

Nova Scotia Centre on Aging

Fall 2020 Newsletter

Our contribution to the COVID-19 dialogue

Our work at the Nova Scotia Centre on Aging has touched on various aging topics over our 25+ year life, including continuing care, dementia care, and family and friend caregiving. Through this work we have built a reputation for research that is high quality and relevant to discussions that shape policy and practice. We have sought and welcomed opportunities to engage with various types of knowledge users to share our knowledge and expertise to enhance the quality of life of older adults and their families. This is our mission.

Never more in the Centre's history has the need to share our expertise been so needed and sought out by individuals grappling with the challenges of COVID-19 and our older population. The pandemic has changed how we socialize, work and communicate. Most sectors in Canada have been hit hard by the COVID-19 virus, but perhaps none more seriously than the long term care sector. We have witnessed unbelievable death rates in long term care in Canada during the 1st wave and, unfortunately, becoming a reality of the 2nd wave in many provinces. Sometimes we lose sight that each death represents a person who is a family member and a member of our community. Each of these deaths is one too many and the loss experienced is deep and wide spreading. The situation is unacceptable.

Over the past few months, there has been an urgent need for evidence and expert advice in the long term care sector to help understand why the sector is particularly at risk and what needs to be done to build a stronger system in the short and long term. The Centre's body of work in this area, and, our established networks with other leading academics in the field, has positioned us well to contribute to this important dialogue. For example, I have had the opportunity to contribute to work at the national level through expert panels and commissioned reports, have been invited to speak to sector-specific practice and policy audiences, have contributed a number of editorials to national media outlets and conducted numerous media interviews to keep the importance of long term care on the public's mind. Myself, and many of my colleagues across the country, are working hard to draw attention to a vital component of our health system that has been disregarded for far too long.

The realities of living and working in a pandemic are with us for some time. We are pleased that our Centre is recognized and is being called upon during this unprecedented time. We will continue to shape discussions that aim to enhance the quality of life of older adults and their families.

Janice



NSCA Director,
Dr. Janice Keefe

Our News

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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.



What's Happening...

Gaining insights about pathways of home care clients



The **Home Care Pathways** project now in its 3rd year is making good progress with its activities, despite some interruption due to COVID-19. The analysis of client assessment data for Nova Scotia and Winnipeg Regional Health Authority is beginning to offer insights into clients' pathways. Similarities and differences between the two jurisdictions are emerging. The interviews with members of the 12 care constellations across the two sites resumed in the summer. The working group is pleased that all of the original clients are available and interested in a follow up interview. Having interview data from two points in time will offer rich insights into factors that influence clients' experience.

The team will be meeting in November, virtually, to discuss findings across the working groups and to identify opportunities for findings to be integrated.

Smith et al. BMC Health Services Research (2020) 20:552
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12913-020-05301-7> BMC Health Services Research

STUDY PROTOCOL Open Access

Home care clients: a research protocol for studying their pathways

Jessica M. Smith¹, Laura Furd¹, Lucy King¹, Michelle Lobchuk¹, Marilyn Macdonald¹, Lori Mitchell², Julie Sempert¹, Grace Warren¹ and Susan Stewart¹

Background: Enhancing non-clinical home care supports and services for older adults to live well is a strategic priority in developed countries, including Canada. Underpinning these supports and services are structures of care that are reflected in home care policies, programs and practices within jurisdictions. These approaches to care exist at multiple levels and inform interactions, perceptions, and care assessment, planning and provision, ultimately shaping the support that an individual, functional differences in approaches to care mean that pathways through home care systems may differ, depending on where one lives. The goal of this study is to understand how approaches to care shape the pathways of older adult home care clients with chronic and long-term conditions in two Canadian health jurisdictions.

Methods: This longitudinal mixed-methods study has three interrelated research streams informed by aspects of the socio-ecological framework. We will examine client pathways using a retrospective analysis of home care assessment and (Behavior Assessment Interview) Home Care) in two health jurisdictions (Nova Scotia and Winnipeg). We will analyze interview data from older adult home care clients and a cluster of each client's family or friend caregivers, home support workers, Canadian social workers and potentially other professionals at up to three points over 18 months using a prospective qualitative comparative case study design (Consolidated Data Stream). We will review home care policies relevant to both health authorities and interview key informants regarding the creation and implementation of policies (Policy Stream). Our study will apply an integrated knowledge translation (IKT) approach that engages knowledge users in research design, analysis and interpretation to facilitate delivery of research.

Discussion: Applying a mixed-method research design to understand approaches to care within and between two jurisdictions will contribute to the evidence base on older adult home care client pathways. Study results will identify

Recently released publication:
BMC Health Services Research publication on study protocol.

Study on quality of life in long term care releasing results **SALTY** Seniors-Adding Life to Years



Check out the study's promo video:
<https://vimeo.com/389017178>

The **Seniors-Adding Life to Years (SALTY)** project is deep into the analysis stage of its rich and diverse data sources across the four streams and ramping up its dissemination activities. While several conference commitments this year were cancelled due to COVID-19, some team members will be presenting at the Gerontological Society of America's virtual conference in November. The team is also leveraging whatever other opportunities currently exist to share insights from the SALTY project, given the situation of COVID-19 and long-term care (e.g., expert panels, editorials).

Significant effort across the streams is being given to manuscript development, with several submitted articles close to publication and a number of others in progress or under review.

In addition, members of the policy stream were pleased to share their work in June through a webinar hosted by the Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement. Recording is available:

<https://youtu.be/7I9Pyto7yZk>

The SALTY network of trainees, past and present, are working on two outputs 1) a manuscript reflecting on how the trainee network fit within the SALTY project, and what the trainees have contributed and learned through the process, and 2) a podcast mini-series titled "Let's Talk Care" (go to Have you Heard section).

Keep up to date with the latest on the team's dissemination activities at:

www.SALTYItc.ca

@SALTY_Itc

SALTYItc

Stay up to date www.homecarepathways.ca

Have you Heard...

SALTY Trainees host podcast mini-series on issues in long-term care



A Podcast Mini Series
From the Trainees of the Seniors-Adding
Life to Years (SALTY) Project
Co-Hosted by:
Mary Jean Hande, Marco Redden & Emily Hubley

The new podcast, “Let’s Talk Care”, brings in guests from all corners of the project to share insights and experiences, and

discuss, from the perspective of early-career researchers, topics such as long-term care quality of life, power and marginalization, working in long-term care, families of long-term care residents, and palliative approaches to care. Episodes are listed on all the top podcast directories. Have a listen to this fresh take on the long-term care system from our future leaders in research. Podcast hosts:



Mary Jean Hande,
SALTY Postdoctoral
Fellow & Trainee
Network Lead

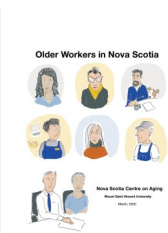


Emily Hubley,
Masters Student &
SALTY Research
Assistant



Marco Redden,
Masters Student

Report on Older Workers in NS Released



Want to learn more about the experiences of older workers in Nova Scotia? The full report and the infographic-style summary report are now available at

<https://novascotia.ca/shift/Older-Worker-Employment-and-Labour-Force-Participation-Booklet.pdf>

Special thanks to the individuals who participated in the focus groups and the employers who participated in an interview. As well, we want to acknowledge the valuable collaboration with NS Department of Seniors and Department of Labour and Advanced Education on this project.

MSVU Site for SSHRC-funded CANd3 Project



Interested in a training opportunity to develop data analytic skills with “big data”? We are pleased to be a partner on the Consortium on Analytics for Data-Driven Decision-Making (CANd3) program. This is an integrated, interdisciplinary program for tackling population aging using powerful analytics. Go to www.mcgill.ca/cand3/ to learn more or contact nsc@msvu.ca.

Dr. Keefe appointed Vice-Chair of European Union’s JPI Scientific Advisory Board

Congratulations to Dr. Keefe on her appointment as Vice-Chair of the European Union’s Joint Programming Initiative (JPI) More Years Better Lives’ Scientific Advisory Board. Dr. Keefe will begin her term as Vice-Chair in January 2021, alongside Dr. Johan Fritzell from Sweden, who will become Chair.

Out and About (Virtually)

NSCA recognizes International Day of Older Persons and NS Seniors Week with messages about value of older adults

Messages about the value of older adults and the need to change the narrative about our aging society were key points made during Dr. Keefe’s presentation to Dalhousie University’s Faculty of Health School of Communication Sciences and Disorders Colloquium Series. View her presentation at <https://youtu.be/q1tygq-KS48>

Dr. Keefe Participates on Royal Society of Canada’s COVID-19 Task Force

As a member of the Royal Society of Canada’s COVID-19 Task Force and co-author of *Restoring Trust* report, Dr. Keefe participated in the online panel, [Restoring Trust: COVID-19 and the Future of Long-Term Care](#) on July 16.

To access the Report: <https://rsc-src.ca/en/restoring-trust-covid-19-and-future-long-term-care>

Presentations & Publications

Publications:

Estabrooks, C.A., Straus, S., Flood, C.M., Keefe, J., Armstrong, P., Donner, G., Boscart, V., Ducharme, F., Silviu, J., & Wolfson, M. (2020, June). *Restoring trust: COVID-19 and the future of long-term care*. Royal Society of Canada.

Keefe, J., Funk, L., Knight, L., Lobchuk, M., Macdonald, M., Mitchell, L., Rempel, J., Warner, G., Stevens, S. (2020) Home care clients: A research protocol for studying their pathways. *BMC Health Services Research* 20, 535. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12913-020-05363-7>

Chamberlain, S., Estabrooks, C., Keefe, J., Hoben, M., Berendonk, C., Corbett, K., & Grenier, A. (2020). Citizen and stakeholder led priority setting for long-term care research: Identifying research priorities within the Translating Research in Elder Care (TREC) Program. *Research Involvement and Engagement*, 6(24). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40900-020-00199-1>

MacEachern, L., Cranley, L., Curran, J., & Keefe, J. (2020). The role of motivation in the diffusion of innovations in Canada's long-term care sector: A qualitative study. *Implementation Science Communications* 1, 79. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s43058-020-00069-7>

Presentations

Keefe, J. (2020, October). *Emerging evidence on enhancing quality of life for long-term care residents*. Presentation to QEII Geriatric Rounds. Online, October 14.

Keefe, J. (2020, October). *Population Aging: Let's Work with It*. Presentation to Dalhousie University's Faculty of Health School of Communication Sciences and Disorders Colloquium Series. Online, October 2.

Devji, A., Duncan, D., Keefe, J., Hall, J., & Micin, M. (2020, September). *Canada and the COVID-19 Pandemic: What went right, what went wrong, and what next?* Panel presentation, COVID-19: What set B.C. apart? B.C. Care Providers Association Conference. Online, September 22.

Keefe, J. (2020, September). *The Rising Tide of Our Aging Population*. Presentation to Rotary Club Harbourside. Online, September 18.

Keefe, J., Taylor, D. & Cook, H. (2020, June). *Quality of Life in Long Term Care: What's policy got to do with it?* Webinar hosted by Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement, June 9.

Opportunities to Support NSCA

Dr. F.R. MacKinnon Endowment Fund

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

News from the Global Aging and Community Initiative



Dr. Zachary Zimmer, Tier 1 Canada Research Chair. Notable recent activities include:

- “The demography of chronic pain: A population approach to pain trends, pain disparities, and pain-related disability and death,” funded by National Institutes of Health.
- “Religion, spirituality, physical and psychological well-being in Muslims: Exploring associations within new and unique Pakistani contexts,” funded by SSHRC Explore Grant.
- Forthcoming peer reviewed publications: Stokes, A.C., Xie, W., Lundberg, D.J., Hempstead, K., Zajacova, A., Zimmer, Z., Gleib, D.A., Meara, E., & Preston, S.H. Forthcoming. Obesity and the increasing prevalence of chronic pain in middle-aged US adults, 1992 to 2016. *Social Science and Medicine: Population Health*.

Zajacova, A., Zimmer, A., & Grol-Prokopczyk, H. Forthcoming. Pain trends among American adults 2002-2017: patterns, disparities, and correlates. *Demography*.

Zimmer, A., & Chiu, C. Forthcoming. Are older persons in China living more years in an independent living arrangement? Estimates using multistate life tables. *Demography*.

Hou, C., Lin, Y., Zimmer, Z., & Fang, X. Forthcoming. The association of modifiable factors with cognitive health expectancy in older adults: A population-based cohort study. *Aging*.

The Global Aging and Community Initiative (www.globalagingandcommunity.com) is located in the Dr. Rosemarie Sampson Centre on Aging and affiliated with the Nova Scotia Centre on Aging.

Stay up to date...like us on Facebook  and follow us on Twitter 

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