



Dr. Janice Keefe
Director, NS Centre on Aging

A Dementia Strategy for Nova Scotia

Dementia refers to a number of disorders in which our ability to think and to remember is damaged. There are more than 70 known dementias, including Alzheimer's, and the symptoms affect a person's ability to function at work, engage in social relationship or perform regular activities of daily living such as dressing, bathing and eating.

As people are living longer, there is an expected increase in the prevalence of dementia. Work continues to identify risk factors and causes, to improve diagnostic tools and to understand approaches for the treatment and care of persons with dementia. As well, recent research is demonstrating important lifestyle factors that can delay the onset of dementia, in particular keeping physically and mentally active.

Much of this research is being done right here in Nova Scotia. For example, the NSCA contributes to knowledge about dementia by helping to better understand the perspective of the family and friend caregiver and what supports she or he may need to help them in the role.

We've also had opportunities to shape education on dementia care that front-line workers in home care

and nursing homes in Nova Scotia are required to have and we've been part of a network of researchers, clinicians and practitioners to develop ways to share and communicate our knowledge.

Despite these efforts, families, communities and the health care system face challenges with providing care for persons with dementia. The good news is that work is underway in Nova Scotia by the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia and the Department of Health and Wellness to develop a dementia strategy. The strategy is intended to address access to services, caregiver support and identify ways to help people with dementia remain independent for as long as possible. This strategy, expected to be released in spring of 2015, is the first of its kind for Nova Scotia and will join the increasing number of provinces (such as Ont. BC, PEI, and NL) that have developed a provincial strategy.

Many of us who work at the NSCA have been personally touched by dementia and realize from a personal as well as educational approach, the importance of planning for dementia care. I encourage you to participate in the strategy in order for Nova Scotia to become better prepared to manage the impact of dementia in our future.



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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...

Study on Nursing Homes Shares Results



Dr. Keefe addresses long-term care representatives in Halifax, November 2013.

With the main data analysis completed, the Care and Construction team has been busy sharing results locally, nationally, and internationally. A knowledge translation workshop was held for long-term care representatives in November, 2013. Almost 70 representatives from across the province came together to hear project results, to discuss implications for the sector, and to identify actions. A report about the workshop was released in March, 2014. As well, team members shared results directly with residents, family, and staff in eight presentations at nursing homes across the province as well as produce a video to make the presentation more accessible. A number of presentations at conferences have occurred and more are scheduled for this spring by researchers students and sector representatives. Recently, results were presented at a national conference on Culture Change in Toronto and at the European Academy of Occupational Health Psychology in London, England. In May three nursing home administrators will travel to Nashville to share results at the Eden Alternative's International Conference. Locally, results will be shared as part of a CIHR-funded Cafe Scientifique in May and as part of Northwood's 4th Annual Research Symposium in June.

The project's website has been revamped to focus on the project's results and will be updated regularly as new findings are released. Please check it out www.careandconstruction.ca

Resources on Elder Abuse for Healthcare Professionals Available

The project being led by the Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia, in partnership with Department of Seniors and the NS Centre on Aging, completed piloting the workshop that was developed for healthcare professionals. The workshop is approximately three hours in length and intended to help healthcare professionals from different disciplines and practice settings be more prepared to support older adults and their family in such situations. In addition to the workshop, a resource will be accessible online. This tool includes information that is covered in the workshop as well as information on assessment tools, community resources and links to other relevant sites. Visit www.legalinfo.org for more information.

Supporting Dialogue About Age-Friendly Communities

Briefs are being developed that will highlight messages about two important elements of an age-friendly community - *Home and Community Supports* and *Social Engagement*. Drawing on information gathered during the age-friendly community consultation work with municipalities in Nova Scotia, NSCA staff have been working with a multi-sectoral advisory group to shape the content of these briefs. The briefs are intended to raise awareness and be a tool to engage stakeholders in dialogue. A webinar is also being planned during which these key messages will be discussed and initiatives that address these two areas highlighted.

New Project Announced

Older LGBT Population Preparing for Later Life

NSCA is collaborating on a national project that will examine how older LGBT individuals are preparing for later life. The project will also create an online community to support education and foster connection among LGBT older adults and their caregivers. The Centre will work with Co-investigator Dr. Áine Humble, Department of Family Studies & Gerontology, MSVU and other local stakeholders – NS Rainbow Action Project, Dept of Seniors and Pride Health. Together they will implement the project activities in Halifax, which is one of the project's five Canadian sites.

NSCA “Out and About”

Sharing Results With Study Participants



Debra Boudreau, Tideview Terrace (left) and Pamela Fancy, NSCA (right) talk about project findings with nursing home residents, family members and staff, Digby, February 2014.

Webinar Draws Over 190 Participants

The webinar, *Older Spousal Caregivers: How A Caregiver Assessment Can Promote Seniors' Mental Health* held on February 6, 2014 hosted over 190 participants from across the country. Dr. Janice Keefe, Director of the Nova Scotia Centre on Aging along with Nancy Guberman from the Université du Québec à Montréal discussed the role of a caregiver assessment tool in promoting and maintaining the health and well-being of older spousal caregivers. To view the presentation you can register online at www.chnet-works.ca

Dr. Keefe Presents at TEDxMSVUWOMEN

Dr. Keefe presented “*What to do about Mom?... should we ask her?*” at the TEDxMSVUWomen event held at the Mount on December 5, 2013. The event was centered around women and innovation - a suitable event for the Mount given its dedication to women. The video is available on youtube by searching TEDxMSVUWOMEN and has been viewed over 2400 times.

Café Scientifique

Innovations in Nursing Homes - Are they Making a Difference? On May, 5, 2014, the NSCA will host an informal public discussion about the results of two significant studies specifically designed to understand innovations in Nova Scotia nursing homes. The expert presenters are: Dr. Janice Keefe, Ann McInnis and Dr. Emily Gard Marshall. This free event is presented by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and the NSCA.

Have you Heard?

In spotlight—NSCA’s Judith Godin



Judith joined the NSCA in September 2012 as the data analyst for the Care and Construction project. In January, Judith began a postdoctoral position with the project funded by the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation. Judith is identifying additional areas of inquiry the survey data collected for this project. She is examining the connections between nursing home staffing mix and two important outcomes: resident quality of life and nursing home staff work experiences. Judith was awarded a PhD in psychology from Carleton University in 2011 and she has a general interest in health research, and a particular interest in the advanced statistical techniques required to analyze health-related data. Judith has over 10 years research and data analyst experience and has over 20 publications including numerous presentations at national and international conferences.

In addition to her work at the Centre, Judith also works as an independent consultant specializing in advanced statistics and research methodology with a focus in health services and organizational psychology and has taught several courses and workshops on quantitative methods. “I am delighted to be a part of such a diverse and supportive team that produces high quality research.” Says Judith, “It is exciting to see the research findings being used to improve the quality of life of nursing home residents.”

Presentations

Keefe, J., & Humble, Á. (2014, January). *Approaches to positive aging: Implications for diverse immigrant population*. Presentation at Positive Aging for Immigrant Families and Seniors: Celebrating Diversity. Exploring New Approaches. Examining Options. Halifax, NS.

Keefe, J. (2014, January). *Challenges and considerations for rural communities caring for seniors*. Presentation at CIHR Best Brains Exchange: Community Based Service Models for Seniors. St. John's, NL.

Keefe, J. (2013, November). *A changing demographic: Why health care professionals will want to know more about family/friend caregivers*. Keynote presentation to the Nova Scotia Association of Medical Radiology Professionals' 2013 Educational Seminar. Halifax, NS.

Keefe, J. (2013, November). *Who cares? Aging boomers and caregiving policy in Canada*. Keynote presentation at the 11th Annual Ellen M. Gee Memorial Lecture. Vancouver, BC.

Keefe, J., Spin, P., & Vezina, S. (2013, November). *Measuring unmet needs of older Canadians living in private households*. Poster presentation at the Gerontological Society of America's Annual Conference. New Orleans, LA.

Keefe, J., Weeks, L., & Stadnyk, R. (2013, November). *Care and Construction: What is the effect on resident's quality of life*. Symposium at the Gerontological Society of America's Annual Conference. New Orleans, LA.

McInnis, A., Keefe, J., & Kelloway, E.K. (2013, October). *Innovation in Nursing Home Care What do new approaches mean for resident quality of life?* Symposium at the Canadian Association of Gerontology Conference. Halifax, NS.

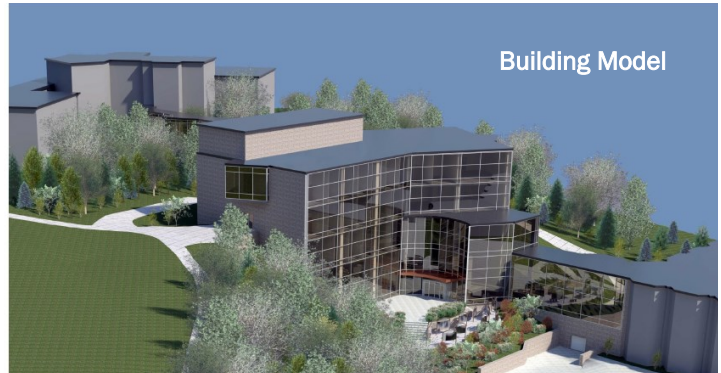
Rapaport, E., Manuel, P., & Keefe, J. (2013, November). *Rising tides and vulnerable populations: Are Nova Scotia rural seniors the next victims of climate change?* Presentation at Esri Canada User Conference, Halifax, NS.

Weeks, L., Keefe, J., Stadnyk, R., Chamberlain, S., Godin, J., Casey, M., & O'Keefe, J. (2013, October). *"I feel he is getting good care and that is comforting": Understanding how care and construction influences family assessment of nursing home resident's quality of life*. Presentation at the Canadian Association on Gerontology Annual Scientific and Educational Meeting, Halifax, N.S.

Fancey, P., Campbell, J., Hattie, B., & Keefe, J. (2013, October). *Age Friendly Communities, The Nova Scotia experience: What can it tell us about priority issues and solutions*. Poster presentation at the Canadian Association on Gerontology Annual Scientific and Educational Meeting, Halifax, N.S.

Fancey, P., Keefe, J., Guberman, N., & Ward-Griffin, C. (2013, October). *Planning for education on family and friend caregiving for health care professionals*. Poster presentation at the Canadian Association on Gerontology Annual Scientific and Educational Meeting, Halifax, N.S.

Margaret Norrie McCain Centre to Open in the Summer of 2015



Construction continues on the new Margaret Norrie McCain Teaching, Learning and Research Centre which is scheduled to open in the summer of 2015.

The McCain Centre will be home to the Dr. Rosemarie Sampson Centre on Aging which will include new space for the Nova Scotia Centre on Aging enabling new synergies and opportunities.

The exterior of the building is expected to be finished in May 2014 and inside the four-floor building new workspace, classrooms and meeting spaces are taking shape.

Receive NSCA Facebook Updates



If you would like to receive updates on NSCA activities and events, search Nova Scotia Centre on Aging on Facebook and like our page.

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.

Contact us:

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

Tel: (902) 457-6546
Fax: (902) 457-6508
Email: nsca@msvu.ca
www.msvu.ca/nsca