



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO  
DALLA LANA SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

## Social and Behavioural Health Sciences Divisional Seminar

**Thursday, November 19, 2015, 12:30pm – 1:30pm**  
**Room HS 574**

**James Iveniuk, Post-doctoral fellow at DLSPH:**

### *"Social relationships and mortality in older adulthood"*

**Abstract:** The paper examines associations between a wide range of social factors and mortality in a nationally representative survey of older adults (N=2995). We find that social network size, participation in social organizations (religious services, volunteering, local meetings), marriage, and emotional closeness to confidants all have comparable associations with reduced mortality risk. Time spent with confidants, network density, availability of support, loneliness, and talking about health were not associated with all-cause mortality. Furthermore, we found that individuals who had more family in their network, and who were closer with their family, were less likely to die. No such associations were observed for number or closeness to friends. Closeness to family also protected against death from cardiovascular disease, but not cancer. We link our findings to sociological theories concerning the differences between family and friendships, and call for increased attention to categories of relationships in the study of social factors and mortality.

**Faraz Shahidi, SBHS PhD Student:**

### *"Can labour market policies protect workers from the adverse health consequences of temporary employment?"*

**Abstract:** In contemporary debates over the future of work and welfare, the governments of advanced capitalist economies are said to face an increasingly difficult bind between the growing demand among employers for labour market flexibility and the persisting demand among workers for social security. In recent years, "flexicurity" has been introduced by a diverse range of social and political actors as a seemingly effective way of bridging the gap between these conflicting sets of expectations. Advocates of the flexicurity approach argue that, by striking the right balance between flexibility and security, governments can protect workers from the adverse health and social consequences of flexible employment. Despite figuring prominently in the European Employment Strategy, this theoretical claim has not been the subject of rigorous empirical testing. Drawing on a multilevel modelling strategy, we use data from the European Social Survey to test the arguments of the flexicurity approach, with a focus on employment-related health inequalities between temporary workers and their permanent counterparts.

***We hope to see you there!***