

# Nova Scotia Centre on Aging

Fall 2022 Newsletter

## Our 30 year legacy on family/friend caregiving

This year is our Centre's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Throughout the past three decades our work has touched on many aspects of an aging population, generating knowledge to inform policy and practice. However, one consistent theme throughout this time has been the focus on family/friend caregiving. The role of family/friend caregivers is essential to our health and social care systems and to our commitment to supporting older Nova Scotians with care needs to remain at home. While caregiving can bring benefits and joy to some, what caregivers do, and the challenges they face in their role, can contribute to physical, financial and mental consequences. Support for caregivers is needed as is an ongoing understanding of how best to do that.

The Centre's foundation was built on the topic of caregiving in the early 90s, through the *Care for the Caregiver* (funded by Seniors' Independence Program, Health and Welfare Canada). This project was developed to provide social, physical and emotional support for those caring for older adults and introduced caregiver education and support workshops in Nova Scotia. Similar education and support initiatives continue today through the province's [Caregivers Nova Scotia Association](#).

Throughout the years, our Centre led other important work to inform policy and practice on caregiving including: *From Policy to People: Generating Systemic Support for Family Caregivers* (1995-1997), *Older Parents Caring for Adult Sons/Daughters with Disabilities: Age Related Transitions* (1999-2001),

*Where to Begin: An Introductory Planning Guide for Family Caregivers* (2004-2005), *A Profile of Caregivers in Nova Scotia* (2008), *Does Timing of Caregiving Assessment Make a Difference* (2010-2013), *Caregiver Supply and Demand* (2010-2012), *Financial Well Being of Caregivers—A Think Piece* (2017). I also had the honour of being the Mount's Canada Research Chair in Aging and Caregiving Policy (2002-2012). During this time I had opportunity to contribute to several other caregiving projects nationally and internationally. All to say that advancing knowledge on caregiving to inform policy and practice has been a cornerstone of our work. However, the need for ongoing attention to family/friend caregiving has not subsided given that 28% of Nova Scotians provide 221 million hours of unpaid assistance (Statistics Canada 2018 General Social Survey).

Most recently, we are pleased to be working with Caregivers Nova Scotia on a **strategic review of family/friend caregiving in Nova Scotia**. This review, which involves hearing from family caregivers first hand as well as those working with them, will unveil the current landscape on the realities, experiences and needs of today's caregivers including a deeper understanding of the experiences of those from diverse racial and cultural backgrounds.

As we celebrate 30 years of generating knowledge to inform policy and practice, we look forward to building on our success and further our work on a number of topics, including family/friend caregivers.

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...

### Strategic review of family/friend caregiving in Nova Scotia



NSCA is pleased to be working with Caregivers Nova Scotia on work that is reviewing the landscape of supports for family/friend caregivers and identifying existing gaps to better support them. In addition to background literature review work, Centre staff will be holding focus groups with caregivers this fall throughout the province and online to understand first hand their experience. In addition, caregivers who are unable to attend a focus group and individuals who work with caregivers will be able to complete a survey to provide their input. For more information on the project and ways to have your voice heard visit [NSCaregivingProject.ca](http://NSCaregivingProject.ca)



## NSCA hosts Institute of Aging SPA 2023



Those living into advanced age will be the focus of the CIHR's Institute of Aging Summer Program in Aging (SPA), June 4-9, 2023. NSCA is the host organization planning the 4+ day immersive training program in Nova Scotia which will involve 40 Canadian trainees in aging and several leading researchers as mentors. The funding opportunity for interested trainees is open on [ResearchNet](http://ResearchNet) until November 24. Support from supervisor is required. For more information visit [www.spa2023.ca](http://www.spa2023.ca)

### Supporting mental health of long-term care staff



At the Association's Annual General Meeting in June, NSCA staff shared highlights of their evaluation on the *Leaning into the Hard* program, a program aimed at supporting the mental health needs of staff working in long-term care, which was delivered to long-term care staff during winter of 2022. Their evaluation work highlighted areas in which the program was found to make a difference and noting challenges with implementing the program. This fall, the Association will be making the program available again to participating homes and NSCA continues its evaluation.

### Results from study on pathways of home care clients being shared at CAG 2022

Several presentations are being given by team members at the Canadian Association on Gerontology Conference, October 20-22, in Regina:

*Trajectories of older home care clients' pathways over 4 years: Exploring functional changes*

*Not a "task" like any other: Meanings and anxieties associated with meal preparation in home care settings*

*The work required of older clients to age in place with non-medical home support services*

*"We're just out there sacrificing": A longitudinal study of homecare work during Covid-19*

Stay up to date on project activities: [www.homecarepathways.ca](http://www.homecarepathways.ca)

### NSCA hosts conversations on AGEISM



NSCA will be hosting two consultation events on Ageism on November 9 as part of national consultation

work being led by the FPT Ministers Responsible for Seniors Forum.

## Have you Heard...

### Your photos wanted!



Community Links and the Nova Scotia Centre on Aging is continuing its call for photo submissions. This project aims to collect photos of Nova Scotians that help tell this story, change how older Nova Scotians are viewed and recognize important contributions older Nova Scotians make to family and community. Click [here](#) for more information.

### Four practice briefs sharing insights on family visitation in LTC during pandemic

A number of briefs are available with suggested actions and strategies to help care homes with implementing family visitation policies:

[Family Visitation in Long-Term Care During COVID-19 -Communication is Key](#)

[Family Visitation in Long-Term Care During COVID-19 -Impact on Residents, Family and Staff](#)

[Family Visitation in Long-Term Care During COVID-19 -Actions to Take From Staff Perspective](#)

[Family Visitation in Long-Term Care During COVID-19 Actions to Take from Family Perspective](#)

### Practice briefs on family visitation in LTC during pandemic featured to national audience

The above practice briefs were highlighted as part of a Webinar hosted by Healthcare Excellence Canada featuring Dr. Janice Keefe and project advisor, Roberta Bishop. The Webinar, *Family Visitation in Long-Term Care During COVID-19 | Reframing Research into Practical Strategies to Improve Practice* is now available online. Click [here](#) to view.



The “Let’s Talk Care: Fresh Perspectives on Long-Term Care” Podcast Series is now available to listen to on Youtube. Topics include working in long-term care, family presence in long-term care and living with dementia. For the full series go to [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCx\\_HqQaF\\_49JXCueTXFkwkQ/videos](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCx_HqQaF_49JXCueTXFkwkQ/videos)

## Out and About

### REVES Conference lobster dinner



Dr. Janice Keefe with demographer colleagues attending REVES conference in Halifax

### Canadian Academy of Health Sciences annual meeting



Dr. Janice Keefe, CAHS Fellow, with colleagues attending the Academy’s Gala and Induction Dinner, Montreal.



Have you heard...2022 is our 30th Anniversary.



## Presentations & Publications

### Presentations:

Keefe, J., Poss, P., Mah J., Mitchell, L. (2022, October 20-22). *Trajectories of older home care clients' pathways over 4 years: Exploring functional changes*. [Poster]. Annual Scientific and Educational Meeting of the Canadian Association on Gerontology, Regina, SK.

Kuryk, K., Spring, L. Burke, R., Rempel, J., Funk, L., Keefe, J., Warner G. (2022, October 20-22). *Not a "task" like any other: Meanings and anxieties associated with meal preparation in home care settings*. [Oral]. Annual Scientific and Educational Meeting of the Canadian Association on Gerontology, Regina, SK..

Weeks, L. E., Hande, M.J., Hubley, E., Burke, R., Warner, G., Chamberlain, S., Andrew, M. K., Keefe, J. (2022, October 20-22). *Supporting linked lives: A longitudinal exploration of family and friend caregiver visitation restrictions in long-term care homes during the COVID-19 pandemic*. [Oral]. Annual Scientific and Educational Meeting of the Canadian Association on Gerontology, Regina, SK.

Kuryk, K., Funk, L., Warner, G., Macdonald, M., Lobchuk M., Rempel, J., Keefe, J. (2022, October 20-22). *The work required of older clients to age in place with non-medical home support services*. [Poster]. Annual Scientific and Educational Meeting of the Canadian Association on Gerontology, Regina, SK.

Keefe, J. (2022, October 1). *Exposing our ageist society and what we can do about it*. [Presentation]. Eradicating Ageism Conference, Third Age Centre, St. Thomas University, NB.

Fancey, P., Hubley, E., Keefe, J. (2022, June 23). *The art of resilience – leaning into the hard: Support for staff mental health did it make a difference?* [Presentation]. Nursing Homes of Nova Scotia Association Annual General Meeting, Halifax.

Rockwood, K., Sim, M., Shetty, N., Moorhouse, P., Barrett, L., Keefe, J. (2022, June 17). *Covid-19 related Research*. [Panel Discussion]. 10th Annual Northwood Research Symposium.

Keefe, J. (2022, June 13). *Population Aging: Let's work with it*. [Presentation]. Higher Education Day, Canadian Association of Gift Planners Conference, Halifax.

Keefe, J. & Bishop, R. (2022, June 13). *Family Visitation in Long-Term Care During COVID-19 | Reframing Research into Practical Strategies to Improve Practice*. [Webinar Series]. Healthcare Excellence Canada.

## 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



The Global Aging and Community Initiative (GACI) is directed by Dr. Zachary Zimmer, Tier 1 Canada Research Chair, and is located within the Nova Scotia Centre on Aging.

· GACI hosted two international events. The “International Workshop on Health Expectancy: An Education, Training and Networking Opportunity for Early-Career Scholars,” took place on Sept. 19-20 Assisted by funding from a SSHRC Connection grant, GACI was able to help fund the attendance of nine students. Following the workshop, GACI held the 33rd meeting of REVES (the International Network on Health Expectancies and the Disablement Process). It took place Sept. 21-23, 2022, at Dalhousie University.

· With funding from a CIHR Project grant, GACI coordinated the hiring of a post-doctoral fellow with expertise in biological aging to work on the project titled: “Long-term Effects of War on Health of Older Persons within a Rapidly Aging Population: The Case of Vietnam.”

· In May 2022 Dr. Zachary Zimmer received MSVU's Award for Research Excellence. In May 2022 Dr. Zimmer also received a Health Surveys Research Award from IPUMS (Integrated Public Use Microdata Series).

· Papers recently appearing in journals: "Respiratory Health among Older Adults in Vietnam: Does Earlier -Life Military Role and War Exposure Matter?" in the Journal of Aging and Health; "Is transition in living arrangements associated with older adults' subjective well-being when preference is considered?" in the Journal of Gerontology: Social Sciences.

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

### Contact us:

Nova Scotia Centre on Aging  
Mount Saint Vincent University T: 902-457-6546  
166 Bedford Highway E: nsca@msvu.ca  
Halifax, NS B3M 2J6 www.msvu.ca/nsca