

# Nova Scotia Centre on Aging

Fall 2016 Newsletter

## Changing the Story: Celebrating our Aging Population

Our desire to age well as a society or to ensure a healthy aging population is not limited to Nova Scotia where there is a higher proportion of older adults than other jurisdictions. The fact that we have a higher proportion of older adults should be viewed as a good news story as opposed to the doom and gloom that is often associated with the aging of our population. Many people are aging in places where they want to be and they are able to continue to participate in our communities. How can this be a bad thing? And if so, how do we make it a good news story.

This was the topic of discussion at community conversations across Nova Scotia this summer that our Centre had the pleasure of hosting on behalf of the Department of Seniors. Over 300 Nova Scotians came out to offer their ideas to make Nova Scotia a place that celebrates getting older and recognizes the knowledge and experience that older adults have. We heard many positive stories of older adults as mentors, entrepreneurs, community leaders, and supporting with child care and care of others in need. These examples are not just limited to Nova Scotia but can be found in communities across Canada and internationally.

October 1 was International Day of Older Persons and recognized as National Seniors Day in Canada. This day is all about challenging the negative stereotypes about older adults and intended to recognize and celebrate the valuable contributions to communities, workplaces and society by older adults. Here in Nova Scotia and around the globe there are older adults who are not in a position to advocate for conditions that support a better quality of life. This makes it difficult for them to stay involved with their family and community and live life to the fullest. That's why research on aging is important and why we at the NSCA are committed to making research matter.

Aging well is a global issue and I am pleased to welcome Dr. Zachary Zimmer to our community of leading researchers on aging. Dr. Zimmer holds a Tier 1 Canada Research Chair in Global Aging and Community at the Mount. His international work will advance the health and well being of older persons. Through our Centre's tradition of applied research and Dr. Zimmer's Global Aging and Community Initiative, the potential for changing the story about our aging population just got better.



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...

### Successful Team Meeting in Halifax



Pictured above: SALTY team at first team meeting. September 2016.

The Seniors – Adding Life to Years (SALTY), a four year multidisciplinary and multi-sectoral project aiming to add quality to late life for people living in nursing homes and their caregivers, had a very successful first in-person team meeting in Halifax September 18<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup>. About 40 of the SALTY project members from British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario and Nova Scotia came together to meet as a team, discuss research methods, debrief study timelines and activities and strategize the next steps for the project. Research trainees on the project met with mentors (study leads) for an evening workshop discussing the role of trainees on the SALTY project and participating in a knowledge translation presentation and interaction. The meeting provided an opportunity for the team to hear the voices and study perspectives of team members representing long term care residents, caregivers (family, volunteer and staff), and knowledge users.

In the year ahead, the team will be collecting and reviewing relevant policy documents, conducting a scoping review and key informant interviews to learn more about promising practices, evaluating the implementation of a quality improvement initiative for end of life care, and developing longitudinal indicators to assess quality end of life care. For more information on the project and updates visit [www.SALTYltc.ca](http://www.SALTYltc.ca), contact [SALTY@msvu.ca](mailto:SALTY@msvu.ca) or follow @SALTY\_ltc

## Moving Research to Action to Enhance Resident Care



Three knowledge translation events are being planned with decision makers in long term care throughout Canada to explore ways in which professional networks can be leveraged to support the spread of ideas and innovation. The networks were identified through a survey with senior administrators conducted in 2014-15 and the resulting sociograms offer valuable insights in the breadth and strength of networks. The Advice Seeking Networks in Long Term Care team will be hosting these events in Edmonton, Winnipeg and Halifax this fall. For more information on the project visit [www.trec.ualberta.ca/en/Projects/SNA.aspx](http://www.trec.ualberta.ca/en/Projects/SNA.aspx)

### Retirement—it's more than the money!

NSCA is working with Community Links to develop and deliver workshops that provide "soon to retire" employees with an opportunity to consider their social ties in retirement. The workshops, to be piloted this fall in select workplaces, are intended to help employees become more aware of the linkages between social ties and health and well being in later life. The workshop will also provide an opportunity to consider strategies that will help to foster new, and maintain existing, social connections.

### Working CARERS Program—will it work in rural communities?

NSCA is currently partnering with researchers at Mount Sinai Hospital to explore the feasibility, sustainability, and impact of the Reitman Centre's Working CARERS Program, a skills training program for family/friend caregivers who also are employed. The current study aims to understand the realities of individuals living in rural Nova Scotia who are employed and provide assistance to a family/friend living with dementia as well as what it takes to have the 8-week program part of ongoing supports for caregivers in rural communities. This project is one of many being led by the Canadian Consortium on Neurodegeneration in Aging.

**Participants Needed:** NSCA is seeking individuals from the Bridgewater area and surrounding communities to participate in the project. If you would like to learn more about the project, please call 1-877-302-4440

## Out and About

### Consultation Sessions Held to Inform Action Plan on an Aging Population



NSCA hosted several community conversations in late spring/early summer to gather input from Nova Scotians about what can be done to encourage and enable people to continue to participate and contribute to their communities as they get older. This work was done for the Nova Scotia Department of Seniors who has undertaken a process to develop an Action Plan for government. Thank you to everyone who participated in the community conversations or provided input online or through the workbook. For information on the progress of the Action Plan, contact [seniors@novascotia.ca](mailto:seniors@novascotia.ca)

## Have you Heard...

### Introducing the New Canada Research Chair in Global Aging & Community



The NSCA is pleased to welcome Dr. Zachary Zimmer, Canada Research Chair in Global Aging & Community to our community of leading researchers whose international work will advance the health and well being of older persons. Dr. Zimmer is a social demographer whose

research involves examining large nationally-based data sets and extracting and analyzing broad social indicators of well-being of older persons such as their health and their living situations. He states "As we are living longer around the world, we need to consider are we living well? What is happening on the quality side is of great interest. As we are expanding life, how it relates to quality of life is extremely important." For more information go to: [www.globalagingandcommunity.com](http://www.globalagingandcommunity.com)

## Our Future is Aging Conference a Success!



Special thanks to all the participants, key note speaker, sponsors, volunteers, presenters and exhibitors of "Our Future is Aging: Current Research on Knowledge, Practice and Policy". The second Our Future is Aging conference was held in June 2016 on the beautiful Mount campus in Halifax.

Many of the Conference presentations can be found on the NSCA website: [www.msvu.ca/agingconference](http://www.msvu.ca/agingconference)

We would like to acknowledge the event sponsors: GOLD: Nova Scotia Department of Seniors and Research Services, IWK Health Centre and Nova Scotia Health Authority. BRONZE: Northwood and the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation. In addition to our sponsors, this conference was made possible through financial contributions from The Shaw Group, MSVU President's Conference Fund, and the Dr. F.R. MacKinnon Endowment Fund.

For more information on the conference go to: [www.msvu.ca/agingconference](http://www.msvu.ca/agingconference)



## Presentations & Publications

### Presentations

Keefe J. (2016, September). *Enhancing resident care in Nova Scotia: Innovative mapping of advice networks in residential long term care*. Presentation to Community Governed Organization of Nova Scotia, Dartmouth, NS.

Keefe, J., & Andrew, M. (2016, April). *The continuum of care for seniors*. Faculty of Medicine, Dalhousie University. Halifax, NS.

Keefe, J., Boudreau, D., Casey, M., & McInnis, A. (2016, June). *Research evidence informs change in nursing homes: An integrated knowledge translation approach*. Nova Scotia Centre on Aging Conference, Our Future is Aging: Current Research on Knowledge, Practice and Policy. Halifax, NS.

Keefe, J., Estabrooks, C., Beacom, A., Berta, W., Dearing, J., & Squires, J. (2016, June). *A social network analysis of long term care in Atlantic Canada: Who should you look to for advice?* Poster presentation, Nova Scotia Centre on Aging Conference, Our Future is Aging: Current Research on Knowledge, Practice and Policy. Halifax, NS.

Cranley, L., Berta, W., Dearing, J., Estabrooks, C., Keefe, J. & McAfee, E. (2016, June). *Enhancing resident care in nursing homes: Characteristics of opinion leaders in the long term care sector in Atlantic Canada*. Nova Scotia Centre on Aging Conference, Our Future is Aging: Current Research on Knowledge, Practice and Policy. Halifax, NS.

Manuel, P., Rapaport, E., & Keefe, J. (2016, June). *Aging communities and rising seas, a community planning and design challenge: Case studies from Nova Scotia*. Nova Scotia Centre on Aging Conference, Our Future is Aging: Current Research on Knowledge, Practice and Policy. Halifax, NS.

Delaney, K., Aubrecht, K., & Keefe, J. (2016, June). *Do provincial approaches to home and community supports and services delivery help or hinder client-centred care?* Poster presentation, Nova Scotia Centre on Aging Conference, Our Future is Aging: Current Research on Knowledge, Practice and Policy. Halifax, NS.

McAfee, E., Keefe, J., & Estabrooks, C. (2016, June). *Out of the loop: Social network isolation in long-term care in Nova Scotia*. Poster presentation, Nova Scotia Centre on Aging Conference, Our Future is Aging: Current Research on Knowledge, Practice and Policy. Halifax, NS.

Aubrecht, K., Ward-Griffin, C., Guberman, N., Keefe, J., & Fancey, P. (2016, June). *"I just didn't see what her big problem was": The gendered logic of dependency in nursing student attitudes towards family caregiving*. Nova Scotia Centre on Aging Conference, Our Future is Aging: Current Research on Knowledge, Practice and Policy. Halifax, NS.



### NS Deputy Ministers Visit the NSCA

Dr. Keefe gave a presentation on the NSCA to the NS Deputy Ministers who were taking a tour of the Mount learning about the vast array of educational programs and research initiatives.

### NSCA Celebrates its 25th Anniversary in 2017

2017 marks the 25th anniversary of the NSCA. Stay tuned for more information on events and activities acknowledging this milestone.

### Like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter

If you would like to receive updates on NSCA activities and events, like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter.



### 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 902-457-6470.

**Contact us:**  
Nova Scotia Centre on Aging  
Mount Saint Vincent University  
166 Bedford Highway  
Halifax, NS B3M 2J6

T: 902-457-6546  
E: [nsc@msvu.ca](mailto:nsc@msvu.ca)  
[www.msvu.ca/nsc](http://www.msvu.ca/nsc)