

# Nova Scotia Centre on Aging

Spring 2019 Newsletter

## Long Term Care—From Research to Action

The majority of older Canadians in need of assistance live in the community, but 6.8% of those 65 and older receive such assistance in a long term care facility. Not surprisingly, the proportion of those 85 and older in long term care rises to 30% as the prevalence of frailty and dementia increases with age. This demographic is a reality of today's nursing homes which are increasingly home to individuals with more complex care needs.

For individuals who require this level of assistance, moving to a care facility can be a traumatic experience. Having to leave familiar surroundings and people at any age can be challenging, but because of the images we see and the messages we receive about the quality of care, reluctance can intensify. Less discussed, is that for many individuals, this move can result in positive health and social outcomes.

As a member of the Minister's Expert Advisory Panel on Long Term Care, I recently had the opportunity to hear first hand stories of innovation and inspiration to ensure high quality care in a strained health system. I also heard of the many challenges being faced by residents, families, staff and administrators that clearly raise concerns about quality of care. The day to day realities of the system pressures are influenced by high rates of chronic disease and

dementia, responsive behaviours of some residents and challenges with recruitment and retention of staff. All of these factors can impact quality of care. Change is needed to address the current situation—and soon!

For many years, long term care was an under-researched area. The *Seniors-Adding Life to Years* study is but one example of how this is changing. Prominent researchers from across Canada are coming together with decision makers and clinicians to examine late life issues in long term care and to identify solutions. Our team is at the stage of interpreting data. We are meeting at the end of May to consider and dialogue about the meaning of the results and how to move these research insights into action. This is exciting!

The need for long term care is not expected to wane. In fact, it could grow as more individuals live longer with complex care needs. There is a growing body of evidence about the issues facing long term care, and Nova Scotia has key recommendations from the Expert Panel. This is good news. What we need now is the will and resources to implement change that will ensure those who live, work and visit our nursing homes have good quality of life.

Janice



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.



Centre  
on  
Aging  
Nova Scotia

## What's Happening...

### Gaining insights into home care clients

The Home Care Pathways project is heading into year 2 of its 4 year mandate. The team is analyzing thousands of home care client records in Nova Scotia and in Winnipeg as well as launching the field work in Nova Scotia and Winnipeg which will involve interviews with clients, family caregivers, care coordinators, and home support agency staff. Through these data sources, the team will gain insights into the factors that shape the experiences of older home care clients through the home care system.

Stay up to date on the project's progress at [www.homecarepathways.ca](http://www.homecarepathways.ca)

### NSCA reviewing strategies on aging in Canada and abroad

NSCA is working with the National Seniors Council on a project that involves identifying and reviewing strategic documents at the provincial, territorial and federal level as well as select other jurisdictions abroad that may offer insights for the Council. The Council is tasked with providing advice to the Government about a national seniors' strategy.

### A refresh for Nova Scotia's Continuing Care Assistant education

NSCA is working to refresh the curriculum standards for the Continuing Care Assistant program that is required education for individuals to work in publicly funded programs in Nova Scotia. The Centre's review includes identifying areas to better align the standards with competencies, updating resources with the latest best practice, identifying relevant measurement/assessment tools and developing a protocol for future reviews. The team presented their proposed changes to the standards to the Continuing Care Assistant Provincial Advisory Committee in April.

## Study on long term care gearing up to launch results



SALTY Team Meeting, February, 2019 with more than 40 members participating via videoconferencing.

With the main data analysis well underway across all four streams, the SALTY team is busy working on various dissemination initiatives to share results in various ways and with different audiences. Team members will be presenting at various national conferences during the upcoming year and several manuscripts targeting scholarly journals are in progress.

In April, insights from two of the teams' work to date were shared through the *brainXchange* webinar series— the team based at University of Alberta working on burden symptom indicators and the team based at University of Victoria involved in evaluating a palliative approach for long term care. More than 150 individuals from across Canada participated in this forum. Another webinar is being planned for 2020.

In May, the team will meet in Halifax for their final full team meeting. More than 40 researchers, decision makers, clinicians, representatives of resident, family, staff, and volunteer perspectives, and students from across Canada are involved. This two-day event will be a significant knowledge exchange forum for the team providing an opportunity to share and discuss insights, and identify how the evidence emerging from the research can advance policy and practice in support of an enhanced quality of life in long term care.

Follow the latest on the team's activities and emerging results at: [www.SALTYItc.ca](http://www.SALTYItc.ca) SALTYItc @SALTY\_Itc

## Out and About

### Mount's Agetastics participate in Walk for Alzheimer's



Alzheimer Society

The Mount's "Agetastics" team, organized by the Centre on Aging, is walking again this May to support the important work of the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia. The team hosted a Coffee Break on campus, sold raffle tickets, and obtained pledges. They are expected to top their previous fundraising efforts. Go Agetastics!

### Dr. Keefe attended TREC Investigator Meeting, Edmonton



In February, Dr. Keefe attended the meeting of investigators for the Translating Research in Elder Care (TREC) research program based at University of Alberta. Dr. Keefe's involvement with this research program is important in connecting this relevant work to the Atlantic region.

### Dr. Keefe panelist at Wounds Canada Conference

Dr. Keefe participated in a panel discussion at the Wounds Canada Conference, Halifax, sharing insights from the Minister's Expert Panel on LTC report about changes needed to support quality of care including wound care.

## Have you Heard...

### TEDxMSVU Aging Well talks available online!



We are pleased to announce that the 10 TED Talks from the TEDxMSVU Aging Well event held on October 4, are now available online. Check out the dynamic line up of speakers who challenge us to rethink assumptions of our aging population. Go to: [www.msvu.ca/tedxmsvu](http://www.msvu.ca/tedxmsvu)

**Be challenged. Be encouraged. Be inspired.**

### Moncton to host major national conference on aging

Researchers and practitioners in aging won't want to miss this year's Canadian Association on Gerontology national conference being held here in the Maritimes. This opportunity doesn't come "east" too often so it is great for those with an interest in aging in Atlantic Canada to get the latest research results, best practice evidence and make connection with others across the country. Visit the conference website for more information <http://cag2019.ca/>

### BSW Student completes practicum at NSCA



From left to right: Heather Armstrong, BSW student, Afolake Awoyiga, Faculty Field Advisor and Pam Fancey, NSCA Associate Director.

NSCA staff wished Heather Armstrong well after having completed 700 hours of field placement as part of her Bachelor of Social Work degree at Dalhousie University. Heather had learning opportunities about the role of research in shaping policy and practice, the value of engaging knowledge users and citizens in the research, and insights into the services that support older adults.



## Presentations & Publications

### Publications:

Queluz, F., Kerrvin, E., Wozney, L., Fancey, P., McGrath, P., & Keefe, J. (2019). Understanding the needs of caregivers of persons with dementia: A scoping review. *International Psychogeriatrics* (available online).

Wozney, L., Freitas de Souza, L.M., Kervin, E., Queluz, F., McGrath, P.J. & Keefe, J. (2018). Commercially available mobile apps for caregivers of people with Alzheimer Disease or Other Related Dementias. *Journal of Medical Internet Research-Aging*, 1(2): e12274.

Andrew, M., Dupuis-Blanchard, S., Maxwell, C., Giguere, A., Keefe, J., Rockwood, K., & St. John, P. (2018). Social and societal implications of frailty, including impact on Canadian healthcare systems. *Journal of Frailty and Aging*, 7(4), 217-223.

### Presentations:

Keefe, J. (2019, April). The critical mind: Decision-making for clinicians and health leaders. Panelist at Wounds Conference, Halifax.

Keefe, J., Taylor, D., Parker, B., Tay, L., Fancey, P., & Cook, H. (2018, November). Including family caregivers in Canadian long term care: Ambiguity between policy and practice. Oral presentation to the Gerontological Society of America Annual Meeting, Boston.

Keefe, J. (2018, October). Family caregivers: Even the “backbone” needs support. Keynote presentation to Alzheimer Society of Manitoba Annual Conference, Winnipeg.

Keefe, J. (2018, October). Quality of life and quality of care: Engaging the voices of persons living with dementia. Keynote presentation to Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia Annual Conference, Dartmouth.

Taylor, D. & Keefe, J. (2018, October). Is quality of life for residents supported at a legislative level? A four province comparison of Long Term Care policy using a resident perspective. Oral presentation to Canadian Association on Gerontology, Vancouver.

Fancey, P., Kervin, E., Queluz, F., Wozney, L., McGrath, P., & Keefe, J. (2018, October). Understanding the needs of caregivers of persons with dementia: A scoping review. Poster presentation to Canadian Association on Gerontology, Vancouver.

Keefe, J., Carrière, Y., Knight, L., O'Neil, K., Légaré, J., Décarie, Y. & Fancey, P. (2018, October). Working longer and caregiving—Adequacy of federal policies to support older workers. Oral presentation to Canadian Association on Gerontology, Vancouver.

Hoben, M., Grunier, A., & Keefe, J. (2018, October). Web-based Delphi panels—An innovative method to integrate key stakeholders in research on end of life in nursing homes. Oral presentation to Canadian Association on Gerontology, Vancouver.

## News from the Global Aging and Community Initiative



The Global Aging and Community Initiative (GACI) is directed by Dr.

Zachary Zimmer, Tier 1 Canada Research Chair. Notable activities over the last several months:

- We continue to actively seek research funding for and submitted a proposal on: “The Demography of Pain”. The project team met in Buffalo, NY where we also presented a related paper at their Sociology Series: “Pain in the U.S. and Abroad: A Demographic Perspective.”
- A symposium on “Aging Families in China: Social, Demographic, and Policy Considerations” was held at Syracuse University where we presented a demographically-based analysis on living arrangements of older persons in China.
- Three articles appeared in academic journals.
- Work on our ‘Vietnam project’ continues. We attended a major related meeting at the University of Utah and launched detailed analyses of data collected from this project, assisted by an MSVU graduate student.

For more information visit our website: [www.globalagingandcommunity.com](http://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.

**Stay up to date...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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