

Nova Scotia Centre on Aging

Summer 2023 Newsletter

Is the Window of Opportunity closing? Let's change the story for long-term care

In my message two years ago, I used language "Carpe Diem or Seize the Day" in relation to the care of older people in long-term care facilities. This was at the time when the intensity of the pandemic was starting to ease but we were still reeling from the devastation that had taken place in long-term care. There were numerous commissions and expert panels all making recommendations calling for change, change not just addressing what happened through the pandemic but change to address the longstanding shortfalls in long-term care.

Since then, there has been countless hours given to the development of standards for the long-term care sector by people with lived experience, the workforce, researchers and policy and decision makers. The Health Standards Organization focused on standards related to the delivery of care services and the Canadian Standards Association focused on standards related to physical environments. Both organizations released their reports in January and both identified guidelines and criteria for provinces and providers to accept given that the standards are only considered voluntary.

I am pleased to share that provinces are carefully reviewing the standards in relation to their long-term care policies to identify areas they could work on. This is good news, but at the same time policies do not always translate into practice. What we may experience as a resident living in long-term care, a family member supporting a resident

or a staff person working in long term care does not necessarily represent person-centred care, what was identified as the core of the standards. There is still much work to work and we continue to have a moral obligation to do this work-"Carpe Diem or Seize the Day". Our article, *The predictable crisis of Covid-19 in Canada's long term care homes* was recently published in the British Medical Journal and the subject of a recent Globe & Mail op-ed. We call for federal leadership and funding enabling transformational change in long-term care homes and improvements in quality of life for residents, their essential care partners and staff.

The federal government, for example, is moving forward with discussions on a Safe Long-Term Care Act that may help to foster advancements of the quality and safety in long-term care services across the country. An opportunity for public input now exists and I encourage you to take a few minutes to share your thoughts <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/programs/consultation-safe-long-term-care.html>

The pandemic shone a light on the deficiencies in long-term care and we are at a crucial point to ensure that the legacy of the pandemic is about changing the story for those who live, work and support someone living in long-term care. Let us Carpe Diem or seize the day to make fundamental differences to improve our long-term care system before the window of opportunity closes.

Janice



NSCA Director,
Dr. Janice Keefe

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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. Enhancing Lives of Older Adults.



MSVU.CA/NSCA

What's Happening...

Strategic review of family/friend caregiving in Nova Scotia wrapping up

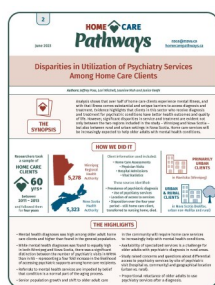


Through our consultation work in Fall 2022, we heard from 411 family/friend caregivers and 53 stakeholders who work with family/friend caregivers. Focus group discussions were held in-person across the province and online and a survey was available to complete online, by telephone, or by mail. We heard about caregivers' experiences and what they need most to support them in their role. A lot of information has been collected and reviewed and the report summarizing what we heard has been prepared for Caregivers Nova Scotia. Sincere thanks to all the individuals who took time to contribute to this work. For more information go to nscaregivingproject.ca or contact CaregivingProject@msvu.ca



Home Care Pathways team sharing results

Recently published in BMC Geriatrics: [Inter-provincial variation in older home care clients and their pathways: a population-based retrospective cohort study in Canada](#)



The second summary, in a series of summaries, is now available: [Disparities in Utilization of Psychiatry Services Among Home Care Clients](#)

Study results were shared at the Canadian Association for Health Services and Policy Research

Conference in Montreal:

“Relational Cultures in Homecare” by Dr. Lauren Spring.

“Diversity among home care client pathways: Applying latent class models in longitudinal data” by Dr. Jeff Poss.

Stay up to date: www.homecarepathways.ca

NSCA hosts successful CIHR Institute of Aging Summer Program in Aging



Those living into advanced age was the focus of the CIHR Institute of Aging Summer Program in Aging (SPA) in June. NSCA was the host organization planning the 5 day immersive training program held at White Point Beach Resort which involved

more than 40 trainees in aging and several leading researchers as mentors. Over the course of 5 days, trainees learned from national and international experts in the areas of population health, frailty, dementia, health equity, immunosenescence, continuing care, longitudinal studies, and knowledge translation. Trainees also benefited from interacting with, and hearing from, older adults throughout the program.



In addition to skill-building sessions on plain language writing, sex, gender and EDIA, and research methods, a key focus of the

program was on enhancing proposal development skills. Throughout the week, trainees worked with mentors in small groups focused on developing key aspects of a CIHR project proposal (e.g., EDI, sex and gender considerations, team expertise, ethics, knowledge mobilization plan, etc.).



For more information visit www.spa2023.ca

NSCA contributing to refresh of Province's education on dementia

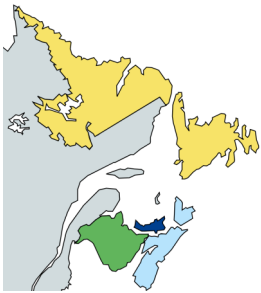


We are pleased to be working with the group responsible for *Dementia: Understanding the Journey* course to update the course once again.

Knowledge about dementia and best practice continues to emerge so it is important that individuals living with dementia benefit from workers and family/friend caregivers who have the most up to date information. Our work includes identifying current knowledge as well as consulting with course facilitators, individuals who have completed the course, subject matter experts and employers. For more information on the DUTJ course visit www.dementiaedu.ca

Have you Heard...

\$2.1 million for research on staff in long-term care



Dr. Janice Keefe, Director of the Nova Scotia Centre on Aging, and colleagues were awarded a \$2.1 Million CIHR Project Grant: Fall 2022 for their multi-site Atlantic Canadian study on quality of work life for staff in long-term care. This study seeks to understand how working conditions in residential long-term care settings may affect the conditions of care of the residents. The Atlantic Canada focus extends research happening in western Canada through the Translating Research in Eldercare (TREC) program and will help to address the limited data in the region to understand what can be done to support these staff. Project work gets underway this fall with the launch of the survey for staff in long term care. Approximately 50 homes in the region are expected to participate.

For more information go to www.arcltc.ca



Health Standards Organization (HSO) publish National Long-term Care Standards

The Health Standards Organization (HSO) and the Canadian Standards Association (also known as CSA Group) released [CAN/HSO 21001:2023 Long-Term Care Services](#) and [CSA Z8004:22 Long-Term Care Home Operations and Infection Prevention and Control](#). The national standard developed by CSA Group focuses on design, operation and infection prevention and control practices, while the national standard developed by HSO addresses the delivery of safe, reliable and high-quality long-term care services.

Dr. Janice Keefe was a member of HSO's Long-Term Care Services Technical Committee.

Out and About

Dr. Keefe speaker at CAnD3 event, Montreal



Four cohorts of CAnD3 Fellows and leading population researchers together to mark program's halfway point.



Advisory Board held its bi-annual meeting



Members of the Centre's community-based Advisory Board. Several members missing from photo.

Opportunities to Support NSCA

Dr. F.R. MacKinnon Endowment Fund

Support the efforts of the NSCA, contributions can be made to the Dr. F.R. MacKinnon Fund 902-457-6470.

Presentations & Publications

Presentations:

Kilmen, S., Banerjee, S., Devkota, R., Doupe, M., Dymchuk, E., Duan, Y., Estabrooks, C., Keefe, J., ... & Hoben, M. (2023, April). *DEMQOL-CH differential item functioning: Do proxy assessors' language and ethnicity matter?* [Oral] NCME Annual Meeting, Chicago.

Mitchell, L., Poss, J., Mah, J., & Keefe, J. (2023, April). *Home care responsiveness after an unplanned hospitalization: Will my patient get more home care?* [Poster]. Canadian Geriatrics Society Annual Scientific Meeting, Vancouver.

DeGraves, B., Titley, H., Duan, Y., Thorne, T., Keefe, J., ... & Estabrooks, C.A. (2023, May). *Workforce resilience: A coherent breathing intervention for the Long-Term Care workforce.* [Poster]. Canadian Association for Health Services and Policy Research Conference, Montreal.

Spring, L., Mason, S., Kuryk, K., & Keefe, J. (2023, May). *Relational cultures in homecare.* [Poster]. Canadian Association for Health Services and Policy Research Conference, Montreal.

Poss, J., Mitchell, L., Mah, J., & Keefe, J. (2023, May). *Diversity among home care client pathways: Applying latent class models in longitudinal data.* [Oral] Canadian Association for Health Services and Policy Research Conference, Montreal.

Keefe, J., Price S-L., Leiter, M., & Thibault, T. (2023, June) *Exploring Mental Health and Well-being of staff in Continuing Care.* [Panel] Annual Northwood Research Symposium, Halifax.

Keefe, J. (2023, June). *What's data got to do with it? Why evidence is needed to improve long-term care.* CCANS Annual Conference, NS.

Keefe, J., Taylor, M., Quesnel-Vallée, A. (2023, June). *Future of aging research panel.* [Panel]. 2023 CAnD3 Meeting, Montreal.

Publications:

Mitchell, L., Poss, J., MacDonald, M., Burke, R. & Keefe, J. (2023). Inter-provincial variation in older home care clients and their pathways: A population-based retrospective cohort study in Canada. *BMC Geriatrics*.

Irwin, P., Taylor, D., Keefe, J. (2023). Provincial Policies Affecting Resident Quality of Life in Canadian Residential Long-term Care, Submitted to *BMC Geriatrics*.

Gruncir, A., Hoben, M., Easterbrook, A., Jensen, C., Buencamino, M., Tompalski, J., Chamberlain, S., Ekhlās, S., Bever, G., Murphy, R., Estabrooks, C., Keefe, J., Marshall, S. (2023). Exploring nursing home resident priorities for care using the Action-Project Method. *BMC Geriatrics*.

Estabrooks, C., Duan Y., Cummings, G., Doupe, M., Keefe, J., Poss J., Song, Y., Squires, J., Wagg, A., Norton, P. (2023). Changes in health and well-being of nursing home managers from February 2020 (pre-pandemic) to December 2021. *Journal of the American Medical Directors Association*.

Chamberlain, S., Warner, G., Andrew, M., Hande, M.J., Hubley, E., Weeks, L.E., Keefe, J. (2022). With COVID comes complexity: Assessing the implementation of family visitation programs in long-term care. *The Gerontologist*.

Gallant, N.L., Hardy, M-S., Beogo, I., Conklin, J., Connelly, D., Kaasalainen, S., Keefe, J., Robitaille, A., Yous, M-L., Fanaki, C., & Cameron, C. (2022). Improving family presence in long-term care during the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Healthcare Quarterly*.

Keefe, J.M., Taylor, D., Hande, M.J., Irwin, P. & Hubley, E. (2022). Do residential long-term care policies support family involvement in residents' quality of life in four Canadian Provinces? *Journal of Aging & Social Policy*.

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.

- September 2022, GACI hosted the “International Workshop on Health Expectancy: An Education, Training and Networking Opportunity for Early-Career Scholars.” The workshop was supported by a Connections grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

- GACI organized and hosted the 33rd annual REVES conference. The three-day event was titled: “Advances in International Research on Health and Life Expectancy in the Covid-19 era.” The conference featured 37 presentations and participation from more than 60 international academics.

- Eva Ryan, a Doctoral student in Statistics at the University of Limerick in Ireland spent a little more than one month at GACI as a visiting scholar. She is working on the NIH funded project titled: The Demography of Chronic Pain: A Population Approach to Pain Trends, Pain Disparities, and Pain-Related Disability and Death.

- GACI Post doctoral fellow, Dr. Feinuo Sun, is currently in France as a visiting scholar at INED.

- Dr. Zimmer received the Award for Research Excellence, Mount Saint Vincent University, May 19, 2022. He was also named one of the world's top-ranking Social Sciences and Humanities Scientists by Research.com on December 7, 2022.

- The paper: “Early-life war exposure and later-life frailty among older adults in Vietnam: Does war hasten aging. *Journal of Gerontology: Social Sciences*, authored by Zimmer and colleagues, was selected as the Editor's Choice Article by the journal in 2022. Zimmer also recently published “War exposure: An under-appreciated determinant of population health in Asia,” in *Asian Population Studies*.

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