

# Nova Scotia Centre on Aging

Advancing Aging Research and Enhancing Seniors' Lives for 20 Years

Fall 2013

166 Bedford Highway, Halifax, NS, B3M 2J6 902-457-6788



## Nursing Homes Offer Positive Resident Quality of Life

For some individuals staying in their own home is not always possible, due to the complexity of care required and the challenges associated with meeting the care needs in a home environment. So, when care needs exceed the capacity of home care and/or the care provided by family and friend, a nursing home may be considered.

have been associated with the caregiving while the person was at home is alleviated.

Collectively, residents, staff and families at our nursing homes make up a dynamic community with a common goal of providing person-centred care and supporting quality of life for the residents.

Nursing homes are a valued and essential component of our continuing care system and while increasing attention is being given to home care services, it is important to remember that nursing homes provide necessary and appropriate care for a specific group of our population. In Nova Scotia, recent innovations include new homes with small, self contained neighborhoods as well as changes in staff approaches. Recent national data indicate that almost three quarters of residents are women and a large proportion has some form of dementia. Despite some stereotypes that people have about nursing homes, nursing homes are alive with people and activity and in many instances a person's situation can improve because they are receiving appropriate care and social stimulation. Family relations can also improve because the strain that may

For the past few years I have been working with a team of researchers and representatives from the long term care sector on a nationally funded study that is examining different models of nursing home care in Nova Scotia. We are pleased with the response to the study and are delighted that results will start to be released this fall. Overall, our study found that residents, families and staff perceive a positive quality of life for residents in our nursing homes. We also found that supporting relationships amongst residents, families and staff, and creating home-like environments are important factors to residents' quality of life. Our study results will inform decisions for both practice and policy as decision makers grapple with allocating limited resources to support the care needs of an aging population. I'm pleased that the Centre's work can contribute to ensuring these settings are caring communities.



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

## 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...

### New Projects Announced

#### Building Age-Friendly Communities: Messaging to Shape Policy and Practice

Several municipal units in the province are engaged in a planning process to become more age-friendly. The results from the planning process help to shape initiatives and strategies at the local level but also have relevance at the regional and provincial level. With funding from Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation, the Centre will work to develop key messages that are common to communities arising from the age-friendly communities consultation data that can be used to shape community and health services policy and practice.

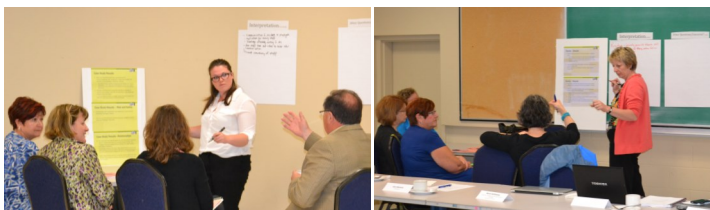
#### A Synthesis of Evidence-Based Knowledge on Caregiver Assessment

Dr. Janice Keefe and her colleagues have received funding to synthesize data across several studies that have used the C.A.R.E. Tool, a guide to help health care professionals engage in a conversation with family and friend caregivers to better understand their needs. The synthesis will identify outcomes of the caregiver assessment that can be used to demonstrate the benefits of caregiver assessment from a practice and policy perspective.

#### Survey of Nursing Home Waitlist Clients

This fall, NSCA will be conducting a survey with clients who have been assessed for nursing home admission and are waiting for placement. This project is being funded by the Continuing Care Branch, Department of Health and Wellness and survey results are expected to support the Branch's planning of home care and nursing home care services.

#### Results of Nursing Home Study to be released this Fall



Care and Construction team met in June to review study results and work on dissemination activities.

Preliminary findings from the Care and Construction project highlight the importance of relationships in nursing home residents' quality of life. Regardless of who we talked to - families, staff or residents - positive relationships were a significant element in supporting residents' quality of life. This is a central message the project team will be sharing at conference presentations and dissemination events throughout the fall and winter. During October and November, conference presentations are scheduled. As well, on November 27th, invited members of the continuing care sector will participate in a full-day workshop focused on results from the project. Representatives will hear results from the study and identify ways to apply those results to policy, practice, and education in the field. Sector representatives from the project team are excited to be sharing results with their colleagues in this unique event. It is a key event in realizing the project goal of integrated knowledge translation informing decisions for continuing care in Nova Scotia.

#### Pilot Underway of Workshop on Elder Abuse for Health Care Professionals

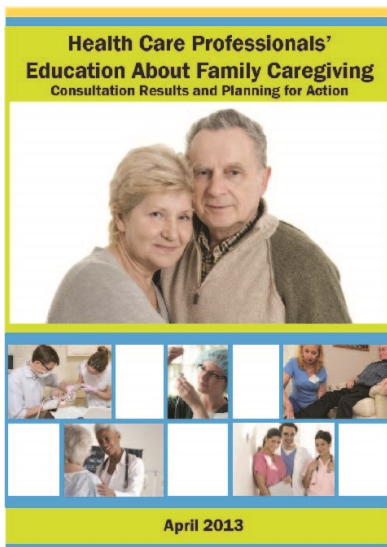
NSCA is working with Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia and NS Department of Seniors to develop a workshop and online tool to assist health care professionals better understand abuse of older adults and be more prepared to recognize and support older adults and their family in such situations. After extensive consultation, the workshop has been developed and this fall will be piloted with health care professionals in several districts throughout Nova Scotia. With support from Centre's Dr. F.R. MacKinnon Endowment Fund and the Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia, the workshop is also being offered at the Canadian Association of Gerontology annual conference as part of its Pre-Conference Workshop program.

## NSCA “Out and About”

### Strong Presence at Canadian Association of Gerontology’s Annual Conference

Staff, students and researchers affiliated with the Centre will have a strong presence at the annual conference of the Canadian Association on Gerontology in Halifax, October 17-19. On the program includes presentations on age friendly communities, aging communities and climate change, caregiver assessment, dementia care and a number of presentations sharing results from the study on nursing home models of care. More than 500 participants from across Canada and elsewhere are expected to be in attendance. For more information check out the conference program at [www.cagacg.ca/CAG2013](http://www.cagacg.ca/CAG2013)

### New Resource Available About the Need For health Care Professionals Education



A new resource is available that advocates for health care professionals' education about family and friend caregiving. The brochure, "*Health Care Professionals' Education About Family Caregiving Consultation Results and Planning for Action*" developed as part of the Timing of CARE Tool project is now available online on the NSCA website or in

print form by contacting [caretool@msvu.ca](mailto:caretool@msvu.ca) or contacting the NSCA. For more information on the project visit [www.msvu.ca/nsca/caregiverassessment](http://www.msvu.ca/nsca/caregiverassessment).

## Have you Heard?

### NSCA's Katie Aubrecht Receives Post-doctoral Fellowship



Katie Aubrecht joined the Centre's team in 2011 as our Research Coordinator. At the same time she was working to complete her Ph.D. dissertation on “university students’ mental health” through Sociology of Education, University of Toronto. She successfully defended in summer of 2012.

Her work at the Centre during the past few years exposed her to different issues in aging and perspectives helping her to see important linkages between her interest in disability studies and aging. In particular, she has developed a specific interest in dementia care and will be starting a two year CIHR funded Post Doctorate Fellowship in January to further examine the role that social organization of dementia plays in constructing the meaning and value of person-centred care.

“Working at the NSCA provided a space of personal and professional growth to help me think about the possible linkages, and the support from Dr. Keefe and others at the Centre has been fabulous” says Katie.

Dr. Aubrecht is also teaching a new graduate level course examining different perspectives on dementia being offered by the Mount's Department of Family Studies & Gerontology.

Congratulations, Dr. Aubrecht, on your CIHR Award!

## Publications and Presentations

Fancey, P., Keefe, J. & Campbell, J. (2013, September). *Age-Friendly Communities in Nova Scotia: What we are learning about the role of various stakeholders in shaping age-friendly communities.* Paper presentation at the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference on Age-Friendly Cities, Quebec City.

Keefe, J. (2013, September). Caregiver supply and demand: Preparing for the future needs of older Canadians. Health Canada, Ottawa, ON.

Keefe, J. (2013, June). *Assessing nursing home residents' quality of life: What is important to family?* Presentation at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Northwood Research Symposium. Halifax, NS.

Keefe, J. (2013, June). *The Resident of the Future.* Keynote Address at the Annual General Meeting of Saint Vincent's Nursing Home. Halifax, NS.

## Mass Messaging to Support Positive Aging

### HEALTHY LIVING - POSITIVE AGING: Physical activity never gets old!

Many people think that as they age, exercise is no longer an important part of staying healthy. But in fact, this may be the best time to exercise! In your senior years. Research shows that staying physically active improves your mood and can reduce negative thoughts about aging. There is a host of scientific evidence about a wide range of benefits of increased physical activity. To get more information on this initiative go to [www.msvu.ca/nsca](http://www.msvu.ca/nsca) The NSCA is a partner on this initiative.

## NSCA Now on Facebook



We launched our Facebook page at “Our Future is Aging: Current Research on Knowledge, Practice and Policy” last fall. If you would like to receive updates on NSCA activities and events, search Nova Scotia Centre on Aging on Facebook and like our page.

## Margaret Norrie McCain Centre New Home to Dr. Rosemarie Sampson Centre on Aging



Construction continues on the new Margaret Norrie McCain Teaching, Learning and Research Centre which is scheduled to open in December 2014. The McCain Centre will be the first academic building in Canada devoted throughout to honouring and telling the stories of women.

The McCain Centre will also be home to the Dr. Rosemarie Sampson Centre on Aging, new space that brings together the Nova Scotia Centre on Aging with the Maritime Data Centre for Aging Research and Policy Analysis enabling new synergies and opportunities. The naming of the space is a result of a legacy gift from Dr. Rosemarie Sampson. Sampson has been affiliated with the Mount for more than 50 years as a student, faculty member, dean, staff member, donor and volunteer. As dean of professional studies during the 1990s, Sampson strongly supported the Nova Scotia Centre on Aging, which was established in 1992. More recently, Sampson chaired the Aging Committee for Project TWENTY12. Stay tuned for future updates on our new home.

## Opportunities to Support NSCA

### F.R. MacKinnon Endowment Fund

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

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