

Nova Scotia Centre on Aging

Fall 2015 Newsletter



Canada now has more older persons than youth

Thursday Oct 1st was the United Nations International Day of Older Persons. It was also National Seniors Day in Canada. It is a day to celebrate the contributions that older people make to their families, their communities, and their country.

Recently, Statistics Canada released official population numbers to confirm what most people knew would eventually happen – as of July 1, 2015 Canada has more older persons (those aged 65 and older) than youth (those aged 15 and younger). When a reporter called me to get my take on this “catastrophe”, an awkward silence ensued when I responded – “Well isn’t that just great that this crossover finally occurred”.

But wait ... having more seniors than children must be bad? Population aging is portrayed as a disaster- something we constantly hear causes all sorts of negative outcomes. Does anyone ever stop to consider the contributions older people make to our society? Most older people (defined as age 65+) give more to their children

than they receive. We will become increasingly aware of their contributions as more and more of those baby boomers reach that “magic age of 65” and add to the dependency ratio. Such ageist attitudes and misinformation will not be tolerated by baby boomers. Yes, there is no denying that we spend significant health care dollars in the last 6 months of life whether someone dies at age 50 or 90. We do have lots to understand about the last stages of one’s life but we need to see older persons as persons first. We need to learn about and better appreciate their contributions in families, communities and society.

This recent statistical change in our population provides us an opportunity to change ageist attitudes and recognize the diversity within the 65+ group. Older persons contribute to our society in many ways, so lets not only acknowledge the work that they have done in the past, but also for the support they are currently giving in our families and our communities.



Dr. Janice Keefe,
Director, NS Centre on Aging

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Our Mission

Through research, education and community engagement, the Nova Scotia Centre on Aging advances knowledge on aging to inform social policy and practice and enhance the quality of life of older people and their families.

Advancing Aging Research and Enhancing Seniors’ Lives for 20 Years



What's Happening...

Opening of the Dr. Rosemarie Sampson Centre on Aging



Pictured above: Dr. Rosemarie Sampson speaking in the Atrium of the McCain Building at the opening of the Dr. Rosemarie Sampson Centre on Aging.

The opening of the Dr. Rosemarie Sampson Centre on Aging was held on Oct. 2, 2015. The Centre is located on the 2nd floor of the new McCain Centre and is home to the Nova Scotia Centre on Aging and the Jessie MacIsaac Campbell Maritime Data Centre. Our opening was also in recognition of National Seniors Day and the International Day of Older Persons.

The naming of the Dr. Rosemarie Sampson Centre on Aging is a result of a generous legacy gift from Dr. Rosemarie Sampson. Dr. Sampson has had a life-long connection with Mount Saint Vincent University – as a student, faculty member, and Dean and believes in the value of the work on aging being done at the Mount.



Dr. Rosemarie Sampson and Dr. Keefe.

Guests enjoying the new office space.

Our Future is Aging Conference



Join us on June 16 & 17, 2016 for **Our Future is Aging: Current Research on Knowledge, Practice & Policy Conference**. You won't want to miss this conference which will showcase research on aging from a diversity of perspectives, disciplines and approaches which address issues and opportunities of an aging population.

Keynote speakers include:

Judith Phillips—innovations in interdisciplinary research

Alex Mihailidis—rehabilitative technologies

Stephen Katz—critical perspectives on aging

Call for Abstracts Open Until November 13

Abstracts of work from all disciplines are welcome.

We are especially interested in proposals which:

- share latest advances in aging research and evidence that may shape program and policy development
- showcase inter-and-multi-disciplinary and community-based research collaborations
- foster research collaborations.

Abstracts will undergo a scientific review process. Deadline for submissions is **November 13, 2015**.

For more information or to submit an abstract, please go to www.msvu.ca/agingconference

NSCA Leads Atlantic Arm of Innovative Study on Networks in Long-Term Care



Meeting of the Atlantic Canadian team members to discuss preliminary survey results.

Approximately 500 senior leaders of resident care in long term care facilities across Canada have participated in a survey about who they seek advice from about resident care. This study is being done in collaboration with Dr. Carole Estabrooks, University of Alberta and other researchers and decision makers from across Canada. Currently, the Atlantic Canada team, led by Dr. Janice Keefe, is interviewing select survey respondents to better understand the "advice seeking relationships" that are emerging from the data. The interviews are exploring why and how these relationships function. The results from this study are the first of its kind for the long term care sector in Canada and will help to understand how existing networks can be leveraged to spread innovations and best practices more efficiently. For more information about the project visit www.trec.ualberta.ca/en/Projects/SNA.aspx

Study on Older LGBT Population Releases Resources

The NSCA collaborated with a national team of researchers and continues to disseminate results of a study which fostered end-of-life conversations, community and care among LGBT older adults. An inventory of Nova Scotia resources related to LGBT end-of-life is available at <http://dal.ca//gahps/lgbteol>

To engage in conversations about these issues with others across the country go to <http://sfu.ca/lgbteol>

Working CARERS Program—will it work in rural communities?

NSCA is currently partnering with researchers at Mount Sinai Hospital to explore the feasibility, sustainability, and impact of the Reitman Centre's Working CARERS Program, a skills training program for family/friend caregivers who also are employed. The current study aims to understand the realities of individuals living in rural Nova Scotia who are employed and provide assistance to a family/friend living with dementia as well as what it takes to have the 8-week program part of ongoing supports for caregivers in rural communities. This project is one of many being led by the Canadian Consortium on Neurodegeneration in Aging.

Participants Needed: NSCA is seeking individuals from the Sheet Harbour and surrounding communities to participate in the project. If you would like to learn more about the project, please call 1-877-302-4440

Director Receives Awards

Dr. Keefe Receives Award from PEI Alzheimer Society



Dr. Janice Keefe was presented with the Danny & Martie Murphy Leadership Award in June from the PEI Alzheimer Society in recognition of excellence and leadership in caregiving research.

2015 Planning Excellence Award for Special Research Study

Dr. Keefe and her colleagues, Eric Rapaport and Patricia Manuel, from Dalhousie University received an award from the Atlantic Planning Institute at its annual conference held in Newfoundland in October. The award was given in recognition of the team's work on climate change and older adults as well as implications of sea level rise in rural communities with aging populations.

Presentations & Publications

Presentations

Keefe, J. (2015, September). *Caregiver realities: Unpacking the context of preparing for and providing care*. Nova Scotia Health Authority Continuing Care Month. Halifax, NS.

Keefe, J. (2015, September). *Relationships trump new buildings*. Symposium on Excellence in Aging. Fredericton, NB.

Keefe, J. (2015, September). *Dementia-friendly care settings. Understanding the person-environment fit in dementia care*. Canadian Academy of Health Sciences Forum. Ottawa, ON.

Keefe, J. (2015, June). *Home support workers: The backbone of the Canadian system that needs reinforcement*. Northwood 5th Annual Research Symposium: Research in Aging: Continuing Care and Beyond. Dartmouth, NS.

Fancey, P., & Keefe, J. (2015, May). *Strategies to support nursing home residents' quality of life: A focus on relationships, home likeness, and the working environment*. Atlantic Learning Exchange: Leading and Accelerating Healthcare Quality and Safety in Atlantic Canada. Dartmouth, NS.

Keefe, J., Ward-Griffin, C., Guberman, N., Fancey, P., & Aubrecht, K. (2015, May). *Not on the exam: Nurse trainees experiences of assessment with older spousal caregivers*. Conference of Canadian Gerontological Nursing Association 18th Biennial Conference. Charlottetown, PE.

Estabrooks, C., & Keefe, J. (2015, May). *Advice seeking networks in long-term care*. Canadian Gerontological Nursing Association 18th Biennial Conference. Charlottetown, PE.

Publications

Rapaport, E., Manuel, P., Krawchenko, T., & Keefe, J. (2015). How can aging communities adapt to coastal climate change? Mapping community asset vulnerability for planning and adaptation. *Canadian Public Policy*, 41(2), 166-177.

Manuel, P., Rapaport, E., Keefe, J. & Krawchenko, T. (2015). Coastal climate change and aging communities in Atlantic Canada: A methodological approach to community asset and social vulnerability mapping. *The Canadian Geographer*, 59(2), 1-14.

Ward-Griffin, C., Browne, J.B., St-Amant, O., Sutherland, N., Martin-Matthews, A., Keefe, J. & Kerr, M. (2015). Nurses negotiating professional-familial care boundaries: Striving for balance. *Journal of Family Nursing*, 21(1), 57-85.

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Opportunities to Support NSCA

F.R. MacKinnon Endowment Fund

If you would like to support the efforts of the NSCA, contributions can be made to the F.R. MacKinnon Fund through the Mount's University Advancement Office at 902-457-6470.

Contact us:
Nova Scotia Centre on Aging
Mount Saint Vincent University
166 Bedford Highway
Halifax, NS B3M 2J6

T: 902-457-6546
E: nsca@msvu.ca
www.msvu.ca/nsca