

Nova Scotia Centre on Aging

Spring 2018 Newsletter

Positive Steps Being Made for Caregivers

There are an estimated 8 million family and friend caregivers in Canada and as our population continues to age, the role of caregivers in supporting older adults with health limitations to remain at home and in their communities will continue.

In addition to the positive aspects that one can achieve from their caregiving role, research has firmly identified the consequences on the caregiver's health, financial, employment and social aspects of their lives. As a result of this large body of work, important advancements are being made to support family and friend caregivers and to mitigate some of these consequences. For example, at the national level, the Canadian government has recently expanded taxation benefits for caregivers by creating the new Caregiver Benefit. As well, the Canadian Standards Association has released standards of care targeting employers to help workplaces be more inclusive and accommodating for employees with caregiving responsibilities.

Here in Nova Scotia, the Caregiver Benefit direct payment program expanded criteria to make it more available, and Caregivers Nova Scotia is set to launch a resource to help family and friends navigate changes through their caregiving journey.

Our work at the Centre continues to have a focus on family and friend caregivers. I am frequently asked to give presentations about ways to support caregivers, and I am pleased to bring to the Canadian Academy of Health Services panel a "caregiver" lens to the important work underway to inform a national strategy on dementia (see page 3). As well, our work focuses on generating evidence about interventions. I am pleased to be working with Dr. Patrick McGrath and his team on an APP for caregivers, and, recently, we hosted a workshop with more than 20 local stakeholders to share with them results from a study about the Reitman Centre's Working CARERS Program. Stakeholders explored considerations for offering this evidence-based psychotherapy program in Nova Scotia for caregivers of persons living with dementia.

May is Caregiver Awareness Month in Nova Scotia, a time to recognize the many family and friends who help an older adult in need. It is encouraging to see some positive steps being made in policy and practice but much more attention is needed. Let's continue to advocate for additional supports for family and friend caregivers.



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...



Seniors-Adding Life to Years Project half-way point



Pictured above: Dr. Janice Keefe and Dr. Katie Aubrecht addressing representatives from Nova Scotia's long-term care sector, November 2017.

April 2018 marks the half-way point for this four-year CIHR-funded project examining resident quality of life in nursing homes. The project is being conducted in NS, ON, AB and BC. The University of Alberta team is gathering input from health providers, managers, care aides, residents and family about what most affects quality of life at end of life. SALTY ethnographic researchers have completed field work in Ontario and policy evaluation continues across jurisdictions.

SALTY Lead Investigators, and Knowledge User representatives from the four study provinces met in April to strategize and plan the final two years of the project. In June, the full SALTY team will meet via videoconference. SALTY Lead Investigators are presenting at the Canadian Association of Health Services and Policy Research conference in May.

Follow us at: www.SALTYItc.ca  SALTYItc
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Embracing technology to support caregivers

Dr. Keefe and Dr. Queluz (see page 3) are working with Dr. Patrick McGrath, IWK Health on a project that will develop an APP for caregivers of persons living with dementia. This is part of Dr. McGrath's CIHR-funded program of research which aims to provide health practitioners with accessible and cost effective technology-enabled tools. The multi-stage project underway at NSCA involves a comprehensive review of existing literature and existing apps as well as consultation with caregivers and stakeholders who work with caregivers.

NSCA partnering to identify barriers for older workers



NSCA is working with the Department of Seniors and Department of Labour and Advanced Education to identify what best supports the continued attachment of older Nova Scotians to the workplace. This is one area identified in the province's *SHIFT: Action Plan for an Aging Population*. This spring,

NSCA staff will be conducting focus groups with older adults working or looking for work to understand their experiences. Focus groups will be held in the Valley, Halifax, Truro and Sydney. Interviews will also be conducted with employers across the province to understand how workplaces are being inclusive and supportive of older workers.

If you are 55+ and employed or looking for work and interested in participating in these focus groups, please contact nsca@msvu.ca

Out and About

NSCA hosts workshop to discuss Working CARERS Program for Nova Scotia



Pictured above: Dr. Keefe engaging with Dr. Sadavoy (Reitman Centre, Toronto) during the workshop, April 2018.

NSCA hosted a Knowledge to Action workshop which involved study participants as well as key stakeholders from across Nova Scotia. Results from the study conducted in Nova Scotia on the Reitman Centre's Working CARERS Program were shared as well as discussions held about ways to make the program available to caregivers supporting persons living with dementia in Nova Scotia. Dr. Joel Sadavoy joined the workshop from Toronto via technology. The project is part of the work being done through the Canadian Consortium on Neurodegeneration in Aging, Team 18.

Have you Heard...

NSCA partners with NS Health Authority to study home care client experiences

Dr. Keefe and a team of researchers and knowledge users from Nova Scotia and Manitoba were recently funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research for a four-year study on home care. Specifically, the project aims to better understand how policy, practice and decision-making shape the experiences of older adult home care clients through the home care system.

The project is under the leadership of Dr. Keefe and Susan Stevens, Senior Director with Continuing Care, Nova Scotia Health Authority. The project includes an established interdisciplinary team with several of Canada's leading experts in home care and caregiving research from MSVU, Dalhousie University, Saint Mary's University and University of Manitoba. Service providers and senior level administrators of health authorities and provincial ministries are actively engaged in the research. Other stakeholders involved include Manitoba's Caregiver Coalition, Caregivers Nova Scotia, Canadian Home Care Association and Health Canada.

Project's activities will take place in Nova Scotia and Manitoba and include a retrospective analysis of interRAI home care assessment data, case studies, policy analysis and stakeholder engagement events. Stay in touch with us for updates as this work unfolds.

Dr. Keefe participating on National Dementia Strategy Panel

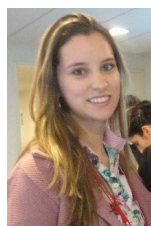
The Canadian Academy of Health Sciences (CAHS) assembled a multidisciplinary, multi-sectoral panel of six experts with a range of expertise, experience, and demonstrated leadership to participate on the (CAHS) Panel for the Assessment of Evidence and Best Practices for the development of a Canadian Dementia Strategy. Dr. Keefe is pleased to bring her "caregiver" expertise to the work of this important panel.

Pamela Fancey receives Northwood's Live More Award for Research



Pictured above: NSCA's Associate Director, Pamela Fancey
Congratulations to Associate Director Pamela Fancey who is this year's recipient of Northwood's Live More Award for Research. Pam is being recognized by Northwood for her contribution to supporting research activities and enhancing the research culture at Northwood. Pam will be presented with the Award at Northwood's Live More Annual Dinner on May 4.

NSCA hosts Postdoctoral Fellow from Brazil



The NSCA is pleased to welcome Dr. Francine Queluz to the NSCA team. Dr. Queluz arrived in Nova Scotia in November to work on the *Accessible and cost effective psychosocial health interventions for Canadians (HealthEnSuite)* project at the NSCA along side Dr. Keefe (and Dr. McGrath, IWK Health-see page 2). Dr. Queluz earned her Doctor of Psychology from the Federal University of Sao Carlos, Brazil, has a background in psychological assessment and has worked on a Social Skills Inventory for elderly caregivers. Welcome Francine!

Agetastics team in Walk for Alzheimer's



The Mount's Agetastics team has raised over \$20,000 in the past few years and will be participating in the 2018

Walk for Alzheimer's again on May 6th. Staff and students at the Centre are pleased to be supporting the important work of the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia by participating in the walk.

Presentations & Publications

Publications

Chamberlain, S., Weeks, L., & Keefe, J. (2017). Factors influencing family member perception of “homelikeness” in long term care homes. *Journal of Housing for the Elderly*, 1-16.

Presentations

Keefe, J. (2017, November). *Portrait of rural aging in Canada*. CIHR Best Brains Exchange: Innovative approaches and pathways used to integrate home and community care with primary health care for elderly persons in rural Canada, Ottawa.

Keefe, J. (2017, October). *Family involvement in long-term care*. CIHR More Years Better Lives Workshop on 85+, Paris.

Keefe, J. (2017, October). *Family involvement in long-term care: How do we view family caregivers?* Invited presentation to Riverview Health Centre. Winnipeg.

Keefe, J., Beacom, A., Meng, J., Chamberlain, S., Taylor, D., Dearing, J., Berta, W., Squires, J., Cranley, L., Thompson, G., Cook, H., & Estabrooks, C. (2017, October). *Using inter-organizational network analysis for quality improvement*. Oral presentation at Canadian Association on Gerontology, Winnipeg.

Chiu, M., Fancey, P., Keefe, J., Lobchuk, M., Meerai, S., St. Amant, O., Sadavoy, J., & Tursunova, Z. (2017, October). *Supporting dementia family caregivers in rural Canadian communities: From research to action*. Oral presentation at Canadian Association on Gerontology, Winnipeg.

MacEachern, L., Keefe, J., Taylor, D., Boudreau, D., & Estabrooks, C. (2017, October). *How policy environment shapes best practice dissemination in long-term care: A case study of professional advice networks in the Maritime provinces*. Poster presentation at Canadian Association on Gerontology, Winnipeg.

News from the Global Aging and Community Initiative



In 2016, Dr. Zachary Zimmer (Tier 1 Canada Research Chair at MSVU) founded the Global Aging and Community Initiative (GACI) with a mission to create knowledge focused on the health and well-being of older persons worldwide through collaborative research across a global scientific community. Currently, Dr. Zimmer and his team are:

- Conducting a comparative study examining the link between religiosity & spirituality and health & life expectancy by analyzing 8 global datasets (funded by John Templeton Foundation);
- Collecting data using the Vietnam Health and Aging Survey to understand the long-term effects of war exposure on the health of older persons in Vietnam (funded by the National Institute of Aging); and
- Hosting a research meeting with American and Canadian colleagues interested in the demography of pain in mid-May at MSVU.

Recently, Dr. Clove Haviva from the University of Manitoba joined the GACI team as a postdoctoral researcher. For more information on the GACI visit: www.globalagingandcommunity.com

The GACI, which shares space with the NSCA in the Mount's Dr. Rosemarie Sampson Centre on Aging, helps to position the Mount as a centre of excellence on aging.

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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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