior-friendly city'. The Hague municipality encourages and facilitates active cooperation with parties such as entrepreneurs, health providers, engineers and older persons to produce the renewal and implementation of health technology. As potential users of the innovation results, the older persons are asked to share their ideas and experiences at the early stage of the innovation. Therefore, the smart solutions meet their needs and can make their life more comfortable and easier in their own home. ■



Committees, coffee and cookies

A visit to ZonMw in The Hague

By Kyma Schnoor

On a rainy day in February we visited ZonMw in the Hague. We went by train and you can imagine when traveling with a group of 40 people in a train... it draws attention. Luckily we all arrived safely at ZonMw where they explained about the aim of ZonMw and the details about the funding process. We, as nice students, listened, asked questions, had coffee and ate cookies.

After the lecture, we were able to experience this funding process by ourselves. Divided into groups, we had to design a plan on how to apply for funding. Again there was a lot of coffee, tea and soft drinks... which made us all motivated. In the short period of time in which we had to make a plan and

present it to the other groups, we learned that it is quite hard to make a good implementation plan and that a lot of stakeholders are involved. Especially, you want everybody to be satisfied and you also really want the money.

The second part of the afternoon we had to be a committee that judged implementation plans of the other group. We learned that it is very hard to decide which plan was actually worth our money. After all, you were not only deciding about a lot of money but also about people's health. So to summarise our experiences, we learned a lot in a short timeframe and ZonMw gave us a good indication of what their organisation is about. ■



Health Council

Another orientation visit to The Hague

By Marianna van Wijk

On a cold day in March this year, our whole group lined up for the security check at the entrance to the Health Council in The Hague. We were very fortunate to participate in this orientation trip as part of the OAS (Organization of the Ageing Society) unit and were looking forward to experiencing the inner functioning of this important organization in health care.

After navigating the hallways and admiring the beautiful interior of this building, we gathered in one of the spacious meeting rooms and enjoyed coffee and cookies while we listened to an informative presentation about the goals of the Health Council within the organizational setting.

The Health Council is an independent advisory committee that operates within legal obligations to advise the government about population health issues and health care. During a working group we were divided into three groups and we had to formulate a few advisory questions to propose to the Health Council about a subject related to ageing and vitality. Some really relevant issues were raised, and we enjoyed the opportunity to discuss these questions with the members of the council. We gained clear insight into the functioning of a committee within the Health Council and we saw a strong organization with great research and policymaking opportunities. On our way out

we noticed the quiet sitting areas and wondered what it felt like to sit there. Who knows, maybe one day some of us will walk around in this beautiful building, sitting in one of these sitting areas, bringing great ideas to the ageing and vitality table! ■



Ministerie van Volksgezondheid,

Visit to Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sports

By Ellen Sai

Keeping everyone in the Netherlands healthy and well is the motto of the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sports. The ambition of this ministry is to keep everyone healthy as long as possible by promoting healthy lifestyles and social participation but also provide help to people with limitations. Currently, they are focusing on a policy to improve the quality of the nursing homes in the Netherlands. But implementing policies is never an easy job, often several things need to be changed before a policy can really do its work.

The biggest issues regarding improving the quality of nursing homes are finding sufficient care providers, providing an actual image about the nursing homes and increasing the administrative power of the care providers. During this visit we were representing the Ministry of

Health, Welfare and Sports and had to come up with ideas to solve one of the problems. This was a pretty difficult process especially when it comes to finding the best solutions that can cover everything and satisfy everybody involved. Every group came with brilliant ideas from campaigns to promote what actual nursing homes are like to collaboration between Master V&A and the Ministry to increase the administrative power of care providers.

All in all, it was a good learning process and gave us an idea on what issues the Ministry is facing every day and why it takes such a long time before a policy is implemented. By putting ourselves in(to) the shoes of someone else, we finally know what is really going on in the world of ministries and policies! ■

Social welfare in Leiden

An orientation visit to Radius

By Jennifer Wang

How much resources and support do we need in order to continue creating a platform where people can gather and do activities together, for the long run? This is the question I ask myself before my visit to Radius, a social welfare organization in communities throughout Leiden.

In the Netherlands, 30% of the population visits their general practitioners frequently and repetitively. These people often report loneliness, mental problems or sleeping disorders and the complaints remain even when medically treated. If this is the case, they can be referred to a wellbeing coach that assesses the clients' overall health in comprehensive aspects (including positive health model and resilience model). This is a project performed in the Netherlands, as well as in other European countries, called social prescribing. The wellbeing coach encourages, channels and accompanies the clients to engage in activities for the first time, according to their interest, talents, and possibilities. Additional assistance like transport or financial support are provided if necessary.

This approach provides clients (mostly the elderly) an opportunity to join the community network and also to gain social contacts within the society. This project is funded by the municipality, and the referral to a wellbeing coach is covered by insurance companies as well. Besides, volunteers who are coached and trained are one of the important sources of manpower when delivering the before mentioned assistance. After several weeks of social prescribing, there will be a follow-up by the wellbeing coach. It is also important for general practitioners to make regular contacts with wellbeing coaches.

The social prescribing project is still an ongoing process, but it has already reached a win-win outcome. Participants can increase both their social contacts and physical activity. Furthermore, a closer collaboration has also been created between primary care and social work professionals, as well as between social and medical organizations. ■



Dear master Vitality and Ageing Alumni,



February to April is an exciting period each year because it is 'OAS time'. In 2019 there was some extra tension in the run up to the block because of the jump from almost 20 students in 2018 to almost 40 this year. The new working group setup with junior teachers and the first-time visit to Brussel also added to the excitement. Looking back we are very satisfied with the outcome and as always it was inspiring to teach and learn alongside a very diverse group of students. As we tidy up the remainders of the block, learn from the evaluations and make plans for next year we look forward to the graduation celebrations and summer vacation!



Tony Poot & Suzan van der Pas



NGuldemand: At the EU with VA students!
❤️ VStaff and 65 others liked this
VAstudents Fun 🙌



VAstudents: On our way to Brussels!
❤️ VStaff and 46 others liked this
SB 🚆



VAstudents: At the EU HQ!
❤️ VStaff and 78 others liked this
manwithmoustache 🤓

The policy part of ageing: Organisation of an Ageing Society

Instead of focusing on diseases or biology,
we now focused on policies and acts

By Dorine van Staalduinen

OAS was a course that was, must be said, challenging for almost everyone. Even if your background studies included policy and management, this was a challenging course. For the more medical schooled students in our group it was also a challenge to look more into the laws and policies that are present in healthcare. During this course we not only had lectures in the LUMC in Leiden, but also at the campus The Hague. Being in The Hague made us feel closer with the policy and government, since the Dutch government is located in this city. The course Organization of the Ageing Society focuses on the healthcare system, including all the complicated aspects. We learned a major overview going from economics to, as earlier mentioned, law. We were confronted with subjects such as Value Based Health Care as well as Integrated Care. The overall question that stood central during this course was: How is the healthcare system currently organized for the elderly and who will we take care of the elderly in this system in the future?

Most of us probably knew how complicated the Dutch system was regarding funding and insurance, but this subject made us realize how hard it actually is. Working from macro-level governance systems via meso-level management to micro-level interactions, we learned to analyze issues for the ageing society. We will never forget the question that remained during a lot of lectures: if an elderly needs a wheelchair, how is that financed then? Who is responsible? In my opinion, the last question is the most interesting question in this course; who is responsible for that ageing society? We as students now have the most up-to-date information and knowledge regarding the organization of this ageing society.

During this course we had the opportunity to write a policy brief. For the policy brief we had to step into the role of a junior policy maker at the Dutch Ministry of Health. As this junior policy maker you just came back from a study visit in another country, where you found something amazing that should be applied in the Netherlands as well. In the policy brief we reported these

findings and wrote a recommendation for the Dutch system to implement this new policy or project. This assignment made us feel like real policy makers and it also showed us what other countries in the world are doing regarding healthcare for the elderly. We clearly did not visit the countries ourselves, but did all of the research via international literature. In that way we not only learned about writing a policy recommendation, but we also learned a lot about how other international healthcare systems are organized.

The last week of the course focused on leadership and entailed the famous Vitality & Ageing leadership game. In this 4-day game we used and applied the knowledge we learnt during the OAS course. Two instructors from outside the LUMC prepared the game together with the master staff. Every day we faced another challenge which we had to solve in groups of approximately four students. Every day another team member was named the leader, which entailed different tasks per day. The game gave us a real life experience how to handle for example: crisis situations in healthcare, difficult negotiations or conflicts with other parties. It showed us how complicated the system is and how hard it sometimes is to make a healthcare project work. It also gave us the great opportunity to act as a leader in a safe surrounding, real future leaders were born this week!

Taken it all together, this course gave us the opportunity to experience real life healthcare. Next to that it ended a perfect circle of courses: from the biology of ageing people, via diseases in the older population to the organization of this older population. It made the masters complete and made sure that we could graduate as all-round professionals in ageing healthcare. ■



Vitality and Ageing Top Opleiding

This year, two special occasions happened. First of all, we were awarded by the Nationale Studenten Enquete as Top Opleiding (Best Master's Programme'). We were very proud of this award. Therefore, we celebrated this with a lunch near the bridge of building 1 and 3, in front of lecture hall 2.



Thesis awards Leiden Universiteit

Vitality and Ageing alumnae Berivan Yildiz was awarded by the LUMC with her master's thesis at the Leidse Onderwijs-prijzen. Her research was dedicated to a population health related topic with the following research question: Resilience in an ageing and migration context: What can we learn from Turkish older adults in Denmark? She was given an award for further research from Prof. mr. Carel Stolker, Rector Magnificus & Chairman of the Executive Board of the Universiteit Leiden.



Research and evidence served as the basis for the internship period and the thesis at the end of the Master of Vitality and Ageing. In this course, we supplied you with the tools needed to design and perform your own research, and to write a smart scientific report. This year we had a beautiful comprehensive program that consisted of a combination of learning, understanding and using various methodologic techniques to prepare for the internship. All teachers enjoyed working with you, especially because of the exchange they had with you during the lessons. The different backgrounds and different ways of looking at research has supported lively discussions! Thank you for your enthusiastic participation!

I would like to wish you all the best in integrating research and evidence in your future work, be it as a researcher or as a user of research results.

Jeanet Blom
Course coordinator Research and Evidence

My name is Carla Bakker and I am the coordinator of the Science & Career Module. It has been a wonderful year working closely with you students, helping you to find a suitable internship and supporting you to think of what life would look like after the Master's.

In total 37 of 39 students found an internship. 6 students did their internship abroad (Bern, Copenhagen, Boston, Sydney, Auckland), 19 at the LUMC and 12 elsewhere in The Netherlands. Of these internships 3 were on a BVA topic, 7 on a policy and 26 on an OI topic, spread 50/50 over qualitative and quantitative research.

It was a most valuable experience seeing students rise to professionals in the field of elderly care and science.

I wish you all the best for the future and good luck with your career wherever your inspiration takes you!

Carla Bakker
Course coordinator Science and Career



Working at the other end of the world

By Odile Vermeulen

For my internship I went to “the land of the long white cloud” – Aoteroa, New Zealand. I wanted to work on a culture-related research topic during my internship because I am fascinated by different cultures.

At the University of Auckland, I was offered an opportunity to study the influence of culture on loneliness in older adults. This topic, in combination with the beautiful country that New Zealand is, made me decide to do my internship at the other end of the world.

For my study I am looking at data from the Netherlands and New Zealand, including Māori and non-Māori. Māori are the indigenous people of New Zealand and, unfortunately, they have been suppressed for a long time in history. This suppression has contributed to social, economic and health disadvantages for them.

“A country full of different cultures, which was one of the reasons to come here on my academic journey.” ✓✓

However, a lot is done nowadays to make up for this.

With my research I hope to contribute to a better understanding on how culture influences the experience of loneliness, which can eventually contribute to development of customized programs to prevent loneliness in older persons from different cultural backgrounds, and particularly Māori. I am based in the Department of General Practice and Primary Health where I have my own desk - with a window view! More importantly I am having a great time here thanks to all my kind colleagues in the department. I learn a lot from them during morning tea and lunch when we share food and have interesting and fun conversations about New Zealand, different cultures, health-related topics, food and many other random subjects.

“Moreover, they prove what it said about people in New Zealand: that they are very helpful!” ✓✓

“The week days are great fun but the weekends are even better, because every weekend I go out to further explore this beautiful country and its cultures.” ✓✓

Everyone is always very keen to help me if I get stuck on the statistics for my research, when my English is letting me down or when other problems occur, such as having no blankets for my bed or when my bicycle broke down. Not only am I learning a lot about myself, New Zealand, different cultures and doing quantitative research, but I also have the opportunity to attend the many health-related seminars the University of Auckland offers. So far, these seminars have been very diverse and interesting, and I even had the chance to meet the Minister of Health from New Zealand who came to talk about the health challenges that New Zealand currently faces! ■



“I am beginning to understand what is truly therapeutic about a place.” ✓✓



“It’s not just the medicine or the garden or any element, it’s the whole atmosphere.” ✓✓

“It is important to see the whole person, even when one has dementia and is seemingly “not there” anymore.” ✓✓



A peek inside a holistic therapeutic environment

My experience at Leendert Meeshuis, Bilthoven

By Claire wang

Under the guidance of Professor Erik Baars from Leiden University of Applied Sciences, I conducted a mixed-method study to investigate whether the anthroposophical nursing home prescribes fewer psychotropic drugs for anxiety and sleep issues and what the used therapeutic tools are.

Imagine a nursing home you would be willing to live in when you are old, when you have dementia. What would it be like? A good therapeutic environment has to do with both the physical environment and how you are cared for. My internship takes place at the beautiful Leendert Meeshuis, one of the two nursing homes in The Netherlands dedicated to the anthroposophical approach. Here, I am beginning to understand what is truly therapeutic about a place.

I found this internship because I was interested in learning more about holistic ways of wellness and care, particularly for the elderly. I was thrilled when I found out that the Leiden University of Applied Sciences has a

Professorship in Anthroposophic Healthcare, and Prof. Baars was enthusiastic to involve me in their new research project, which is to study anthroposophical care organizations around the Netherlands.

“It’s not just the medicine or the garden or any element, it’s the whole atmosphere,” says Dr. Corinne Merkens, one of the two elderly care physicians who are also trained in anthroposophical medicine. I spent my time talking to the doctors, nurses, volunteers, and various staff members to learn about their daily work. Also, I joined music therapy, art therapy, and Eurhythmy sessions to understand what the therapists did and observed how the residents participated and reacted.

It is important to see the whole person, even when one has dementia and is seemingly “not there” anymore. What is most striking about this integrative model of care is that, on top of the multidisciplinary team of professionals, somehow, the “soul” is also taken care of, and accepted, to continue the journey of life. ■

Composing the NOCSO Research Agenda Emergency Medicine for Older People

By Mareline Olthof

Me being one of the V&A master students doing the final internship within the LUMC, I was asked to write something about my research project. Since April 15th, I have been one of the interns at the Department of Internal Medicine, section of Gerontology and Geriatrics at the LUMC together with Lies, Gali and Lina. Despite the fact that our research projects differed a lot, it was nice to work at the same department, to help and support each other when necessary, and to enjoy the free lunches on Wednesday of course. I think I can say on behalf of all of us that we have had a nice and enlightening experience at this department.

Let's go back to my own research project. For this research project, I am doing my internship in the LUMC with dr. S.P. Mooijaart (internist geriatric medicine) as my daily supervisor. However, I am not writing my thesis

"Geriatric care is complex and requires a multidisciplinary approach."

for the geriatric medicine department of the LUMC, but for the Nationaal Onderzoeks Consortium Spoezorg voor Ouderen (NOC SO); a Dutch research consortium with dr. S.P. Mooijaart as chairman. NOC SO consists of several researchers and (care) professionals, including elderly themselves, that collaborate in order to improve the care and the required multidisciplinary approach. NOC SO represents all parties involved in the emergency care chain.

In November 2018, NOC SO was founded and an action plan for 2019 was launched. One of the action points mentioned in this plan was composing a National Research Agenda Emergency Medicine for Older People. The research project I did during my 14-weeks internship was devoted to composing this research agenda. The aim of this research agenda is to fill the research gap in the field of emergency medicine for older people by gaining insight into the knowledge gap among (care) professionals and elderly themselves; which questions

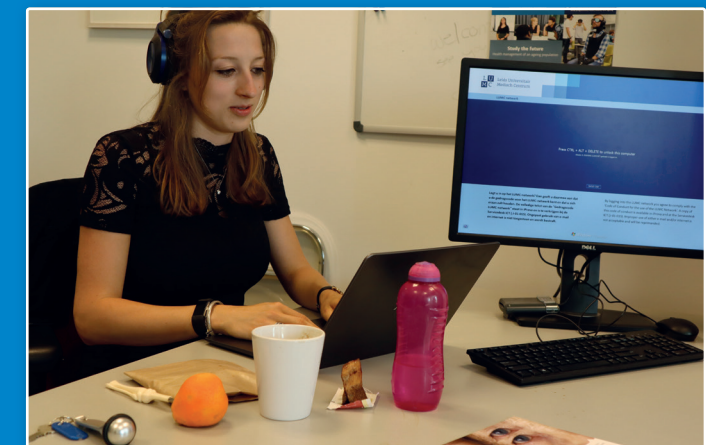
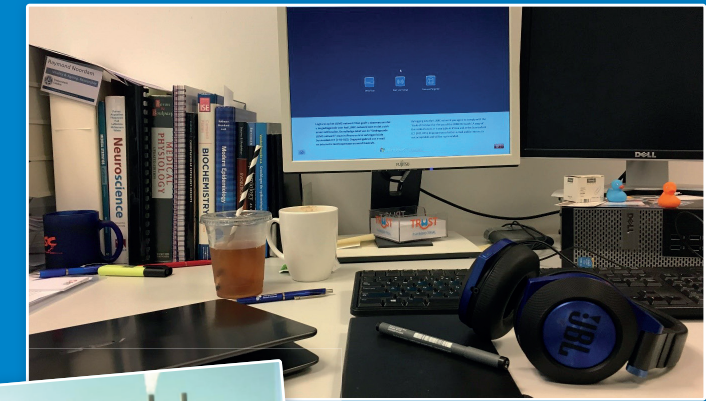
"I wanted to help fill the research gap in the field of emergency medicine for older people."

"I think my internship is of added value because of the national scope, and because it can help with future research."

concerning the improvement of care for acutely ill older people do they have and do they consider as important?

So what did I actually do? For my research project I did qualitative research by using two modified Delphi-rounds and the process was divided in three phases. In the first phase, I published an online survey on the NOC SO website with the question to the respondents which questions they have concerning the improvement of emergency medicine for acutely ill older people and that should be answered. In the second phase, all received inputs were screened based on relevance, duplications and specificity. A final long-list with the remaining questions was constituted and transformed into a second online survey, in which participants were asked to prioritize all questions based on relevance by allocating a score, ranging from 0% to 100%, to each individual question. After closing this second survey, the ten questions with the highest average score did constitute the overall top-10 of research questions for the National Research Agenda Emergency Medicine for Older People. This Research Agenda will later be used for subsidy applications in order to enable actual research into those research topics of interest.

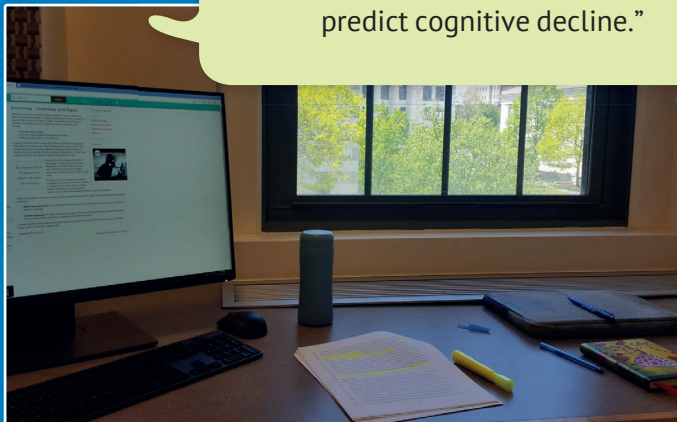
When I was writing this story, the second survey was not closed yet. Therefore, unfortunately, I can't tell you about the results and the overall top-10 yet. After this internship, I will finalize this project by writing a Dutch version and continue with other research activities for NOC SO. ■



“A challenging, as well as a very enriching learning experience.” ✓✓



“Help to identify biomarkers that predict cognitive decline.” ✓✓



“I couldn’t have wished for a more fulfilling end of my time at V&A!” ✓✓



THESIS STORIES

Studying sleep in the vibrant city of Boston

By Veerle van der Klei

Good sleep is necessary at all ages in order to maintain normal brain functioning and to consolidate memories. However, sleep quality and patterns change with age, which are thought to precede the clinical manifestation of cognitive impairment and Alzheimer’s disease. Unraveling the complex underlying mechanisms of this process may help to identify biomarkers that predict cognitive decline and to find therapeutic targets for dementia care. This was the topic that I focused on for my thesis at the Department of Sleep Epidemiology of the Brigham and Women’s Hospital (BWH) and Harvard Medical School (HMS) in Boston, Massachusetts, USA.

During the master Vitality and Ageing I was offered the amazing opportunity to go to Boston for a 15-week research internship, where I joined professor Susan Redline and dr. Shaun Purcell on their work regarding the relationship between sleep and cognitive decline within the ageing population. The Sleep Division at the BWH has access to a rich collection of nation-wide cohort studies, which allowed me to study this intriguing relationship and to gain hands-on experience with applying statistical, causal models to large data sets by using R: a challenging, as well as a very enriching learning experience.

On top of my individual research project it was very valuable to be part of the medical community at the Longwood Medical Area in Boston. In this stimulating environment I was able to shadow several neurologists at their clinics within the memory disorders unit and the sleep disorders department, I attended multiple interesting talks (e.g. the Women’s Brain Initiative Symposium) and I loved going out to the classical summer concerts at the HMS courtyard with my colleagues from sleep. Furthermore, it was interesting to compare the American and Dutch health care systems in discussion with other medical students and to learn more about other internationals visiting this renowned area.

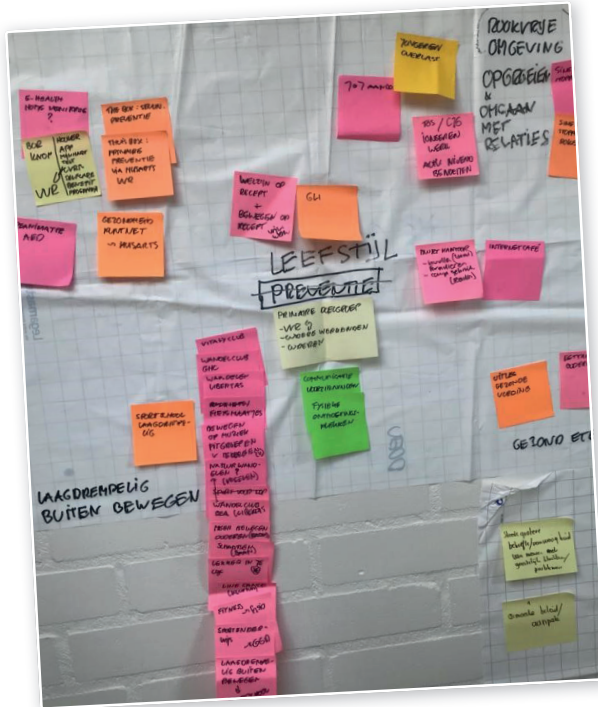
Luckily my American experience wasn’t only about work though. Living in a house with eight other Dutch students I also had the time of my life exploring the Boston area: from going to jazz cafés and breweries with live music, to entering the dance-off at an all American Red Sox game, and taking weekend trips to hike and mountain bike in the most gorgeous National Parks of Vermont and Maine. Making these new friendships and enjoying summer nights on our porch were the perfect additions to really live the American dream, and I couldn’t have wished for a more fulfilling end of my time at V&A. ■

Stevenshof Vitaal

Reducing the risk of cardiovascular disease in elderly GGD Hollands Midden, Leiden

By Anne Meerveld

I am doing my internship at the GGD HM, at the Department of Epidemiology and Public Health. For 14 weeks, I am supporting a project called 'Stevenshof Vitaal'. This project is part of a bigger project called 'Wijzer in de Wijk', which requires collaboration with the participating municipalities Alphen aan de Rijn and The Hague.



All municipalities aim to reduce health differences in their districts using an integrated health approach, but different municipalities have different target populations. Stevenshof Vitaal is created for the elderly population of the Stevenshof in Leiden. During the previous decades, the Stevenshof was the lively and ideal family district of Leiden: a very homogenous group of inhabitants. However, at the moment, the population is ageing rapidly, which causes different health risks and an increase in healthcare costs. In the specific population of the Stevenshof, mainly cardiovascular diseases (CVD) are a common phenomenon. Therefore, in collaboration with a various group of concerned health care professionals, the GGD aims to reduce the risk of CVD by using an integrated health approach in collaboration with the inhabitants themselves.

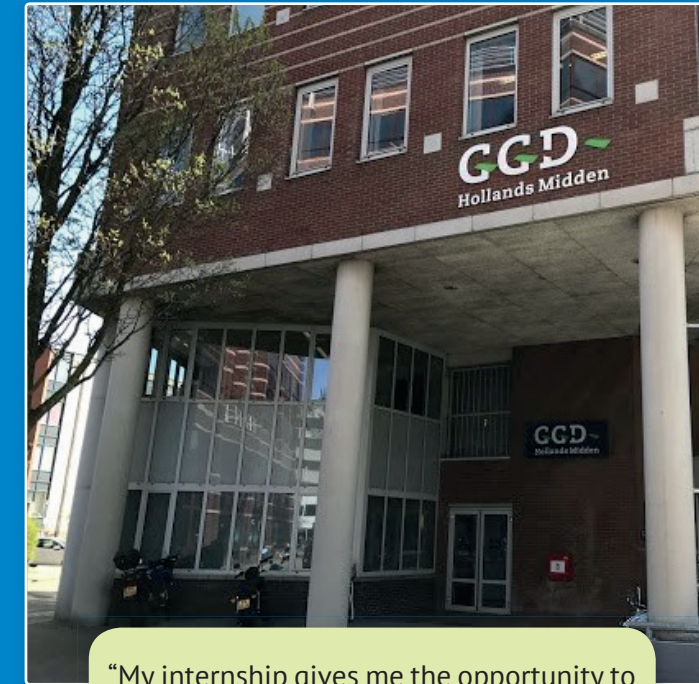
My role as an intern at the GGD and as part of the project, starts with my own research question: which interventions and activities, that fit an integrated district plan, can contribute to the prevention of cardiovascular disease by increasing physical activity and decreasing overweight, in the pre-pensioner population (50-65 years) of the Stevenshof, Leiden? To answer this question, I am doing qualitative research in which I am using semi-structured interviews. I have conversations with healthcare professionals who are involved in the

"It is challenging and it really requires a proactive attitude."

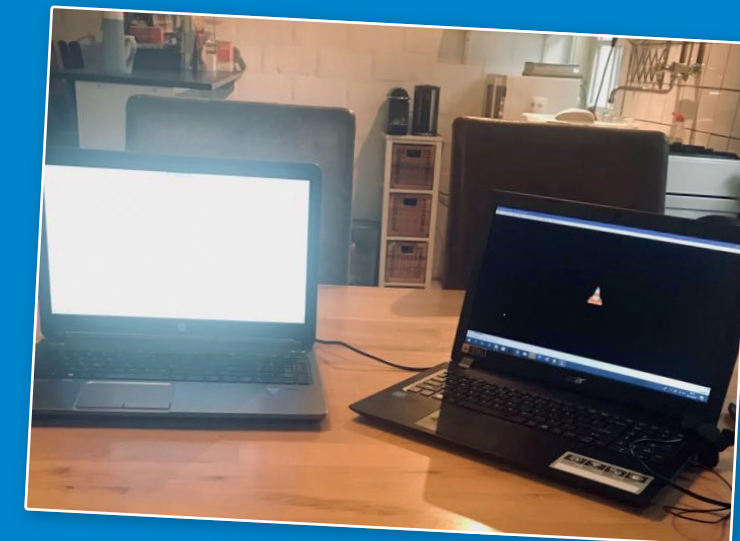


implementation and execution of new and existing health interventions in the Stevenshof. When I interview them, I am asking about their professional expertise, their experiences with the target population, their ideas about the arrangement of the integrated approach and how they deal with the obstacles they encounter in their work field.

Because Stevenshof Vitaal is part of a bigger project, I am having meetings with cooperative partners from the other municipalities as well. I think my internship is challenging and it really requires me to have a proactive attitude. At the same time, my supervisor is a really caring and helpful woman. She gives me the freedom to work from home, for example when transcribing my interviews, but at the same time, she really supports me when I need some direction. I am meeting many new people in the healthcare sector, which really enables me to see what parts I like and do not like for my own profession after I finish with this Master's. Additionally, I am networking a lot and creating new professional relationships, which could be helpful for my own future. I am really happy with my internship and it gives me the opportunity to contribute to the health of the elderly of the city where I am living myself! ■



"My internship gives me the opportunity to contribute to the health of the elderly of the city where I am living myself!"



Older individuals' wishes for ageing-in-place in small and rich municipalities

A case-study in the municipality of Bloemendaal, NL

By Casper Maas

Small and wealthy municipalities differ greatly from average Dutch municipalities when it comes to demography, income, housing offer, and therefore also when it comes to the wishes and needs of their citizens. However, limited research has been done in such municipalities when it comes to these wishes and needs. The municipality of Bloemendaal, one of the wealthiest in the country, reached out to the University of Leiden for an intern to do research on this topic, as they are very interested to see what their 70+ citizens living in large owner-occupied housing want and need in order to fulfil their current and future housing wishes. My research is therefore set in the municipality of Bloemendaal, which I portray as a case-study and representative for other similar municipalities in The Netherlands.

I contacted several elderly organisations throughout the municipality to ask them to spread the word about my research. The 70+ older individuals were then given the chance to contact me if they wished. This way, participation remained completely voluntary. At first I did not get many replies, as it took a while for the message to spread. Eventually, several dozens of older individuals signed up. I conducted individual interviews, as well as a focus group, with these participants. I thought it was an amazing experience to speak to a wide variety of older individuals with many different backgrounds, to talk about their ideas regarding their future housing and neighbourhood arrangements. Many participants showed gratitude as they saw a great need for this research to be performed, in Bloemendaal, as well as in other parts of the country.

Beyond my expectations, all participants were extremely humble and hospitable and offered me lunch, drinks, and many rides back to the train station. A message that these older individuals repeatedly made clear to me is that

kindness is key. Many of these people may have a lot of money, but also worked hard for it and are doing anything they can to help others in need as well. In short, I learned many things from doing qualitative research and also had loads of fun in the process.

In addition to my research project, I got to see the diverse profession of policy-making up close. It includes doing research, thinking of solutions, speaking to the general public, and most of all serving the citizens. The idea people have of civil servants is often that they are elitist and work too slowly to get things done. I must say that I had this same impression, but I learned that due to the complexity of the profession of a civil servant it is extremely difficult to make changes. What I can say without a doubt is that all the people I worked with have one main goal, which is to serve the public. I have seen this in multiple projects that included cooperation with the citizens as well as the political field. Municipalities, at least that of Bloemendaal, listen to their citizens, but often fail to live up to their expectations due to the many legal and financial restrictions and obligations. I participated in projects having to do with the placement of asylum seekers, more physical exercise for the elderly, and the social support act. It is a rewarding job, but it is not easy and certainly requires patience. To conclude, my internship was informative, inspirational, and most of all an amazing and fun experience. The hard work but the busy schedules are completely worth it. ■

“Kindness is key: many of these people have a lot of money, but also worked hard for it and are doing anything they can to help others in need as well.” ✓✓



“I learned many things from doing qualitative research and also had loads of fun in the process.” ✓✓

“What I can say without a doubt is that all the people I worked with (civil servants) have one main goal, which is to serve the public.” ✓✓

Balance is key: work hard, but relax even harder

Writing my thesis at the University of Copenhagen

By Dorine van Staalduinen

I wanted to write my master thesis abroad because I wanted to learn more about international healthcare systems. The Danish healthcare system differs a lot from the Dutch one, so when the opportunity came across to do my internship there, I did not hesitate.

During my internship I investigated perspectives and ideas of several healthcare organisations regarding polypharmacy in a multimorbid and ageing society. Polypharmacy has been a hot topic in Denmark the last years, but a tangible project had never been set up. My research therefore tried to discover how an effective network could be set up and how that network could be improved by using the design thinking approach. I conducted interviews with the most important people in the Danish healthcare system and it surprised me how open and nice they were to me.

During my internship I had the opportunity to work together with two co-researchers and my supervisor, Prof.dr. Rudi Westendorp. They provided me with great opportunities and invited me to a lot of their meetings as

well. The network that I was researching also felt like a warm bath. They made me feel like an important actor in the process, which felt really good. Several stakeholders also surprised me by saying: “your work is great and if you’re ever in need of a job, you can always call me.”

Copenhagen itself surprised me in all different kinds of ways. From Germany to the US and from South-Africa to Argentina, I would have to travel all over world to visit all the friends I made here. Next to that, Copenhagen has a very open vibe that I did not ever experience in any other European city.

One thing about the culture in Denmark that I liked a lot and which I will never forget is: work hard and effective, but relax even harder and more effective. The Danish work hard and effective from 8-6 five days a week, but switch to absolute relax modus the moment the weekend kicks in. Having this clear distinction between home and work suited me well! I quickly adjusted to this culture of working hard and relaxing hard. Sadly I had to leave for now, but Copenhagen: I will be back soon! ■



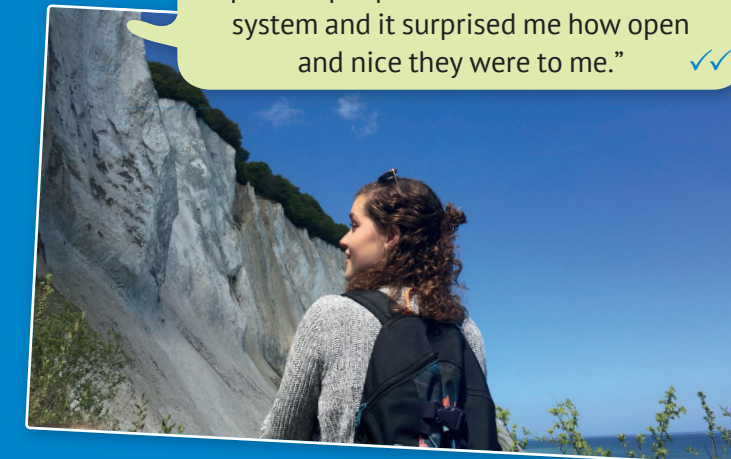
“From Germany to the US and from South-Africa to Argentina, I would have to travel the world to visit all the friends I made here.” ✓✓



“Several stakeholders also surprised me by saying: “Your work is great and if you’re ever in need of a job, you can always call me.” ✓✓



“I have had interviews with the most important people in the Danish healthcare system and it surprised me how open and nice they were to me.” ✓✓



Going abroad to the country of chocolate and cheese

My internship at the primary care department of the University of Bern

By Alexandra Achterhof

I had the pleasure to finish the master V&A by doing my thesis at the Berner Institut für Hausarztmedizin (BIHAM) in Bern, the capital of Switzerland! For 16 weeks, I worked at the primary care department to research the relation between medication appropriateness and willingness to deprescribe of older multimorbid patients with polypharmacy. As I have always been interested in the topic of polypharmacy and its health consequences, I now got the opportunity to not only work on the topic of my interest, but to discover Switzerland at the same time!

I was surprised to find out that the Swiss working environment is totally different from that in Holland. As we are used to strict rules, stress and always working hard, in Switzerland there is more room for reflection, a lot of independent working and plenty of time to do fun things.

I got a very warm welcome when I started my internship at the department and met some amazing colleagues! The fact that the institute was stationed in a newly renovated building, equipped with all modern conveniences, wasn't a bad thing either. And the (almost

daily) trips to Bern's best ice cream parlour that happened to be just around the corner, the Gelateria di Berna, were a great addition to the long working days.

The most memorable moments I experienced in Switzerland were the times I spent with my new friends looking at the breath-taking views I had from the mountains. I truly was surprised by the beauty of Switzerland. Not just the mountains, but the big lakes, the Aare (the river that flows through Bern) and city centre of Bern were wonderful as well. Another experience I will never forget is the Bernese local tradition: in summer, all citizens of Bern (young and old) jump in the Aare, float with the current, jump out of the Aare and walk with dozens of people back to the point they jumped in. It is very fun to do and awesome to see!

"I had the opportunity to work on the topic of my interest and to discover Switzerland at the same time."

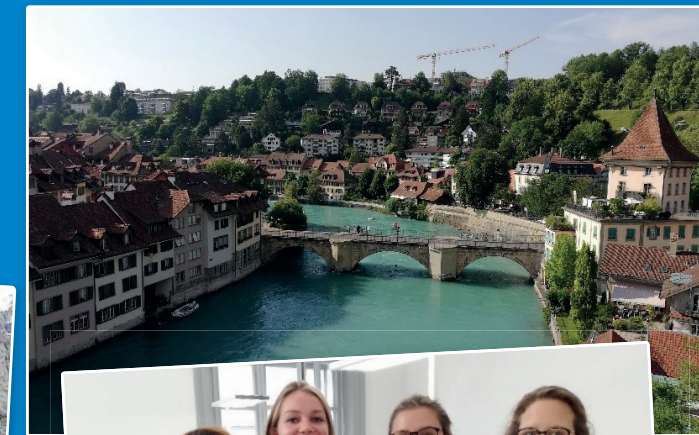


"I truly was surprised by the beauty of Switzerland."



The fun thing about doing research abroad is that you do not only experience the research process in a completely different environment, with people having different expectations from you, but the fact that you develop your personal and social skills as well. I made a lot of new friends and managed to live in another country for 4 months. I was even able to practice my German skills, which now led me to be able to speak German almost fluently. All in all, I had a great time and had the opportunity to develop myself and my research skills in a very short period of time. I can recommend going abroad for your internship to everyone! ■

"By doing research abroad you do not only experience the research process, but you also your personal and social skills."



Coping with the intersection between culture and ageing on healthcare

A lesson on culturally sensitive care approaches in Woonzorgcentra Haaglanden (WZH) the Hague, the Netherlands

By Cindy Hellen

My internship was about recognizing motivations of ethnic elderly in choosing a culturally sensitive senior facility. I did my internship at Woonzorgcentra Haaglanden (WZH) in the Hague, the Netherlands.

Before I continue, allow me to explain the context on why I find this topic interesting to research. Commonalities have interested people in one another for as long as humanity exists. For a nomad like myself, wherever life takes me, I would look for any trace that reminds me of home: something that reminds me of my Indonesian heritage. A tendency I believe resonates within every sojourner regardless of their origin. Even though in the end, adapting and quite a few times adopting the host culture will be the best way to enjoy life. In the world where ageing and migration interlaced, I think culturally sensitive care might provide a solution to overcome health disparities among immigrants.

I was curious on how the Netherlands, with a heterogeneity comparable to Indonesia, accomplishes the task of caring for their greying migrant population. I wanted to investigate the motivation of ethnic elderly with an Indonesian background in choosing a culturally sensitive care facility. Thus, I started my internship at WZH Waterhof the Hague. This nursing home applies an Indonesian culturally sensitive approach in their environment, practice and activities, and therefore attracts older persons from adjacent facilities to experience the approach.

After many delightful conversations with the residents, I found my answer. Similarities of ethnicity and experiences through decades of residency in the Netherlands aggregates these older persons with Indonesian ethnicity together. The social cohesion through adjacent Indonesian cultural social capital assist them in navigating the pinnacle of their lifetime. These factors, combined with physical limitation due to age,

“I wanted to investigate the motivation of ethnic elderly in choosing a culturally sensitive care facility in the Netherlands from the perspective of older persons with an Indonesian background [...].” ✓✓

attributable familiarization of host country to duration of residency and education in Dutch, influence their decision to look for a culturally sensitive care facility. However, a culturally sensitive environment is of lesser degree compared to social connection with fellow older individuals with Indonesian background. These elements are important, yet they are incomplete without cultural competence of the involving components.

Thus, my study confirms other studies on culturally sensitive approaches. Nevertheless, such a delicate approach needs to utilize more than one type of theory: it requires a combination of the existing theories. After all, ageing is a culmination of complex adjustments: it requires different perspectives and constant studies to comprehend. All in all, the internship was a memorable experience and reminded me of my initial intention to join the Master; supporting a better future for the elderly starts from myself.

With His blessings I hope I can apply what I learn into practice and perhaps in the future I have the ability and capacity to help my fellow countrymen in Indonesia. ■

Dank u wel Waterhofen tot ziens!

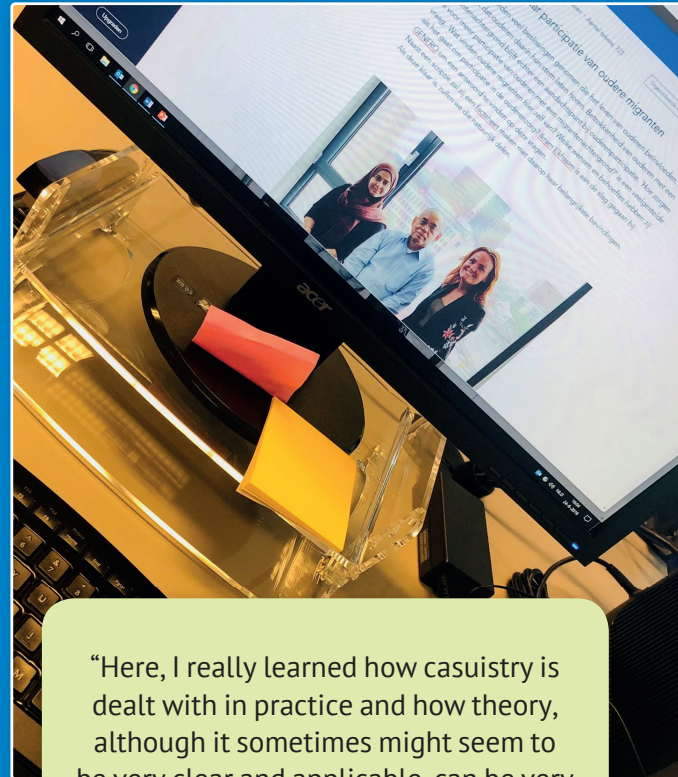
“With His blessings I hope I can apply what I learn into practice and perhaps in the future I have the ability and capacity to help my fellow countryman in Indonesia.” ✓✓



“A very interesting, fun and informative combination as I was able to have my internship at two different organizations at once!” ✓✓



“I gained new experiences, new knowledge, insights and I have expanded my network in the working field.” ✓✓



“Here, I really learned how casuistry is dealt with in practice and how theory, although it sometimes might seem to be very clear and applicable, can be very challenging to implement in practice.” ✓✓



THESIS STORIES

Desired participatory involvement of migrant elderly in elderly care

My master thesis at ZorgImpuls and GENERO in Rotterdam

By Ikram L'Khissim

The past 10 weeks I have spent most of my time in Rotterdam where I did my internship at ZorgImpuls. Zorgimpuls is a regional support structure that advises and assists with regional and neighborhood-oriented cooperation in and with primary care in Rotterdam, Capelle aan den IJssel, Zuidplas, Lansingerland and Barendrecht. At the same time I wrote my master thesis at the Geriatric Network in Southwest Netherlands and surroundings (GENERO), which is housed at ZorgImpuls.

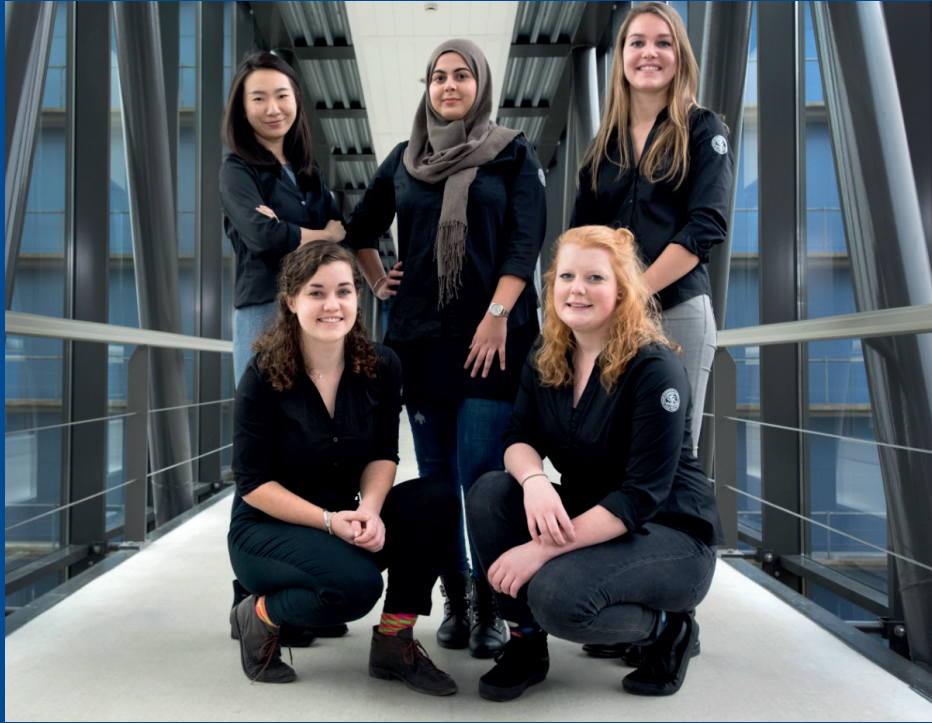
At ZorgImpuls I had the privilege to implement my knowledge into practice, by working alongside experienced colleagues and by helping to write advisory letters, prepare and participate in meetings with several organizations and also by giving presentations to people in the working field.

Next to this, I wrote my thesis at GENERO. Here, I explored what the desired participatory involvement of non-western migrant older individuals is in elderly care in Rotterdam. At the same time I also explored the needs of these older individuals when talking about participatory involvement. I did this by interviewing several older individuals with a non-western background. For this internship I was not merely interested in gaining more scientific knowledge, but I was mainly interested in combining my knowledge from the master Vitality and Ageing with my background in health management. Both of my studies came together very nicely in practice.

That is why this combination of organizations was perfect for me! ■

Can you believe it? We did it! We have completed our master, an education that will serve as the platform to launch ourselves into our futures. Some of us will go on with studying, others will go straight into the work force, but each of us will travel our own path. Wherever we go and whatever we do, may we always be friends when we meet again. Because, that is what we did. We made new friendships. Some were pretty casual and others were much closer, but we will remember each other fondly. As the JVT of 2018-2019, we would like to thank you all for your input and your trust in us representing you. We hope to have met your expectations of a JVT and we hope you enjoyed the activities we organized for you, as much as we enjoyed organizing them.

Being able to give input on our education was one of the most fulfilling tasks of the JVT. That is why, we also would like to thank all teachers, coordinators and the management. You motivated us to speak up, have a say and really valued the perspective of us students. It is great to see that our feedback has always been considered important

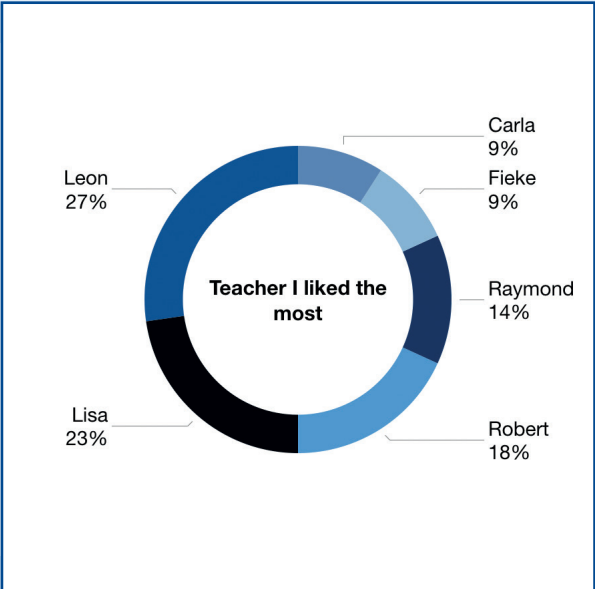
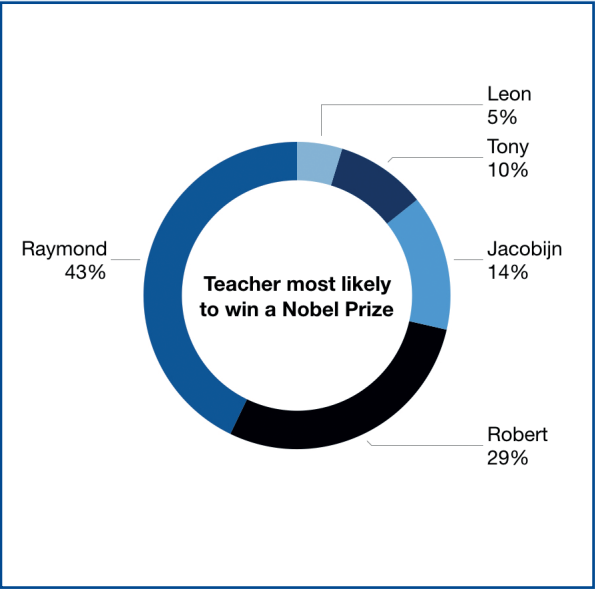
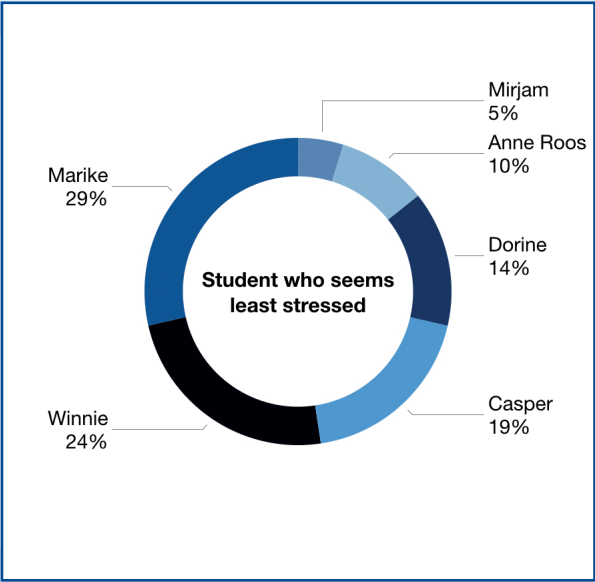
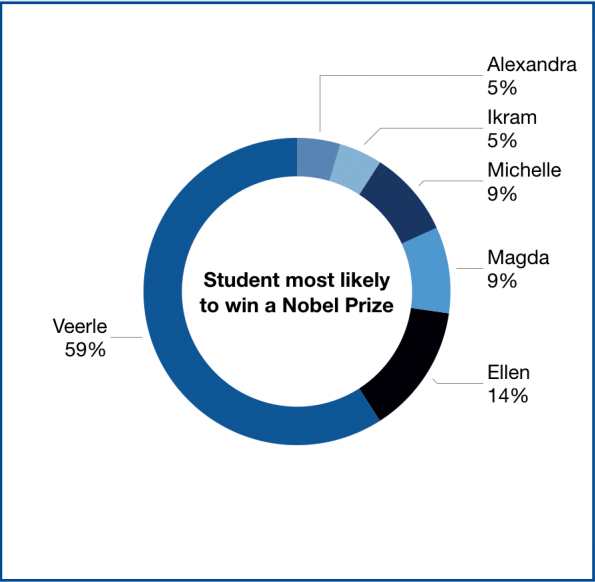


and valuable to you and always you listened and acted on our feedback. We very much enjoyed our role in improving the education of V&A and hope we made our fellow students proud.

In order to keep your memories fresh on some highlights, the following pages will present you with an overview of all your fellow students, as well as some insight in some interesting topics 🍷

It was a short, but impactful year, and we want to thank you all for being a part of it. It would not have been the same without you!

Your JVT 2018|2019
Chair Ikram L'khssim
International member Claire Wang
PR member Dorine van Staalduin
GOES member Alexandra Achterhof
Secretary Lies Vreugdenhil



Kyma Schnoor (23)

My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing

There are huge differences in the way people become older and I was very interested in discovering why this was the case. Moreover I wanted to find out what we could do about it. In the end, we all become hopefully part of that older population and I think we sometimes forget that fact.

My best memory of V&A is

The studytrip to Brussels, with the lovely beer tasting and our touristic trip to “manneken pis”. Oh and of course the social network lunches with the typical Dutch kroketten!

I think the secret to successfully becoming old is

To enjoy life and stay positive.

In 10 years from now

I will be having a job that allows me to contribute to improving health care for elderly people.



Ikram L'Khissim (22)

My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing

After finishing both my bachelor in Health science and my master in healthcare management I just did not feel ready yet to start working fulltime. I felt as if something was still missing. I wanted to broaden my knowledge and still focus on a particular target group. With our population ageing, it only made sense to me to choose this master.

My best memory of V&A is

Most definitely the students, the teachers and all of the other new contacts I have made both on a personal and professional level. I have gotten to know people at a level other master students might never know.

I think the secret to successfully becoming old is

Being yourself and enjoying each and every step along the way. We only get one life, so we better make the best of what we got.

In 10 years from now

I hope to be successful in life and in whatever I do at that moment. I hope to contribute to society, to make my mark in care and welfare, and most of all I hope to enjoy each and every step I make to get there!

Thomas Lenior (27)

My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing

I'm fascinated by the development of rejuvenation therapies. I see this as an important step forward in improving the human condition. V&A allows me to combine insights from the field of ageing with those from human evolution to ensure these innovations are understood and developed in a broader framework of human evolutionary development.

My best memory of V&A is

The excursion to Max Planck in Germany. Seeing the institute and listening to the researchers there really inspired me and confirmed that I was on the right path.

I think the secret to successfully becoming old is

A package deal of social, environmental and biological factors, some of which are already within our control.

In 10 years from now

I will be combining insights from human evolution and ageing research to improve both quality and quantity of life.



Stephanie Fakkert (24)

My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing

I feel this master takes the whole multidisciplinary perspective of ageing into account, which I think is very important. Moreover, the awesome and interesting study trips to Cologne and Brussels are a nice addition.

My best memory of V&A is

Too many to choose from. But definitely the last dinner together where the Masters team was singing this beautiful song: we vitality and ageing, all vitality and ageing..!

I think the secret to successfully becoming old is

Do something, look forward to something and have loving relations.

In 10 years from now

I will be ten years closer to ageing vitally.

Gali Albalak (22)

My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing

I love the elderly and I feel passionate about becoming an expert in ageing. I wanted to be able to deliver the best care for the elderly and increase their quality of life. I felt like the master Vitality and Ageing could really help me in reaching those goals.

My best memory of V&A is

The study trip to the Max Plank Institute in Cologne, with all the social activities! Especially I enjoyed the social program during the evening, which was very fun.

I think the secret to successfully becoming old is

Exercising both your body and your mind.

In 10 years from now

I will have finished my PhD and be part-time physical therapist and part-time researcher in the field of healthy ageing (or even a professor 🤖).



Yani Langenberg (24)



My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing

Seeing people's life experiences and knowledge become trapped in a body that was increasingly failing them as they aged saddened me. I believe we can design better solutions that minimize the effects of biological ageing so people can live healthier, happier and more fulfilling lives until older ages. V&A could give me the tools to pursue that passion.

My best memory of V&A is

Our study trip to Cologne and the Max Planck Institute was definitely the best memory for me. We had so much fun together! The visit to Max Planck showed me possibilities for my future career path that I hadn't really considered before, so all in all I felt this trip was the most valuable for me.

I think the secret to successfully becoming old is

V&A has taught me that ageing successfully is a multi-faceted process that requires deliberate health management approaches from different perspectives. "The" secret doesn't exist!

In 10 years from now

I will hopefully be a doctor that is developing therapies that extend our healthy lifespan.

Rozemarijn Beemster (22)

My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing

I work already a few years in a nursing home and I really like the contact with older people. However, in the healthcare sector there are a lot of improvements possible. In my future career I want to contribute to the optimization of the healthcare and the master V&A was a perfect step towards this goal.

My best memory of V&A is

The study trips to Cologne and Brussels were really nice. We had really nice bonding with the staff and the students.

I think the secret to successfully becoming old is

Staying vital by doing sports, keeping in contact with loved ones, and enjoying the little things in life!

In 10 years from now

I will be optimizing the healthcare in the Netherlands, and especially the elderly care.



Lina de Vries (23)

My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing

During my study Nursing one of my teachers stated: "Everyone knows what it is like to be a child, but nobody knows what it is going to be like to be old". This motivated me to learn more about the elderly, in order to gain more insight in what they think is important in life.

My best memory of V&A is

The network lunches that allowed for a lot of social interaction, and involved kroketten.

I think the secret to successfully becoming old is

Eating healthy and staying physically active throughout life.

In 10 years from now

I will be a medical doctor

Anne Meerveld (24)

My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing

After my bachelor in Health sciences, I did not really know which direction I wanted to go. I liked the biological part of health, but also the organisation of care. In this master you get both, with the specialization in the elderly population. With our common greying society, plus the fact that everyone gets older, and therefore it also includes your own future, I thought this master would fit my interests and also create opportunities for the future.

My best memory of V&A is

I really liked the study trip to Keulen and Brussels. Besides the learningfull experiences at the Max Planck institute and the Parliament, the master also really tries to create friendships and connect the students. You do some really nice stuff like having dinner together and social events like beer tastings. In addition, the professors are also really involved in the activities, so that you also create a nice, professional relationship with your professors!

I think the secret to successfully becoming old is

Beside enjoying life, care for your body cause it's the only one you will get!

In 10 years from now

I hope to have a good social and professional situation and have a good time working in the healthcare field. It doesn't really matter where I stand, as long as I will be challenged every day and really feel like I can contribute to the health of citizens and the quality of care.



Mirjam de Vries (22)

My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing

I think the older population is a very vulnerable group. I wanted to expand my knowledge about this group to help them in the future.

My best memory of V&A is

The lunches and study trips!

I think the secret to successfully becoming old is

Not too much stress.

In 10 years from now

I will be 32.

Magda Schneider (25)

My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing

I was unsure of what kind of career I wanted to pursue. I really liked how the program combined my interests in biology, health care and policy, so that I didn't have to choose between those directions (yet). And I have always enjoyed interacting with elderly people.

My best memory of V&A is

So hard to pick! It has been a great year. I really enjoyed the Brussels trip. It was fun and I learned a lot.

I think the secret to successfully becoming old is
Being able to cope with stress well

In 10 years from now

I am not sure and I kind of like that. I hope to be contributing to society in my career and to have a happy private life.



Claire Wang (27)

My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing

I wanted to learn what the approach of The Netherlands was in taking care of its elderly population, regarding health care and organisation.

My best memory of V&A is

Building an escape room during the leadership games at the end of the course Organisation of an Ageing Society.

I think the secret to successfully becoming old is

Keep doing the things that you love and never lying to yourself.

In 10 years from now

I will be living in yet another new country, probably.

Odile Vermeulen (24)

My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing

When I saw how my grandma was treated when she was in a nursing home I realized how much better care for older persons could be organised and given! By following this Master I can learn skills and knowledge that will enable me to improve care for older persons.

My best memory of V&A is

All the fun moments we had together when networking, while sharing some free food and drinks 🍷

I think the secret to successfully becoming old is

Enjoy life, be relaxed and take good care of your body.

In 10 years from now

I will be an influencer of (elderly) health care in The Netherlands.



Veerle van der Klei (24)

My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing

As a medical student I had often encountered interesting cases of both vital and vulnerable elderly. The master Vitality and Ageing was the perfect opportunity for me to learn more about this rapidly growing patient population, to expand my academic background and to discuss current challenges caused by the grey pressure in an international and multidisciplinary setting.

My best memory of V&A is

The personal emphasis experienced throughout the master program, which was reflected by both the approachable teachers and the diverse and engaging team work with other students. This not only made V&A a safe and stimulating learning environment, but also a very fun team to be part of.

I think the secret to successfully becoming old is

A combination of three things: a purpose in life, companionship and a sense of humor.

In 10 years from now

I will be a physician that finished a PhD to add to the current body of thought regarding dementia care, hopefully about to complete a specialization within either family medicine, geriatric care or neurology.



Eveline Schipper (25)

My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing

I wanted to continue broadening my knowledge about societal aspects but also the bioethical aspects of science. Moreover, I hoped to learn more about and was interested in the problems and solutions of an ageing society.

My best memory of V&A is

Having fun, messing around with each other, but also helping each other out when needed 🍷

I think the secret to successfully becoming old is

Keep making music and keep listening to music together!

In 10 years from now

I will be a singing, flower-picking family mom 🍷
Career-wise: unclear, but I'd like to be involved in providing music therapy to elderly people.



Mareline Olthof (23)

My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing

I wanted to broaden my knowledge on healthcare management, as well as learn more about how the healthcare system is organized in the light of the ageing society that we face.

My best memory of V&A is

The study trip to Brussels, where we visited the European Parliament and learned a lot about healthcare policies, as part of the course of Organization of an Ageing Society.

I think the secret to successfully becoming old is

Being as physically active as possible and being surrounded by loving friends and family.

In 10 years from now

I will be employed but I don't know where yet!

Dorine van Staalduin (22)

My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing

I can see that the society is rapidly ageing and figuring out how we will organize this challenge in the future is something that I think is extremely interesting. I hoped the master Vitality and Ageing could learn me more about this particular topic.

My best memory of V&A is

The moment during our visit to the Max Planck Institute when our guide tried to make a joke about the fire alarm that was not funny at all.

I think the secret to successfully becoming old is

Living with less worries: "Everything will be OK, and if not, then that will be OK as well."

In 10 years from now

I will be 32 – no joking – I will be an international quality or policy advisor on elderly healthcare working for the UN or WHO.



Alessandra Gonzalez Avila (33)

My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing

I decided to take action in a worldwide problematic by combining my background with the international view of the Master. I wanted to broaden my knowledge on the ageing topic and have tools to inspire others.

My best memory of V&A is

That, in addition of having the experience of studying abroad, I was able to feel like home with my new friends.

I think the secret to successfully becoming old is

A combination of curiosity, gratitude and joy for life!

In 10 years from now

I will be enjoying my job, I will be celebrating almost 15 years together with Arturo, we will be taking care of our kids and planning small trips to keep learning new things.

Lies Vreugdenhil (22)

My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing

I wanted to broaden my interest before continuing with my master in Medicine. I think knowledge about the older population will come in handy no matter what specialization I choose in the end, because the older population has a diversity of health challenges.

My best memory of V&A is

The study trip to Cologne (with additional pre-trip 'discover the night life of Cologne' day) and the pub quiz of the JVT closing OAS dinner.

I think the secret to successfully becoming old is
Celebrating a lot of birthdays!

In 10 years from now

I will hopefully be almost finished with my specialization, but I don't know which one it is going to be yet.



Alexandra Achterhof (21)

My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing

I have always been interested in the biology of ageing, and the processes that occur with that. By following the half-

minor of Vitality and Ageing during the third year of my Medical Bachelor, I got a good insight of what the master would entail. So apart from what we would learn, I got an idea of how much fun the master would be. And I have never regretted my choice!

My best memory of V&A is

Working groups with Robert and the trip to Brussels as part of the OAS course.

I think the secret to successfully becoming old is

To live the least stressful life possible.

In 10 years from now

I will (be) a geriatrician or psychiatrist.

Jonathan Plender (29)

My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing
The reason to start Vitality and Ageing for me was my curiosity towards the elderly in society, and also I wanted to make some progress in my academic life. This master offered the opportunity to finish in a relatively short period of studying.

My best memory of V&A is
The offers made by the master team to create feelings of being a community concrete in the song during the closing dinner. I learned to write precisely.

I think the secret to successfully becoming old is
Maintain a unique life and rhythm in peace with people in the environment.

In 10 years from now
I will be a senior Advisor for a health institute.



Linda van Rijsewijk (24)

My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing
I know from personal experience how important it is to have a good health system that takes care of the older people in a society. The need of older people is different from that of younger people and therefore it is important to know what older people need and prefer, especially because of the ageing population.

My best memory of V&A is
The many social events to network, with the tasty lunches

I think the secret to successfully becoming old is
Experience a lot of happiness & being close to family.

In 10 years from now
I don't know what I will be in 10 years, because a lot can happen in 10 years, but I hope working with elderly people.

Shasvin Bhoelai (28)

My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing
I was inspired to apply because of the wide range of modules and mix of theory and practical skills, that I felt could equip me with knowledge in several disciplines. Moreover, the international and interdisciplinary character of the programme was attractive as the whole was followed by diverse students from all over the world.

My best memory of V&A is
The trip to Brussels

I think the secret to successfully becoming old is
Keeping a balance in eating, drinking, and sleeping and enjoy life

In 10 years from now
I will be CEO of my own hospital



Cindy Hellen (37)

My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing
Everyone is ageing, but not anyone have the privilege to be wise about it while entrusted to bless others. I had the privilege already, I hope I can bless others with it.

My best memory of V&A is
Everything was memorable, although the meals and the study trips definitely predominates.

I think the secret to successfully becoming old is
*Being grateful and always thrive to adapt

In 10 years from now
Only God knows! But always for the better I hope.

Samira Lone (24)

My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing

I wanted to learn more about the older population. They are a growing and increasing population that need more attention and have different needs and preferences, so found the Master Vitality and Ageing felt like a very relevant Master program.

My best memory of V&A is

The study trips to Brussels, during the course of Organisation of an Ageing Society, and Cologne during Biology of Vitality and Ageing.

I think the secret to successfully becoming old is

Having a good mental health and strong social network.

In 10 years from now

I will be hopefully helping with the improvement for care for the growing population of older migrants.



Sophie van der Landen (22)

My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing

I was interested in working with the elderly for a long time already. During my Psychology masters I did not feel educated enough on this particular topic. I went looking for an extra challenge, which became the Master Vitality and Ageing.

My best memory of V&A is

The trip to Cologne, where we took over the bar during the free time in the program.

I think the secret to successfully becoming old is

Drinking a craft beer once in a while.

In 10 years from now

I will be working as a psychologist or researcher in the field of elderly care.

Winnie Kleintjens (23)

My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing

I was interested in the elderly themselves and especially I wanted to learn more about how we could improve the care for them.

My best memory of V&A is

All the wonderful people I've met and the study trips to Brussels and Köln where we learned and saw a lot of things from the theories that we learned, but into practice.



I think the secret to successfully becoming old is

To be happy and live a healthy life.

In 10 years from now

I have no clue what I will be doing.



When I found the Master V&A, I was excited about the possibilities it opened for me here.

My best memory of V&A is

The chance to work with different classmates during every group assignment.

I think the secret to successfully becoming old is

Keep up your activity levels and take good care of yourself throughout your life. If you start early, you have a better chance at being healthy later in life.

In 10 years from now

I hope to be able to use both my knowledge from this master and my previous education in Homeopathy to make a difference.

Pradnya Satavalekar (32)

My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing

After studying Homeopathic medicine in India, I had not been able to use my knowledge here, in the Netherlands.

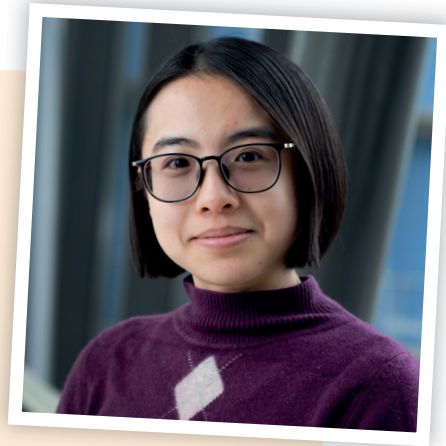
Manik Kharismayekti

My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing
To initiate the steps becoming an expert for the ageing society, enriching my skills and knowledge about the older persons, how their care & well-being is organized. With this master I aim to have a career in the healthcare, governmental or non-governmental organizations that handles challenges of the ageing society.

My best memory of V&A is
Having to initiate the steps becoming an expert for the ageing society, enriching my skills and knowledge about the older persons, how their care & well-being is organized. With this master I aim to have a career in the healthcare, governmental or non-governmental organizations that handles challenges of the ageing society.

I think the secret to successfully becoming old is
Having a positive view on ageing.

In 10 years from now
I will give more contributions for the ageing society in the Netherlands, Indonesia and Surinam.



Jennifer (Pin-Chun) Wang (24)

My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing
I believe when we discuss about seniors, it is more than declining and care. I prefer prevention better than care. Thus, the key to create an age-friendly society is to increase vitality in older adults, that is to blossom in life.

My best memory of V&A is
Working group session

I think the secret to successfully becoming old is
Have people whom we care for around us and strike a balance mentally, physically and spiritually.

In 10 years from now
I will be a promoter of implementing active ageing in Taiwan.

Anne van de Wetering (23)

My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing
About 5 years ago, I started working in a nursing home. This is when the elderly population caught my interest. The Master of Vitality and Ageing was the perfect way to combine both my interest in psychology and the elderly population.

My best memory of V&A is
The new group of friends I made during the program.

I think the secret to successfully becoming old is
Doing what you love and what makes you happy!

In 10 years from now
I will be a psychologist.



Daisy van der Ziel (25)

My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing
I wanted to broaden my horizon and gain some extra knowledge, especially on the older population and how to deal with the challenges that come with them, before I went on to proceed in the study of Medicine.

My best memory of V&A is
The free time during the program of the study trip of the Organisation of an Ageing Society, when we did Karaoke in Brussels.

I think the secret to successfully becoming old is
Keeping a balance in life.

In 10 years from now
I will be Doctor Dais.

Dide de Jongh (22)

My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing

After high school had several jobs in elderly care. This group always fascinated me, because of their extensive knowledge and rich history. During my work, I came across various problems that I'd like to change in the future! That is why this master seemed to be perfect for me; to make my dreams come true. By adding knowledge about the ageing population and improving my academic skills.

My best memory of V&A is

The study trip to Cologne. Socializing with all the teachers and students, while having some drinks and dancing until late really formed some stronger social bonds in the group.

I think the secret to successfully becoming old is

A perfect combination of being happy, nerdy, physical active and good genes.

In 10 years from now

I will be a well-known researcher in improving quality of life for older individuals



Michelle Zonneveld (21)

My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing

I wanted to gain a deeper understanding of the biological ageing process and, more importantly, I wanted to discover the secret to staying young forever!

My best memory of V&A is

During the study trip to Cologne, when we visited the Max Planck institute, I really enjoyed eating schnitzels and having a beer together with all the students and teachers!

I think the secret to successfully becoming old is

Eating antioxidants, following a calorie-restricted diet and staying out of the sun!

In 10 years from now

I will be the inventor of an anti-wrinkle cream that actually works!

Ellen Sai (27)

My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing

I am very interested in research on the topic of biology of ageing, and I thought this Master could help me with expanding this knowledge.

My best memory of V&A is

The Brussels study trip during the course of Organisation of an Ageing Society, when we visited the European Parliament, the Dutch representatives and the EU headquarters.

I think the secret to successfully becoming old is

Being happy and having a contentful life!

In 10 years from now

I will be a successful scientist that researches a topic regarding vitality or ageing.



Marianna van Wijk

My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing

I wanted to pursue a new career path, which could help me in opening the door to other opportunities for my life.

My best memory of V&A is

The end of year dinner at Restaurant Holle Bolle Gijs, when we reflected on the entire year and socialized with both students and teachers.

I think the secret to successfully becoming old is

Maintaining a positive mindset 🍷

In 10 years from now

I will still be 27 years old, and I will still be maintaining a positive mindset 🍷

Anne-Roos Kersbergen (21)

My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing
Since everyone gets old(er) eventually, I thought it better to learn as much as I could about it!

My best memory of V&A is
Building our escape room at the Health Hackathon as part of the leadership games of OAS, and the networking lunches with muffins and kroketten during the year, that allowed for new social interactions.

I think the secret to successfully becoming old is
to stay busy doing the things you love and to always look forward to something in the future.

In 10 years from now
I will be some kind of doctor and living life to the fullest.



Marike Klugkist (24)

My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing
I wanted to learn more about how the health care system functions, and gain more knowledge about major healthcare problems such as multimorbidity, the greying population and effective prevention and interventions.

My best memory of V&A is
The leadership games as part of the course of OAS, when we could use the skills we learned and put them into practice.

I think the secret to successfully becoming old is
Living a physically & mentally active life, with not a lot of stress

In 10 years from now
I will be a General Physician with special attention for innovative health care solutions!

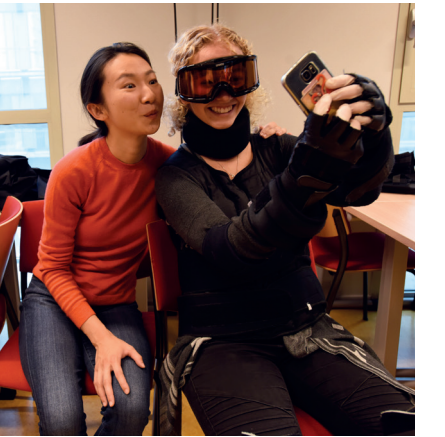
Casper Maas (22)

My motivation to study Vitality and Ageing
Vitality and Ageing offers a unique and multidisciplinary way of learning about one of the most pressing issues in healthcare: the ageing population. I want to contribute to improving the current situation. The Master Vitality and Ageing is a good basis for this.

My best memory of V&A is
Co-creating together with an older person from the elderly panel, during the course of The Older Individual.

I think the secret to successfully becoming old is
Drinking Coca-Cola Zero.

In 10 years from now
I will be working at the Ministry of Health.





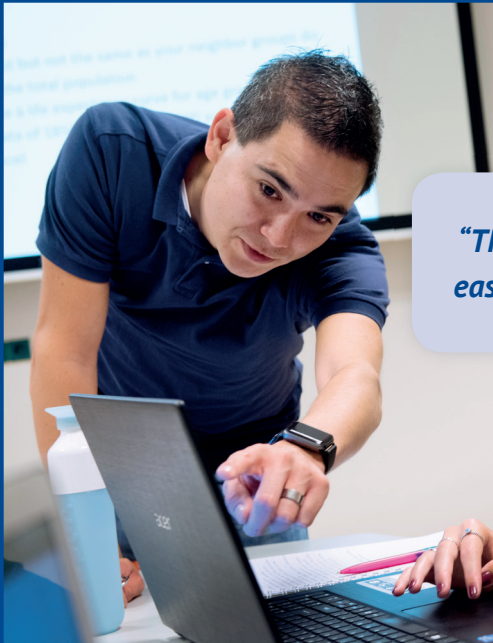
After Robert left, someone had to take up his mantle



Final Blackboard notification: Goodbye and all the best!



*Stay vital, go viral!
#Thanks for all the photo's!*



"Thank you for taking it easy on Leon after I left"



I hope you remember how to Keep Calm and Get Old'

Dear Vitality and Ageing Alumni

It seems like such a long time ago that we all met, in Future Perspectives, when we threw you in the deep end with our Present Like a Pro exercises (peas and carrots, anyone?), and prop-driven storytelling. You had only a short time to think about your own previous research and come up with a FameLab talk, and boy, did you deliver! We knew there and then that we were in for a good year with all of you. We made you communicate in all

sorts of media, and it seems like everyone found a (previously hidden?) strength, whether it was the rigor of scientific reporting, the confidence of 'selling' your innovation, the creativity of making a video or the appeal of a glossy journalistic profile. Thank you all for a wonderful year, it's been a pleasure!

Patrick, Bron and Inge
Communication in Science



This year couldn't be as successful as it was thanks to the students, participating older people and of course all the staff that was involved in organising the programme!

We want to thank all the lecturers from the LUMC and Leiden University. And especially all the external experts, nursing home professionals, general practitioners, orientation visit hosts and internship supervisors.

Texts	Vitality and Ageing students cohort 2018-2019, Amber Schoenmakers, Lies Vreugdenhil
Design	Engelen & de Vrind
Press-work	Mediacenter Rotterdam
Edition	400

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LUMC 2019





GOODBYE AND GOOD LUCK!