

Fall/Winter  
2009 -10

## Director's Message



**Dr. Janice Keefe**  
Director  
NS Centre on Aging

At the Nova Scotia Centre on Aging we continue to work on initiatives that advance knowledge and inform policy and practice in the field of aging. In June 2009, the Nova Scotia Centre on Aging had the opportunity to co-host the 4<sup>th</sup> CIHR Institute of Aging Summer Program in Aging. This very successful 4 day training event was held at White Point Beach Resort and involved 50 trainees from across Canada and more than 15 program mentors/presenters. Participants' reviews of the program are very positive and we are delighted to have had the chance to work with the Institute of Aging to help shape new and upcoming scholars in the field of aging.

In line with our Strategic Plan, we are involved with, or working to build, several collaborations. First, our Centre is part of a national network of close to 30

researchers and community partners interested in research on abuse and neglect of older adults.

Second, we are pleased to be facilitating a collaboration amongst researchers and decision makers with a mutual interest in nursing home residents. With the many changes underway in our long term care facilities, NS is well positioned to serve as a study site to assess and understand the changes on resident quality of life. Researchers from a variety of disciplines as well as community partners such as Northwoodcare Inc., NS Department of Health (Continuing Care Branch) and Nova Scotia Association of Health Organizations are involved in this collaboration. We continue to be part of and support the Atlantic Seniors Housing Research Alliance which has grown to more than 100 stakeholders across the region.

We are also delighted to be working with the Alzheimer Disease and Other

Dementia Care Course Committee to develop a refresher workshop for continuing care workers and family caregivers of persons with dementia.

Finally, interest in the Age-Friendly Communities Initiative continues to grow. NSCA shares the research results through presentations to community organizations and leaders. We are involved in a national initiative interested in building a framework to help measure the successes of the age-friendly work and currently developing a Guide to support evaluation at the community level.

Thanks to the researchers, staff, students as well as the members of the Management Board and Advisory Board who help make all this happen.

Enjoy our newsletter,



We're on the web, visit us @

[www.msvu.ca/nsca](http://www.msvu.ca/nsca)

## Nova Scotia Centre on Aging 2009-2010 Advisory Board

### NSCA Welcomes New Staff:

**Jamiee Ellis** as Project Assistant.

Jamiee's role includes assisting with anything and everything at the Centre. She supports work related to proposal development, project evaluation, communications and promotions, and is assisting with the preparation of our key products such as the Refresher Workshop Manual and other reports.

The Nova Scotia Centre on Aging receives support from a community-based advisory board comprised of representatives from government, private business, senior organizations, universities, and the general community.



**Back Row (L to R): Ron Swan (Member at Large), Dr. Susan Brigham (Member at Large), Pamela Fancey (Associate Director, NSCA), Sharon Reashore (Caregivers Nova Scotia), Sandra Murphy (Gerontology Association of Nova Scotia), Ross Osborne (Group of IX), Dr. Kim Kienapple (Acting Dean, Professional Studies), and Dr. Melissa Andrew (Centre for Health Care of the Elderly).**

**Front Row (L to R): Dan Maclean (Member at Large), Irene Rose (Chair), Dr. Janice Keefe (Director, NSCA), Bessie Harris (Member at Large), and Lorne Clarke (Member at Large).**

**Missing from Photo: Valerie White (Department of Seniors)**



## Seniors to Seniors. Talking About Cancer

This booklet (available in English and French) shares the experiences and wisdom of seniors with cancer with others who are just beginning their own cancer journey. Valuable insights about the cancer experience and coping strategies are offered by the more than 80 seniors from across Canada, including Nova Scotians. The most important message from seniors with cancer to other seniors was: Take care! Manage your attitude, your life, your feelings and your treatment. In addition to this educational booklet for seniors, a report for health care professionals is available with messages from the seniors about their experience with the health care system during their cancer journey.

## Atlantic Seniors Housing Research Alliance

ASHRA has recently released three new products. The first is a series of Fact Sheets (available in English and French) highlighting 11 key messages from the research. These key messages include:

- Seniors Want to Age at Home and in their Communities
- Seniors have Home Repair Needs
- Seniors Spend a Disproportionate Amount of Income on Housing
- Seniors' Health Impacts Housing
- Most Seniors Live in Rural Areas
- And more...

and others are organized by province. This Report is a valuable tool to understand the scope and extent of programs and services to support seniors in remaining in their homes and in their communities.

Third, ASHRA has released a series of short case study films exploring innovative ideas in living in response to challenges facing our population as they age. They are based on site visits within North America as well as England and Ireland.

Visit [www.ashra.ca](http://www.ashra.ca) to find out more about these products and to view online the case study films.



## Inventory of Academic Courses in Aging in Atlantic Canada

In line with the Centre's Strategic Direction related to Education and Training, an *Inventory of Academic Courses on Aging in Atlantic Canada* is now available. A brief description is provided on each course and organized by university by province within Atlantic Canada. This is a valuable resource for any one interested in starting their academic career in aging or for those with an interest in life-long learning. Note: some universities offer discounts for older adults (60 or 65 and older). Contact the respective university for more information on tuition and related course expenses.



**Building Research Capacity  
in Continuing Care**

NSCA is facilitating the development of a collaboration amongst researchers and decision makers with a mutual interest in understanding the impact of changes underway in Nova Scotia's nursing homes (e.g., physical design, delivery of care). This evolving collaboration has been enabled by a one-day research capacity building workshop held in June 2009 by the Nova Scotia Centre on Aging.

**What's Happening... New**

**Age-Friendly Communities  
Implementation and Evaluation Guide**

With funding from the Public Health Agency of Canada, NSCA is developing a Resource Guide that will assist municipalities/communities in the local assessment, development and evaluation of Age-Friendly Communities Canada Initiatives.

**Alzheimer's Disease and Other  
Dementias Workshop**

NSCA is working with the Alzheimer Disease and Dementia Care Course Committee to develop a one-day refresher workshop for workers in the continuing care sector. The workshop is based on the recently updated Care Course curriculum and is expected to be available in early 2010.

**What's Happening... Ongoing**

**Seniors' Legal Planning Information Kit**

The Nova Scotia Centre on Aging is collaborating with the Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia to develop an Information Kit designed to educate seniors, caregivers, and family members of seniors with regard to arranging one's legal and financial affairs. The goal of the Kit is to ensure that seniors and their caregivers understand legal information that reflects the unique situation of seniors in their relationships to caregivers, family and communities, and to ultimately protect seniors from fraud and financial abuse. NSCA recently finished a consultation phase with seniors, caregivers, family members and practitioners who work with seniors to elicit feedback on a draft version of the Kit. This information is being used to revise the Kit. Beginning in the spring of 2010, a series of information sessions will be held across the province by the Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia as part of a public awareness campaign to inform communities of the availability of the Kit and about legal issues in general.

**Home Support Workers: Human Resource Strategies to Meet Projected Chronic Care Needs of Older Persons in Canada**

A team of researchers led by Dr. Janice Keefe has received funding to examine the issues and strategies related to the recruitment and retention of home support workers. This project involves the development of a background paper and a series of consultations with practitioners and decision makers in four regions across Canada. NSCA is responsible for the evaluation of this 1 year initiative.

**Projecting the Housing Needs of Aging Atlantic Canadians (ASHRA)**

In May 2009, the Atlantic Seniors Housing Needs Conference was held at Mount Saint Vincent University. This three-day conference provided an opportunity to share results from the project's activities and discuss next steps to mobilize the knowledge to key stakeholders. Case studies of innovative housing models from select international venues were released, and policy approaches and gaps related to housing and support services were discussed. The project, now in its final months, is focused on knowledge transfer and dissemination activities including conference and community presentations, academic articles, briefing notes, and newsletter and newspaper articles. It is also conducting interviews with various housing experts across the Atlantic region to help finalize the gap analysis report.

**NSCA and CIHR Institute of Aging Co-Hosted Successful SPA!**

Amidst the bountiful population of roaming bunnies, White Point Beach Resort served as a beautiful setting for the 2009 Summer Program in Aging (SPA) in June 2009. The SPA, a CIHR Institute of Aging initiative, provided 50 graduate students and post doctoral fellows involved in aging research from across Canada an opportunity to focus on skill development and build networks with other students and leading Canadian researchers. The four-day program, organized and delivered by NSCA, included workshops on team building, ethical considerations, proposal development, and knowledge translation.





**Dr. F.R. MacKinnon**  
Founding member of NSCA

Dr. MacKinnon was a founding member of the Nova Scotia Centre on Aging (NSCA), having facilitated its inception in 1992 in response to the need for a university-based centre that could blend academic strengths with community involvement in age-related issues. The Endowment Fund, established in 1996 to honor the retirement of Dr. MacKinnon from public sector service, is used to support research, education on aging issues and opportunities to consult with the senior community. Donations may be made through the Mount's University Advancement Office ([www.msvu.ca/alumnae/howtogive.asp](http://www.msvu.ca/alumnae/howtogive.asp)).

### Upcoming Events:

MSVU Research Day - February 10, 2010—this event is open to the general public to learn more about research at MSVU.

[www.msvu.ca/en/home/research](http://www.msvu.ca/en/home/research)

## Recent Publications/Presentations

### Publications

*Seniors to Seniors. Talking about Cancer.* (2009). This booklet was produced as part of the Cancer and Seniors Mental Health project of which NSCA was a partner. Funded by the Healthy Living and Chronic Disease Strategy-Cancer Component of the Public Health Agency of Canada.

Keefe, J., & Stadnyk, R. (2009, July). *Building research capacity to examine nursing home resident and family quality of life. Workshop Report.* Halifax: Nova Scotia Centre on Aging, Mount Saint Vincent University.

Keefe, J., Stadnyk, R., White, E., & Fancey, P. (2009, June). *Building research capacity for examining the impact of development on quality of life for nursing home residents and their families. Background document.* Halifax: Nova Scotia Centre on Aging, Mount Saint Vincent University.

Martin-Matthews, A., Tamblyn, R., Keefe, J., & Gillis, M. (2009). Bridging policy and research on aging in Canada: Recognizing an anniversary, realizing an Opportunity. *Canadian Journal on Aging*, 28(2), 185-193.

### Presentations

Fancey, P. (2009, October). *Atlantic Seniors Housing Research Alliance: Transferring knowledge, resources and expertise.* Paper presentation at the Annual Meetings of the Canadian Association on Gerontology, Winnipeg, October 22-24, 2009.

Fancey, P., Martin-Matthews, A., & Keefe, J. (2009, October). *Increasing need, decreasing supply: What we need to understand to retain home support workers.* Paper presentation at the Annual Meetings of the Canadian Association on Gerontology, Winnipeg, October 22-24, 2009.

Légaré, J., Décarie, Y., Charbonneau, P., Keefe, J., Gaymu, J., & l'équipe Félicie. (2009, September). *Les futures personnes âgées les plus vulnérable en termes de santé et de mode de vie: Une comparaison entre le Canada et quelques pays européens.* Poster presented at the XXVI IUSSP International Population Conference, Marrakech, Morocco, September 27–October 2, 2009.

Keefe, J., Charbonneau, P., Décarie, Y., & Légaré, J. (2009, September). *Defining disability: Recognizing the heterogeneity of care receivers and its consequences for projecting future care needs of Canadians.* Poster presented at the XXVI IUSSP International Population Conference, Marrakech, Morocco, September 27–October 2, 2009.

Keefe, J., Vaillancourt, Y., & Fancey, P. (2009, October). *Social economy, public policy and care of older persons: Perspectives of community-based care from NS, NB and Quebec.* Paper presentation at the BuildingPolicy4<sup>th</sup> Social Economy Colloquium, Mount Saint Vincent University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, September 30-October 2, 2009.

Décarie, Y., Légaré, J., Charbonneau, P., Keefe, J., Gaymu, J., & FELICIE team. (2009, July). *Future older people in the most vulnerable situation in terms of health, family situation and living arrangement: A comparison of Canada with some European countries.* Poster presented at the 19th IAGG World Congress of Gerontology and Geriatrics, Paris, France, July 5-8, 2009.

Légaré, J., Charbonneau, P., Décarie, Y., & Keefe, J. (2009, July). *Heterogeneity of disability and its consequences for projecting future care needs of older Canadians.* Poster presented at the 19th IAGG World Congress of Gerontology and Geriatrics, Paris, France, July 5-8, 2009.

Décarie, Y., Légaré, J., Charbonneau, P., Keefe, J., Gaymu, J., & FELICIE team. (2009, June). *Using dynamic microsimulation models to face the policy issue of caring for the most vulnerable elderly: A comparison of Canada with some European countries.* Paper presented at the 2nd General Conference of the International Microsimulation Association, Ottawa, Ontario, June 8-10, 2009.

Fancey, P. (2009, June). *Evaluation: Everything you didn't want to know and more.* Presentation to the Age-Friendly Communities Evaluation Meeting, Ottawa, June 16-17 2009.

Keefe, J. & Hattie, B. (2009, May). *Down home: Creating age friendly communities in Atlantic Canada.* Workshop as part of the Atlantic Seniors Housing Needs Conference, Halifax, Nova Scotia, May 27-29, 2009.

## Contact Us

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## Achievements/Awards/Recognition

Bessie Harris, outgoing Chair of the Advisory Board, was recognized at the Fall Advisory Board meeting by the Centre's Director, Dr. Janice Keefe. Bessie, a retired provincial civil servant, joined the NSCA Advisory Board in 2001 and assumed her leadership role as Chair in 2003. Dr. Keefe thanked Bessie for her commitment to the Centre through some tumultuous years and for her guidance in helping to establish the Centre's current organizational structure. Dr. Keefe also thanked Bessie for her interest in continuing to serve on the Advisory Board as a member at large.