

# Nova Scotia Centre on Aging

Spring 2017 Newsletter



## Caregiving: A look at the brighter side

When older people need care, it is mostly provided by family and friends. They are often recognized as the “backbone” for supporting the needs of an aging society. There is an extensive body of research on family and friend caregivers and much of it focuses on the challenges they face and the consequences on their health, finances, employment and social aspects of their lives. Without a doubt, caregiving can be challenging especially when there is little respite or other forms of support and people can feel isolated and overwhelmed. As a result, many caregivers do experience negative consequences. However, with our continual focus on the challenges and difficulties of caregiving we tend to overlook what may be positive aspects of this role and how recognizing and enhancing the positive experiences may buffer some of the negative aspects.

Some of the research I have been involved in has asked “Why do you provide care to your relative?” Answers offer valuable insight into the potential positive aspects of their role – “to show love and respect”, “to give something back”, “to make sure s/he receives good care”. These speak to personal satisfaction and a

sense of accomplishment in achieving goals that are important to them. For example, a daughter who wants to reciprocate the care that her mother provided to her children or the spousal caregiver who feels that the care she gives her husband with dementia is more personalized than what a nursing home may provide. In both examples, the caregiver may achieve satisfaction in being able to provide the care. Other reasons for caregiving may include personal growth or giving meaning to one’s life which can also reap personal benefits. Fact is, caregiving can be a rewarding and fulfilling experience. This is in no way to suggest that the adverse effects are not important—they need to be addressed. By recognizing caregiving’s positive side, we affirm the contributions caregivers make and these positives can help cope with the more stressful situations.

May is Caregiver Awareness Month in Nova Scotia. A time to recognize the contribution of family and friend caregivers. As we continue to advocate for supports for caregivers, let’s not only focus on the need to reduce the difficulties they face but also focus on ways to enhance the positive aspects.



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...

### NSCA Hosts Community Presentations

NSCA is pleased to be hosting four presentations for the public in May. Topics are aimed at thinking about issues differently and viewing aging more positively and feature experts on the topics.

#### Power of Positive Thinking for Health and Resilience

Dr. Beverley Cassidy, Fountain of Health Initiative  
May 4, 6:30-8:00 pm, Lunenburg County Lifestyle Centre, Bridgewater

#### Positive Aging and Nutrition: Let's Talk About it!

Dr. Catherine Morley, School of Nutrition and Dietetics, Acadia University  
May 9, 6:30-8:00 pm, Community Room, Wolfville Farmers Market

#### Caregiving: Is there a silver lining?

Dr. Janice Keefe, Nova Scotia Centre on Aging, Mount Saint Vincent University  
May 23, 6:30-8:00 pm, Paul O'Regan Hall, Halifax Central Library

#### Creative Aging

AHA! Artists  
May 25, 7:00-8:30 pm, Community Room, Antigonish Public Library

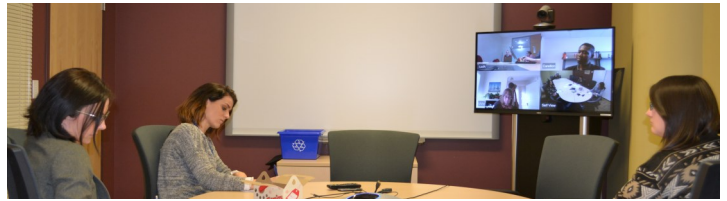
These sessions have been made possible with financial support from the Dr. F.R. MacKinnon Endowment Fund. Special thanks to our collaborators for helping to make these community events possible:



### Workshop Challenges Retirees to Think about Social Involvement

NSCA is working with Community Links on a project aimed at mitigating social isolation in later life. The project includes a workshop for "soon to retire" employees and "recent retirees" to consider the importance of social ties and discuss strategies to foster new, and maintain existing, social connections. Participants tell us that the workshop helps them better understand the importance of staying socially engaged and that they will use what they learn in the workshop. For more information on the workshop, contact [nsca@msvu.ca](mailto:nsca@msvu.ca)

## Seniors-Adding Life to Years Project Getting Down to Business



Trainee network meeting via video conference technology.

The SALTY project is in full steam as it heads into its second year. The project involves work in four provinces (NS, ON, AB and BC) and is aimed at enhancing quality of life in nursing homes. Current activities include: discussions with key decision makers to identify a list of symptoms and practices from the RAI data that most affect quality of life at end of life; scoping review addressing barriers to inclusion of persons with dementia in research; analysis of top policies and influential documents in select policy areas. The project also offers a diverse, interdisciplinary, applied health research training environment for its more than 10 trainees. These trainees span the project's four streams and connect regularly. In May, the 50+ member team will have their second full team meeting via video conference technology. Keep connected with the project through: [www.SALTYItc.ca](http://www.SALTYItc.ca)  
Facebook: SALTYItc Twitter: @SALTY\_Itc

## Out and About

### Government Launches Action Plan for an Aging Population



Pictured above: Marjorie Willison, Committee Co-Chair; Donna Comeau, Health and Wellness; Pamela Fancey, NSCA.

NSCA was recognized for its background work to **Shift - Nova Scotia's Action Plan for an Aging Population** which was released on March 23rd. NSCA held community conversations in Nova Scotia to gather input to support the development of the Plan which includes more than 50 actions. For more information go to <https://novascotia.ca/shift>



## NSCA Staff Walking for Alzheimer's

Again this year, NSCA is participating in the Alzheimer Society's annual walk on May 7 to raise money to support programs, services and research. The AGETASTICS Team has raised close to \$4000 this year and more than \$13,000 over 6 years. Go AGETASTICS Go!

## NSCA Partners on Art Exhibit

NSCA is partnering to offer an art exhibit this fall entitled: **Bodies in Translation: Age and Creativity**. This exhibition will feature work that challenges assumptions about aging as it relates to identity, culture, embodiment, sexuality and disability. The exhibit will run from September 8 to November 12, 2017 at the Art Gallery, Mount Saint Vincent University. Join us for a public reception being hosted by NSCA on Sunday, October 1, 2:00-4:00 pm and watch for information about other special events being offered in conjunction with this first of its kind age-focused art exhibit at MSVU.

## Have you Heard...

### 25th Anniversary Dinner a Success!



Pictured above: Dr. Janice Keefe, Dr. Brian Goldman and MSVU President Ramona Lumpkin.

On Thursday, April 6 we celebrated our 25th anniversary during a dinner with more than 150 friends and colleagues, recognizing the many individuals and organizations who have supported the Centre over the years. Thank you to our emcee **Norma Lee MacLeod**, and our guest speaker, **Dr. Brian Goldman** for helping to make our dinner a success.

*Our sincere thanks to those individuals and organizations who supported and attended this milestone event!*



Pictured above: Linda Bird, Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia; Dr. Janice Keefe and Dr. Rosemarie Sampson.

As part of the dinner's program, the Centre took the opportunity to recognize an organization and an individual for their significant contributions. The **Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia** was recognized for its commitment and dedication to enhancing the lives of persons with dementia, and the families and others who support them. The Society has evolved from a small community-based support organization to a key player, province wide, in the delivery of education and supports to persons living with dementia, their families and other care providers as well as a strong advocate for evidence that will enhance practice and policy. **Dr. Rosemarie Sampson** was recognized for her significant contribution to the Nova Scotia Centre on Aging. Both in her former role as Dean of Professional Studies (MSVU) and subsequently through a legacy gift in support of the Dr. Rosemarie Sampson Centre on Aging, in which the Nova Scotia Centre on Aging is housed, she has played an influential role in our Centre's success.

## NSCA Receives 2017 Excellence in Applied Research Award

We are excited to announce that the Global Ageing Network has awarded their 2017 Excellence in Applied Research Award to the NSCA! The Award recognizes the Centre's work on influencing programs and services, its commitment to "giving back" to the field and for our work that supports translating research into practice. For more information on the award go to [www.globalageing.org](http://www.globalageing.org)

## Presentations & Publications

### Presentations

Keefe, J. (2016, November). *Panelist about Health Care Accord*, presented by Canadian Medical Association and Canadian Association of Federal Retirees, Mount Saint Vincent University.

Keefe, J. (2016, November). *Family/friend caregivers: The “backbone” of supporting the needs of an aging society*. Invited keynote presentation at the Courageous Caregivers Conference. New Minas, Nova Scotia.

Keefe, J. (2017, February). *The Future is Aging-Changing the Story*. Presentation for Universities Canada Converge 2017, Ottawa.

### Publications

Keefe, J., Dill, D., Ogilvie, R., & Fancey, P. (2017, April). Examining household model of residential long term care in Nova Scotia. *Health Reform Observer*, 5(1), 1-10.

Keefe, J., Tay, L., & Fancey, P. (2017, March). *Long term residential care in Canada: Current issues, best practices and future trends*. Report prepared for Strategic Program, Veterans Affairs Canada.

Keefe, J., Knight, L., & Fancey, P. (2017, March). *Caring for an aging population – Is the financial well-being of Canadian carers at risk? A think piece*. Report prepared for Seniors Policy Division, Employment and Social Development Canada.

Dearing, J., Beacom, A., Chamberlain, S., Meng, J., Berta, W., Keefe, J., Squires, J., Doupe, M., Taylor, D., Reid, R.C., Cook, H., Cummings, G., Baumbusch, J., Knopp-Sihota, J., Norton, P., & Estabrooks, C. (2017). Pathways for best practice diffusion: The structure of informal relationships in Canada's long term care sector. *Implementation Science*, 12(11).

Panagiotoglou, D., Fancey, P., Keefe, J., & Martin-Matthews, A. (2017). Job satisfaction and the context of care work by home support workers: Insights from three Canadian jurisdictions. *Canadian Journal on Aging*. (36)1, 1-14.

## Student Essay Contest Winners



Pictured above: Aidan Ashley, Dr. Ramona Lumpkin (President), Madeline McPhee and Erin Henderson.

We are pleased to announce that the winners of the Centre's 25th anniversary student essay competition are: 1st prize-**Madeline McPhee**, Grade 5, Sambro Ketch-Harbour Elementary and 2nd prize -**Aidan Ashley**, Grade 6, Musquodoboit Valley Education Centre. Congratulations Madeline and Aidan! The competition, which was for students in Grades 5 and 6 within the Halifax Regional School Board, was intended to increase awareness of older adults and the contributions they make to families and society, and to foster a culture of caring and respect across the generations. Students presented their winning essay during our dinner on April 6. **Thank you to all of the students who participated in the competition!**

## 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

### Dr. F.R. MacKinnon Endowment Fund

If you would like to support the efforts of the NSCA, contributions can be made to the Dr. F.R. MacKinnon Fund through the Mount's University Advancement Office at 902-457-6470.

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