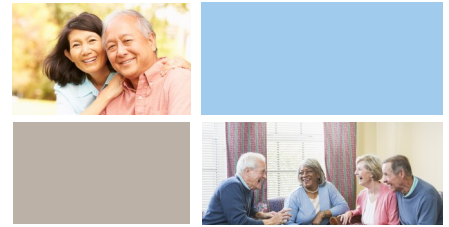


# Nova Scotia Centre on Aging

Spring 2025 Newsletter



## Research is the cornerstone of progressive society

Academic research is undertaken to advance knowledge which can support new discoveries, solve problems and inform policy and practice. All of these objectives are intended to make our lives better. The scientific rigor of research and the peer review process that it goes through, assures us that the evidence is sound and can be trusted. Yet, currently we are facing increasing skepticism and undervaluing of scientific evidence through the dismantling of key research institutes and infrastructures in the US and growing concern about the use of Artificial Intelligence in knowledge creation. If this continues, how we come to know what we know and what decisions are based on will be at risk of bias and misinformation. Research matters and we should be concerned about the current discourse.

Most of us don't do research just to do research. Rather, we want our research to generate knowledge that will make a difference. There is a significant amount of money and time that goes into research whether in basic, clinical or social sciences, and research leads to new insights and potential for change. The kind of applied research we do at the Centre on Aging is all about influencing policy and practice to enhance the lives of older adults and their families. Our research on family and friend caregivers has helped to shape policies such as the Caregiver Benefit and the services of Caregivers Nova Scotia. Our work in the area of long-term care has contributed to changes in staff-resident ratios. These outcomes impact people's lives. Research matters.

I am so excited that we are hosting our 3<sup>rd</sup> *Our Future is Aging* Conference.

This conference is all about celebrating and benefiting from high quality research in the field of aging - Research that will inform practice and policy. Research that matters. What will be presented through the 70+ presentations has been vetted through a peer review process to ensure it meets academic integrity and rigor. Research findings will be shared on topics including healthy aging, care and support, dementia, retirement, biology of aging, health services, mental health and much more. Our key note speakers will challenge us to think about the changing context of research in aging and how AI has and will influence the aging research. Anyone coming to the conference will find something of interest to them and leave with new and richer insights. The conference's theme of "multidisciplinary research to inform people, policy and practice" provides a perfect opportunity to expand your horizons and think beyond your discipline. I challenge those coming to the conference to attend a session that may be outside their wheelhouse. It is through exploring different perspectives that we as researchers, practitioners and decision makers can enrich our own views and work.

Does research matter? Absolutely. Society would stymie without new knowledge and discovery. Should you attend *Our Future is Aging* Conference? Absolutely. You will be positively impressed by the innovative research, novel collaborations and outstanding results that will be shared by local and national researchers and trainees.

I look forward to seeing you there!



NSCA Director,  
Dr. Janice Keefe

## Our News

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Opportunities to Support NSCA

## 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.



Centre  
on  
Aging  
Nova Scotia

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**Advancing Aging Research. Enhancing Lives of Older Adults.**

## What's Happening...

### Research on Atlantic Canada long-term care staff quality of work life study now focusing on dissemination



The project team has been busy with analysis and dissemination activities focused on

providing results to participating sites, the LTC sector and provincial governments. To date each participating care home has received individualized reports, provincial LTC sectors have received results through webinars/meetings, provincial government has received descriptive reports, and staff participants are receiving infographics summarizing results. The project's first manuscript, *Examining Quality of Work Life in Atlantic Canadian Long-Term Care Homes: Protocol for a Cross-Sectional Survey Study*, was published in March 2025. With the support of three recently hired Postdoctoral Fellows, more in-depth analyses are underway and results will be presented at CAHSPR 2025, Our Future Is Aging conference (June 3-4), and Northwood Research Symposium (June 20). On June 5th and 6th the team and sector stakeholders will meet in-person in Halifax to discuss current project work and future priorities.

Keep up to date on the study at [www.arcltc.ca](http://www.arcltc.ca)

### Comparison of pandemic and post-pandemic results underway for Nova Scotia long-term staff quality of work life study

Analyses of results for seven NS long term care homes whose staff participated in both the 2021 and 2024 waves of the quality of work life survey is underway. Findings from both waves of data collection is being examined and compared to see whether pandemic driven sector changes have had an impact on staff quality of work life and staff health and well-being.

## Research informing home care practice and policy



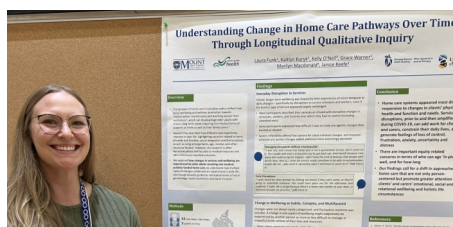
The Home Care Pathways team has already shared findings in several scholarly journals and given close to 20 presentations at local, national and international conferences. The team's work has included rich insights into the perspectives of clients, caregivers and care workers, understanding of client pathways through longitudinal analyses of client assessment data, and analysis of home care policies. This spring the team continues to share insights from the research to inform policy and practice.

#### Article:

Funk, L., Kuryk, K., Spring L., & Keefe, J. (2024). Problematising dominant assumptions about unpaid support through exploring case study profiles of older home care clients. *Health & Social Care in the Community*, Volume 2024, Article ID 3707796. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2024/3707796>

#### Presentations:

- Canadian Association of Health Services & Policy Research Annual Conference, Ottawa
- Canadian Geriatrics Society Annual Scientific Meeting, Toronto
- Our Future is Aging Conference, Halifax



Kaitlyn Kuryk, PhD Candidate presenting at the University of Manitoba Spring Research Symposium.

#### Summaries:

A series of summaries is available for published work emerging from the study. These are a great way to quickly understand different analyses being done and to get takeaway messages from the work. Summaries are available on the project webpage.

For more information go to: [www.homecarepathways.ca](http://www.homecarepathways.ca)





## Our Future is Aging: Multidisciplinary Research Informing People, Policy & Practice

### Our Future is Aging Conference June 3-4, 2025 Halifax, NS

The conference will showcase more than 75 oral and poster presentations on topics including mental health, care and support, long-term care, retirement, dementia, aging in place, frailty, etc. Our keynote speakers will address [changing contexts of population aging](#), [artificial intelligence and aging](#), and leading [research networks and initiatives](#). This is a conference you won't want to miss. [www.ourfutureisaging.ca](http://www.ourfutureisaging.ca)

### PUBLIC EVENT-Navigating the Next 50 Years

Join us on evening of June 2, 2025 for a free [Public Event](#) exploring the realities of “living longer”. Our featured speaker is Margaret Gillis, International Longevity Centre Canada. Register for the Public Event [in-person](#) or [virtual](#).

## Out and About

### Dr. Keefe keynote speaker at provincial LTC association conference



Dr. Janice Keefe was the Keynote Speaker for the Nursing Homes of Nova Scotia Association Spring Conference. Dr. Keefe presented an in-depth look at NS results from the 2024 study “An

Underrepresented, Undervalued Workforce: Understanding and Supporting Quality of Work Life

### Recruiting Postdoctoral Fellows...

Finished or finishing your PhD? Looking for a Postdoctoral opportunity? Be in touch to learn about potential postdoctoral opportunities.

[nsca@msvu.ca](mailto:nsca@msvu.ca)

## Have you Heard...

### Scholarships available to support graduate research in aging

A gift from Shannex has enabled scholarships for graduate students in the Mount's Family Studies & Gerontology program and the Mount's Applied Human Nutrition program whose research will focus on long-term care. These \$10,000 scholarships will be awarded starting in fall of 2025.



Pictured above: Dr. Janice Keefe (left) and Lanlan Xin (right).

Lanlan Xin was the 2024/25 recipient of the Genevieve Keefe Graduate Entrance Scholarship, available to graduate students in the Mount's Master of Family Studies and Gerontology whose research is focused on aging. The scholarship was established by Dr. Janice Keefe in memory of her mother.

### An exciting new program from the NSCA and Aging Well NS

Nova Scotia Centre on Aging is pleased to be working with Aging Well Nova Scotia on a new project, Disrupting Ageism in Nova Scotia. Over the next year, we will be seeking to understand the lived experience of ageism among older adults in our province and developing education materials to help address ageism.

### 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 [giving@msvu.ca](mailto:giving@msvu.ca)

## Presentations & Publications

### Publications

Keefe, J., McCloskey, R., Hodgins, M., McArthur, C., MacKenzie, A., Weeks, L.E., & Estabrooks, C.A. (2025). Examining quality of work life in Atlantic Canadian long-term care homes: Protocol for a cross-sectional survey study. *JMIR Res Protoc* 2025;14:e66338.

Mah, J., Andrew, M.K., Quach, J., Stevens, S., Keefe, J., Rockwood, K., & Godin, J. (2025). Changes in frailty predict social vulnerability among home care clients living in the community followed for ten years. *Journal of Frailty & Aging*, 14(2025), 100031.

Hande, M. J., Weeks, L. E., Chamberlain, S. A., Hubley, E., Burke, R., Warner, G., Andrew, M.K., & Keefe, J. (2025). Caregivers' experiences of nursing home restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Canadian Journal on Aging*, 2025 Jan 6:1-10.

### Presentations

Funk, L., Kuryk, K., Spring, L., & Keefe, J. (2024, November). *How well do institutionalized assumptions about unpaid caregivers match the experiences of home care clients?* [Oral]. Gerontological Society of America 2024 Annual Scientific Meeting, Seattle, WA.

Spring, L., Keefe, J., Mason S., & O'Neil, K. (2024, November). *How medical objects, meal prep assistance and relational culture impact the meaning of "home" for home care clients.* [Poster]. Gerontological Society of America 2024 Annual Scientific Meeting, Seattle, WA.

Howlett, S., Keefe, J., Cahill, L., Wilson, S., & Kelly, M. (2024, November). *Minimizing the severity of chronic disease and disabilities in later life by interventions that support healthy aging and frailty prevention through research and development.* [Panel]. Closing the gap: Living longer in better health, Halifax, NS

Estabrooks, C., & Keefe J. (2025, January). *Sharing big ideas in LTC HHR research.* CanSPARK LTC Research Network Meeting: Building Capacity in LTC HHR Workforce Research, Virtual.

Keefe, J. (2025, April). *Wellness of LTC management & staff.* [Keynote]. Nursing Homes of Nova Scotia Association Conference and Tradeshow: The path forward – Leadership, Quality, Investment, Halifax, NS.

## 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. It is located within the Dr. Rosemary Sampson Centre on Aging and affiliated with the Nova Scotia Centre on Aging.

### Recent publications:

- Eva Ryan, Hanna Grol-Prokopczyk; Christopher R. Dennison, Anna Zajacova & Zachary Zimmer. 2025. Reply to 'Real-world Evidence Regarding the Causal Effect of Pain on Mortality'. *PAIN*. 166(3): 708-710. March 2025.
- Eva Ryan, Hanna Grol-Prokopczyk, Christopher R. Dennison, Anna Zajacova & Zachary Zimmer. 2024. Is the relationship between chronic pain and mortality causal? A propensity score analysis. *PAIN*. January 2025.
- Feinuo Sun, Zachary Zimmer & Nicolas Brouard. 2024. Rural-urban residence and life expectancies with and without pain. *Health and Place*. Volume 89, September 2024.

### Recent presentations:

- Early-life war trauma and later-life health with a focus on Vietnam. Centre for Family and Population Research, National University of Singapore. March 3, 2025.
- Early-life war and later life disability in Vietnam: The mediating effect of post-traumatic stress. Longitudinal and Trend Research on Health and Ageing in Asia. The University of Hong Kong. November 8, 2024.
- How early-life war trauma can impact on later-life health: A focus on aging in Vietnam. Balakrishnan Distinguished Lecture in Population Dynamics and Inequality. University of Western Ontario, London, ON, Canada. November 1, 2024.

For more information visit:  
[www.globalagingandcommunity.com](http://www.globalagingandcommunity.com)

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