




# Perspectives

ANNUAL REPORT | 2024-2025

Newfoundland & Labrador Centre for  
**APPLIED  
HEALTH  
RESEARCH**  
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*"If we want to solve a complex problem, we need to be open to the idea that there is more than one way to look at it."*

- Angel Chernoff





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## Greetings from the Chair

This year's annual report is appropriately focused on sharing perspectives. Again this year, NLCAHR has committed its efforts to public engagement, strengthening partnerships and establishing new collaborative opportunities. The Centre continues to leverage the kinds of knowledge, cooperation, and health evidence necessary to address the many challenges facing health and community services in our province. In direct response to Health Accord NL, the team has been working to adapt to the changing demands of a system in which decision makers are at work creating new organizational structures, quality improvements, and innovative approaches in both community-based and hospital-based services—all aimed to improve health and wellness outcomes for the people of our province.

Through its flagship Contextualized Health Research Synthesis Program (CHRSP), researchers at NLCAHR are focused on flexibility and responsiveness, fostering collaboration, and aiming to integrate research and engagement into the health system transformation process. Following a directive from the NLCAHR Board of Directors in 2022, CHRSP has dedicated the past two years to supporting the integration of health services into a single provincial authority, NL Health Services.

During this period, the team has provided a timely response to shifting priorities. In 2024 and 2025, CHRSP researchers successfully completed an impressive 12 *Rapid Decision Reports* at the request of decision makers grappling with emerging issues. Additionally, the team is engaged in a number of externally-funded research initiatives: a patient-led knowledge synthesis on patient perspectives of team-based primary care; enhancements to data collection frameworks for the Transition House Association of Newfoundland and Labrador; a CIHR-funded project on Work-Life Balance in Long-Term Care; and a new project with the Department of Health and Community Services that aims to investigate evidence and local contextual factors associated with low-value diagnostic imaging.

The Research and Knowledge Exchanges have again fostered collaboration among a diverse array of stakeholders, including patients, caregivers, university faculty and learners, health system professionals, decision-makers, and community partners. Participants share the Centre's commitment to enhancing health and healthcare through effective knowledge mobilization. This year, over 20 Research & Knowledge Exchanges engaged with more than 1,900 participants. The meetings included a combination of symposia, research presentations, and roundtable discussions. Especially valued in the program are the insights derived from personal experiences, community knowledge, and professional expertise. Through an emphasis on the contributions of individuals with direct experience of the health topics discussed—a diverse range of issues including aging, climate change, mental health, autism, chronic illness, Indigenous health, and critical disability studies—the Exchanges ensure that the interests of community partners are placed front and centre. Incorporating health system and government partners within the broader definition of “community,” these groups showcase the collective perspectives necessary to address complex challenges.

I extend my sincere thanks to the NLCAHR Board of Directors and to the Director and staff for your work connecting evidence to policy and for your exemplary public engagement—efforts aligned very strongly with the Faculty of Medicine's strategic plan. It has been a real pleasure working with you this year.

Dolores McKeen, MD, FRCPC, MSc, CCPE  
Dean, Faculty of Medicine, Memorial University  
Chair, NLCAHR Board of Directors





## Greetings from the Director

On behalf of everyone here at the Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Applied Health Research, I'm thrilled to present our 2024-2025 Annual Report. This year, we are embracing the theme of shared perspectives, which feels particularly relevant amid the ongoing changes in the Newfoundland and Labrador health and community services landscape. As we focus on timely, socially accountable research, which is critical during this time of comprehensive restructuring and transformation, we appreciate more than ever how vital it is to come together and exchange insights. I'm proud to report that this past fiscal year has been another very active one for the Centre as we continued the task of aligning our decision support efforts with the Health Accord NL calls to action and the integration of services into the new provincial NL Health Services (NLHS). Through our two core programs—the Contextualized Health Research Synthesis Program (CHRSP) and Research & Knowledge Exchanges—we have worked with partners from across the university, healthcare system, government and community to explore the priority issues that they have identified, working on a series of reports and the mobilization of research and community knowledge. CHRSP published 12 new reports this year in response to requests for timely decision support. The CHRSP team has also been at work on new research, tackling a series of externally funded projects on a range of topics that are outlined in the pages that follow.

The Centre is preparing for a fresh Topic Identification process, in collaboration with our partners in CHRSP, and exploring the chance to enrich our work by creating opportunities for more teaching and learning.

Our dynamic Research & Knowledge Exchanges continue to serve as repositories of diverse expertise and we are drawing on them more and more for advice and guidance in our work; as a catalyst for new research projects; as a way to create new community programs; and as an important forum for knowledge sharing and collaboration. We're excited about a new Exchange starting in Fall 2025 that will be dedicated to Implementation Science and Change Management, which have been identified as key areas of interest to leaders in our health and community services system as we work to navigate moving from evidence into practice and supporting the many changes being planned in health service delivery across our province.

In our growing role as a broker, NLCAHR has become a hub for making connections: we connect our partners to support research projects, we provide links to evidence, we connect community members to services, we build research capacity, share community knowledge, and promote knowledge translation- roles where we envision room for expansion and growth in the coming years.

In this Annual Report, we are proud to showcase the important progress we are making to align NLCAHR ever more strongly with the needs of our partners as we share our diverse perspective to collectively navigate the complex challenges inherent in health system improvement.

In the fall of 2024, we gathered with friends and collaborators, old and new, to celebrate our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary by looking back on our legacy and looking ahead to future growth and sustainability.

We're truly excited about the paths that lie ahead and extend our gratitude to the NLCAHR Board of Directors for their endorsement of our strategic directions. In the pages ahead, you'll discover the innovative projects we've undertaken, the collaborations we've fostered, and the partnerships that are shaping the future of health in our communities. Enjoy the read!

A blue ink handwritten signature, appearing to read 'Rick Audas', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rick Audas, BBA, MBA, MA, Ph.D.  
Professor, Faculty of Medicine, Memorial University  
Director, NLCAHR



# About Us



## About Us

The Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Applied Health Research (NLCAHR) plays a crucial role in advancing evidence-informed health and community care in collaboration with government, the provincial healthcare system, community stakeholders, patients, caregivers and other university partners. Since its



establishment at Memorial University in 1999, NLCAHR has been dedicated to building capacity for applied health research and promoting its use in decision making. Central to its mission is the Contextualized Health Research Synthesis Program (CHRSP), which prioritizes and co-produces relevant health evidence tailored to the unique needs of our province. The insights gained through CHRSP have

positively influenced practices, programs, and policies across Newfoundland and Labrador. Additionally, NLCAHR fosters dialogue and collaboration among diverse partners through its Research & Knowledge Exchanges, which serve as platforms for knowledge sharing and collective problem-solving. With ongoing support from the Department of Health and Community Services, NL Health Services, and the Faculty of Medicine, NLCAHR remains committed to enhancing research capacity and mobilizing knowledge in support of improving health services delivery and health outcomes for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

## Vision

To improve the health of individuals and communities through innovative applied health research, education, and public engagement and to foster a culture of genuine respect for the diversity of perspectives and expertise that community partners bring to research and policy making.

## Mission

To contribute to the effectiveness of the health and community services system of Newfoundland and Labrador and to the physical, social, and psychological health and well-being of the province's population by supporting the development and use of applied health research in this province.

## Goals

Through inclusive community engagement, NLCAHR has three principal goals:

- to help build capacity and organizational resources for undertaking and supporting quality applied health research in the province;
- to increase the amount and impact of quality applied health research undertaken on the priority research themes; and
- to help increase the effective and efficient use of research evidence in the province's health and community services system.

## Governance

The Director manages NLCAHR and reports to a Board of Directors that supports and guides the Centre's strategic decisions. The Board of Directors is chaired by the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Memorial University and includes representatives from the Department of Health and Community Services, the Department of Children, Seniors, and Social Development, and NL Health Services.



## Director and Staff 2024-2025



**Dr. Rick Audas**  
Director and  
Professor, Faculty of  
Medicine



**Rochelle Baker**  
Manager, Communications,  
Partnerships, Research &  
Knowledge Exchange



**Sarah Mackey**  
CHRSP Research Officer and  
Patient Engagement  
Coordinator



**Pablo Navarro**  
Senior CHRSP Research  
Officer



**Emily Granter**  
CHRSP Research Officer



**Tyrone White**  
Manager of Finance,  
Administration, and IT

## Farewell

This year, we bid farewell to CHRSP Research Officer **Julia Li**, as she moved away from the province to advance her academic journey. We appreciate the dedication and expertise Julia brought to her work during her time at the Centre and we wish her the very best as she embarks on this exciting new chapter.

## Research Support

The team at NLCAHR was delighted to work again this year with Post-Doctoral Fellow **Dr. Kazeem Adefemi** who supported two research projects: the CIHR-funded study, *“An Underrepresented, Undervalued Workforce: Understanding and Supporting Quality of Work Life in Long-Term Care”* and a project funded by the Transition House Association of Newfoundland and Labrador (THANL) on data collection frameworks. We also appreciated the valuable contributions of **Dr. Emily Doyle** who supported the Long-Term Care study in 2024 and who will continue to work with us facilitating research connections on behalf of NLCAHR in 2025.

## Student Practicums

In 2024, the Centre supported two practicum placements for students completing their Master’s of Public Health (MPH) at Memorial University. **Samuel Pollett and Adam Pike** carried out a conjoint project, in partnership with Iris Kirby House, a charitable organization in St. John’s that operates violence against women shelters on the Avalon Peninsula. The project involved developing a compendium of interventions to address secondary trauma, also referred to as vicarious trauma, among front-line shelter staff.

## Board of Directors

We thank the following members of the NLCAHR Board of Directors for their service in 2024 and 2025:

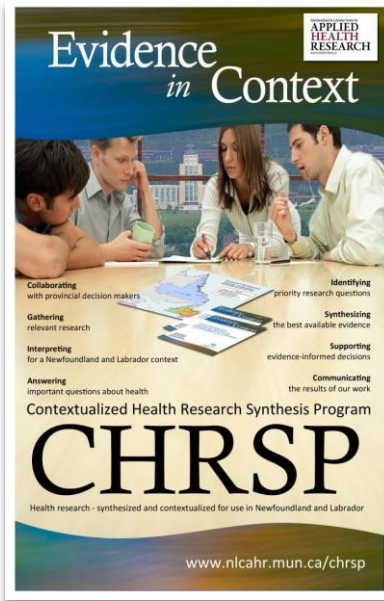
- Dr. Delores McKeen, Dean of Medicine, Chair
- Dr. Laurie Twells, Associate Dean, Division of Population Health & Applied Health Sciences
- John McGrath, Deputy Minister of Health and Community Services, Government NL
- Alan Doody, Deputy Minister of Families and Affordability, Government NL
- David Diamond, former President and CEO, NL Health Services, retired in June, 2024
- Patrick Parfrey, President and CEO, NL Health Services
- Rick Audas, NLCAHR Director (ex officio)





# Research





## CHRSP 2024-2025: Rapid Decision Support

NLCAHR's flagship **Contextualized Health Research Synthesis Program (CHRSP)** is an innovative research program that engages with partners from government, the healthcare system, and with patient and community advisers. CHRSP synthesizes quality health evidence to inform pending decisions on topics our partners identify and prioritize. By asking our health system partners to tell us about their own priorities and to participate directly in the research process, CHRSP has been described as the gold standard of Integrated Knowledge Translation— a method that fully involves knowledge users in the research process.

Under the direction of the NLCAHR Board, CHRSP shifted its activities from 2023 to 2025 to focus on decision support for the province's transition from four Regional Health Authorities to the singular NL Health Services. Given the evolving demands inherent in managing sweeping healthcare transformation, CHRSP adapted its research output to produce *Rapid Decision Support* that responds quickly to questions on an ongoing

basis, as issues arise. By taking this flexible approach, CHRSP provided decision makers with evidence summaries and jurisdictional scans, as required, pointing out articles and resources that would help inform planning teams.

CHRSP published twelve *Rapid Decision Support* reports in 2024-25, bringing the output for this new approach to a total of 22 reports. The following publications are available for review [here](#) on the NLCAHR website.

1. Pediatric Integrated Care Teams 2025
2. Clinical Psychology Workforce 2025
3. Social Isolation in Older Adults 2025
4. Strategies for ED Social Admissions 2024
5. Reducing Physician Admin. Burden 2024
6. Physician Engagement in the Learning Health and Social System 2024
7. Environmental Sustainability in Healthcare- Evidence Scan 2024
8. Environmental Sustainability in Healthcare- Jurisdictional Scan 2024
9. Equity Diversity and Inclusion in Healthcare 2024
10. Equity Diversity and Inclusion Frameworks 2024
11. Virtual Urgent Care 2024
12. Airway Management in Rural Settings 2024
13. Point of Care Testing: Rural/Remote 2023
14. Health System Navigation-Evidence 2023
15. Health System Navigation- Jurisdictional Scan 2023
16. Improving Operating Room Performance for Joint Surgery Backlog 2023
17. Skills Mix for Family Care Teams 2023
18. Policies to Support Family Care Teams 2023
19. Family Care Team Scheduling 2023
20. Outpatient Pathways for Joint Arthroplasty 2023
21. Patient Selection- Joint Arthroplasty 2023
22. Wellness Networks 2023

Our health system partners have told us that these responsive and rapid reports have been highly useful. CHRSP will continue to provide responsive and expedited reporting on an ad hoc basis in the coming years, in addition to the in-depth studies we will complete through a more formal topic submission and prioritization process.

## CHRSP 2024-2025: Externally Funded Research

### Funding from SPOR Evidence Alliance (Support for Patient-Oriented Research)

#### Patient Perspectives on Team-Based Primary Care



Employing the methodology and format of a CHRSP *Rapid Evidence Report*, CHRSP researchers Sarah Mackey and Emily Granter are at work on a rapid knowledge synthesis with Patient Co-Lead Cris Carter and Patient Partner Rosemary Lester of the NL

SUPPORT Patient Public Advisory Council and subject expert Dr. Sabrina Wong of the University of British Columbia Centre for Health Services and Policy Research.

This patient-initiated project has received \$40,000 in funding from the SPOR Evidence Alliance to explore research evidence and contextual factors that address the research question:

***“What does the research literature reveal about patient-reported experiences and outcomes in community-based primary care that is delivered by multidisciplinary teams, specifically regarding patient experiences with access, continuity, and quality of care?”***

#### Contextualizing an Evidence Synthesis for the De-implementation of Low-Value Diagnostic Imaging in Newfoundland and Labrador

Supported by \$25,000 in funding from the SPOR Evidence Alliance, CHRSP researcher Pablo Navarro and MPH graduate Samuel Pollett have commenced a research project proposed by health system leaders in the Department of Health and Community Services. This contextualized knowledge synthesis is being undertaken together with subject expert Dr. Amanda Hall, a researcher in Implementation Science at Memorial University, and with provincial health system leaders and contextual advisers. When searching for evidence on this topic, the CHRSP team located a quality umbrella review that synthesized a large body of systematic review evidence, mirroring CHRSP’s own synthesis methods. As a result, this project will follow the methodology for an *Expedited Evidence in Context* report. Rather than completing both an evidence synthesis *and* the contextualization process, the team will focus on the contextual factors related to the findings from a high-quality umbrella review to address the following research question:

***“Based on key findings from ‘Effectiveness of de-implementation of low-value healthcare practices: an overview of systematic reviews’ (Kien et al. 2024), what contextual factors should decision makers in Newfoundland and Labrador consider when approaching the de-implementation of low value diagnostic imaging?”***

### Funding from the Canadian Institutes for Health Research

## An Underrepresented, Undervalued Workforce: Understanding and Supporting Quality of Work Life in Long-Term Care



Dr. Janice Keefe, Professor and Chair, Family Studies and Gerontology Department, and Director of the Nova Scotia Centre on Aging, and colleagues were awarded a \$2.1 Million CIHR Project Grant: announced in February 2023 for a multi-site study that aims to improve quality of work life for staff in long-term care. The study,

entitled, *“An Underrepresented, Undervalued Workforce: Understanding and Supporting Quality of Work Life in Long-Term Care”* is being conducted from April 2023 to March 2027 to assess how work environments may have an impact on the quality of work life for staff in Long Term Care homes and ultimately, on resident quality of care outcomes. The project includes sites from across Atlantic Canada. Dr. Rick Audas, NLCAHR Director, is leading a research team here in this province which now includes Dr. Kazeem Adefemi Kazeem Adefemi, Postdoctoral Fellow, Memorial University (November 2024—Present) and has also involved past support from researchers Dr. Emily Doyle, and NLCAHR CHRSP Research Officers Emily Granter and Julia Li. This project received a CIHR Project Grant of \$2.1 million and includes Principal Investigator Dr. Janice Keefe of Mount Saint Vincent University, Co-Principal Investigators Dr. Rick Audas, Memorial University, Dr. Carole Estabrooks of the University of Alberta, Dr. Gail Tomblin Murphy of Nova Scotia Health, and Dr. Rose McCloskey from the University of New Brunswick. Other team members include academic and researcher partners from Dalhousie University, Memorial University, University of New Brunswick, University of Calgary, Nova Scotia Health, Nova Scotia Ministry of Health and other policy and practice stakeholders.

[Link to Project Website](#)

### Funding from the Transition House Association of Newfoundland and Labrador (THANL)

## Data Collection Frameworks for Transitional Housing/ Shelters



Under the leadership of Pablo Navarro, Senior CHRSP Research Officer, NLCAHR has partnered with the Transition House Association of Newfoundland and Labrador (THANL) to study the data collection frameworks used by transition houses across the province. Transition houses, also referred to as violence against women

shelters, support people fleeing from intimate partner violence and began opening across Newfoundland and Labrador in the 1980s. In 1987, the Provincial Association Against Family Violence (PAAFV) was established, since renamed the Transition House Association of Newfoundland and Labrador (THANL). Its members include all provincially funded shelters in the province.

With Phase 1 funding of \$100,000 from THANL, researchers analyzed the processes used for data collection across transition houses and how that data is used for analysis, reporting, and decision making. The initial project studied potential barriers and facilitators to changing data collection frameworks, particularly in the context of harmonizing those frameworks to be more consistent across all shelters. The team completed this first phase of the project in 2024 and collaborated with THANL to seek additional funding to implement the findings from Phase 1. At the time of writing, Phase 2 of this project, with an additional \$120,000 in funding, is underway to establish the implementation plan for a new harmonized data collection framework, which will be vital for both statistical analysis and funding.



## CHRSP Health System Partners in 2024-2025

The CHRSP team collaborated closely in 2024-25 with many partners in health system, government, and the community to produce health evidence that will support public policy making in NL. We thank the following participants in our ongoing CHRSP collaboration.

### Health System Leadership

- John McGrath, Deputy Minister, Department of Health & Community Services
- Alan Doody, Deputy Minister, Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development
- David Diamond (until June 2024), former President and CEO, Newfoundland and Labrador Health Services (NLHS)
- Karen Stone, Interim President and CEO, Newfoundland and Labrador Health Services (NLHS)
- Dr. Patrick Parfrey, President and CEO, Newfoundland and Labrador Health Services

### Partners at NL Health Services



#### NLHS Executive Team

*With research coordination being managed by our valued CHRSP Champion, Keith Parsons, our research team continued this year to consult with members of the NLHS executive team on a series of topic submissions covering a range of priority issues.*

- CHRSP Champion: Keith Parsons and Provincial Director of Planning and Policy, NLHS
- Joanne Pelley, Vice President and Provincial Chief Nursing Officer, Chief Nursing Information Officer (Interim), Chief Operating Officer – Labrador-Grenfell (Acting)
- Ron Johnson, Vice President – Innovation and Research and Chief Operating Officer – Eastern Zones
- Craig Davis, Vice President and Chief Operating Officer (Acting) – Central
- Teara Freake, Vice President and Chief Operating Officer – Western
- Dr. Gena Bugden, Vice President – Medical Services
- Kelli O'Brien, Vice President – Quality and Learning Health Systems
- Tina Edmonds, Vice President – Quality and Learning Health Systems (Acting)
- Debbie Molloy, Vice President – Human Resources
- Darla King, Vice President – Transformation (Well-being)
- Cassie Chisholm, Vice President – Transformation (Health Systems)

### Strategic Health Networks

*The Strategic Health Networks (SHN) within NLHS are inter-professional groups with a provincial scope and mandate to drive clinical and operational improvements in health outcomes and service delivery. These networks aim to transform service delivery by connecting and integrating care across zones, focusing on achieving targeted, measurable, and sustainable improvement. CHRSP is connecting with these networks as they are established, with CHRSP Research Officers serving on several networks to support them with links to evidence and research. Our partners in this process include:*

- Nadine McEvoy, SHN Planning and Policy, Senior Director, Transformation - Health Systems
- Krista Butt, Policy, Planning Research Analyst, Strategic Health Networks
- Nicole Power, Planning Research Analyst, Strategic Health Networks
- Natalie Reardon, Director, SHN on Care of Older Adults
- Kim Ghaney, Director, SHN on Primary Healthcare

- Charlene Tellenbach, Director, SHN on Surgical Services/ SHN on Emergency Care
- Julie Sullivan, Director, SHN on Chronic Pain
- Jessica Connors, Director, SHN on LTC and Community Supports
- Sarah Critch, Director, SHN on Child Health

#### Partners in Government of Newfoundland and Labrador



*With research coordination managed by our valued CHRSP Champions in government, our research team consulted with a range of partners in two Government NL departments this year. The Department of Health and Community Services (DHCS) and the Department of Children, Seniors, and Social Development (DCSSD) which has recently been renamed the Department of Families and Affordability. We wish to thank our outgoing CHRSP Champion from DHCS, Donna Roche, for her years of dedicated support for our work.*

- CHRSP Champion: Tara Power, Director of Policy, Planning and Evaluation (A), DHCS (2024)
- CHRSP Champion: Maggie O'Toole Director of Policy, Planning and Evaluation, DHCS (2025)
- Megan Hayes, Assistant Deputy Minister of Health Professional Recruitment and Retention, DHCS
- Carla Whittle, Director of Health Professional Recruitment and Retention, DHCS
- Jeannine Herritt, Assistant Deputy Minister of Regional Services, DHCS
- Andrew Wells, Manager of Health Workforce Planning, DHCS
- Donna Roche, former Director of Data Governance and Privacy, DHCS and former CHRSP Champion
- Deena Waddleton, Director of Seniors' Healthcare, DHCS
- CHRSP Champion: Henry Kielley, Director, Seniors & Aging, former DCSSD- now Families and Affordability
- Renee Ryan, Director of Social and Economic Wellbeing, Families and Affordability
- Aisling Gogan, Assistant Deputy Minister, Executive Branch, Families and Affordability

#### Public, Patient, and Context Advisers



*CHRSP is committed to including patient voices in our research. The team works in partnership with the NL SUPPORT Patient and Public Advisory Council (PPAC) to involve patient and public partners in projects aligned with their interests and lived experiences. CHRSP Research Officer Sarah Mackey serves as our Patient Engagement Coordinator, regularly attending PPAC meetings to identify opportunities for meaningful involvement in both CHRSP and in other NLCAHR*

*initiatives. Through this collaboration, patient and public partners offer valuable insight, advice, and contextual knowledge that help shape and strengthen research projects.*

This year, CHRSP has had the opportunity to work directly with two patient partners from the Advisory Council on the project "Patient Perspectives on Team-Based Primary Care." Cris Carter, PPAC member, proposed the topic and is Co-Lead for this research, working with Rosemary Lester, PPAC member. Both patient partners are providing excellent leadership and lived experience that is shaping both the direction and outcomes of this project. In addition, CHRSP engages with our Research & Knowledge Exchanges, whose members contribute expertise to contextual focus groups aligned with specific areas of interest. We look forward to expanding these opportunities through more in-depth CHRSP projects in 2026 and are committed to building meaningful, collaborative partnerships with patients and their caregivers.



# Engagement





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## Healthy Legacy, Promising Future: Celebrating 25 Years of Research and Public Engagement at NLCAHR

*In November 2024, NLCAHR proudly celebrated its 25th anniversary with a special event supported by Memorial's Office of Research and the Office of Public Engagement. The occasion brought together partners from across the province and across Canada. Reflecting on NLCAHR's achievements over the past quarter-century, this milestone provided meaningful opportunities to highlight NLCAHR's commitment to public engagement and to discuss future directions for the Centre. We extend our heartfelt thanks to all who joined us in this celebration and express gratitude to our featured guest speakers, whose contributions made the day even more memorable:*



**Dr. Michelle Ploughman**, Professor of Medicine, Memorial University, and previous Canada Research Chair (Tier II) in Rehabilitation, Neuroplasticity and Brain Recovery reflected on how a small drop of funding from NLCAHR created the ripple that launched her research career. Dr. Ploughman's research is dedicated to creating and testing rehabilitation approaches to promote neuroplasticity and recovery in stroke and multiple sclerosis. In 2014, Dr. Ploughman launched Newfoundland and Labrador's first rehabilitation research program, opening the Recovery & Performance Laboratory in the Leonard A. Miller Centre in St. John's. Dr. Ploughman's achievements and her appreciation for NLCAHR's support sparked a meaningful dialogue among attendees about how our province can better nurture and expand the next generation of health researchers in Newfoundland and Labrador.





**Dr. Stephen Bornstein**, Honorary Research Professor in the Division of Population Health and Applied Health Sciences and founding Director of NLCAHR outlined the history of NLCAHR, including the development of the Contextualized Health Research Synthesis Program, the establishment of the Research & Knowledge Exchange Program and NLCAHR's former role as a key funder of applied health research in this province. His presentation provided insights into the strategic directions taken by NLCAHR to promote evidence-informed decision making and sparked a group conversation about some of the key lessons learned in the Centre's first 25 years.



**David Diamond**, former CEO NL Health Services gave a presentation about decision support for the province's health system in a period of transition, outlining how both CHRSP and the Research and Knowledge Exchange groups have established innovative and flexible ways to get evidence into the hands of decision makers. His insights sparked a group discussion about how Memorial University can build ways to create more support for evidence-informed and publicly engaged policy making in Newfoundland and Labrador.



**Dr. Sharon Buehler**, an Honorary Research Professor in the Division of Population Health and Applied Health Sciences in the Faculty of Medicine at Memorial University and the convener of the Research & Knowledge Exchange on Aging outlined the Centre's role in creating the Aging Research Centre of NL (ARC-NL). Dr. Buehler outlined the steadfast initiatives of a working group established by the NLCAHR Research and Knowledge Exchange on Aging which resulted in the establishment of ARC-NL, this province's first dedicated research centre for studies on aging at Grenfell Campus in Corner Brook. Dr. Buehler's talk offered an important reflection on how collaborative efforts can yield valuable results, especially when it involves harnessing the expertise of older adults.



**Dr. Jan Buley**, an Associate Professor at Memorial University's Faculty of Education and the convener of the RKE on Horticultural Therapy spoke about how an Exchange at NLCAHR helped to establish the Phoenix Garden Project at Her Majesty's Penitentiary, a successful gardening and educational program that involves inmates (Inside Gardeners!) who are working with university and community partners to create a special garden inside prison walls. She then had all in attendance join her in singing a rousing rendition of "Inch by Inch," a folk song about making gardens grow and a perfect metaphor for public engagement!



**Keynote Address: Dr. Jeremy Grimshaw: Building Evidence Support Systems for Healthcare Decision Makers: How NLCAHR Was Ahead of the Wave** Dr. Jeremy Grimshaw, Professor, Department of Medicine, University of Ottawa; Senior Scientist, Clinical Epidemiology, Ottawa Health Research Institute, Ottawa Hospital - Civic Campus; and Canada Research Chair in Health Knowledge Transfer and Uptake spoke about the Evidence Commission and prioritizing building evidence support systems, and how NLCAHR was ahead of the wave in doing this for NL decision makers.

## Research & Knowledge Exchange

The NLCAHR Research and Knowledge Exchange (RKE) program continued this year to connect community, academic, and healthcare system partners to build applied health research and programming capacity through a welcoming public forum. Since its creation in 2008, the RKE program has been steadily growing year after year and the combined total membership in the program has now reached 1,986 participants. These participants are academic researchers and students, health professionals, government and health system decision-makers, community group members, patients, and caregivers, all with shared interests in a

variety of applied health research topics and the desire to connect to exchange research, community knowledge and to talk about practice, programming and policy making in healthcare.

Events and activities this year included: the university's first symposium on Global Health, a successful collaboration to connect the NL School system with education and resources on eating disorders, and the launch of two new Exchanges: one dedicated to Climate Change and the other (an especially dynamic and engaged new group!) dedicated to Critical Disability Studies. As with every year, the Research and Knowledge Exchanges hosted a wide variety of special presentations and events, highlighted on the following pages.

Leaders from both the Department of Health and Community Services and NL Health Services have expressed an interest in building capacity for the effective implementation of new health and community services practices, programs and policies in our province. In response to this stated need for capacity building, in September 2025, NLCAHR will

### 2024-2025 Research & Knowledge Exchange Groups

1. Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
2. Aging
3. Autism
4. The Arts & Health
5. Chronic Disease
6. Climate Change
7. Cost & Value in Healthcare
8. Critical Disability Studies
9. Eating Disorders, Disordered Eating & Body Image
10. Gender, Sexuality, and Health
11. Global Health
12. Harm Reduction & Critical Drug Studies
13. Health Human Resources
14. Horticultural Therapy
15. Human-Animal Interaction & Wellness
16. Indigenous Health
17. The Learning Health & Social System
18. Mental Health
19. Midwifery & Maternal Health
20. Oral Health
21. Palliative and End-of-Life Care
22. Rural Health



**New Group commencing activities in Fall 2025:**  
Implementation Science and Change Management

launch a new Research & Knowledge Exchange on Implementation Science and Change Management to explore ways to promote the adoption and integration of evidence-based practices into health and to explore the structured process of transitioning individuals, teams, and organizations from a current state to a desired future state while minimizing resistance and maximizing engagement in health and community care.

## Research & Knowledge Exchange Conveners and Membership

*All faculty and student affiliations are with Memorial University, unless stated otherwise.*

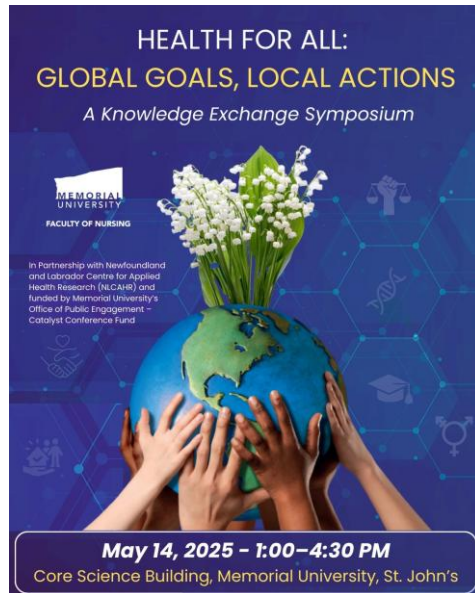
Exchange	Conveners	Membership
<b>Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dr. Jacqueline Hesson, Associate Professor, Faculty of Education</li> <li>Dr. Ross Connolly, Psychologist, Student Wellness Centre</li> </ul>	65 members
<b>Aging</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dr. Sharon Buehler, Honorary Research Professor, Epidemiology, Faculty of Medicine</li> <li>Dr. Karen Doody, Director, Aging Research Centre-NL, Assistant Professor, Environmental Biochemistry</li> </ul>	166 members
<b>Autism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rachel Hogan, Manager, Program Development and Implementation, Autism Society of Newfoundland &amp; Labrador</li> <li>Kayla Warren, OT(R)NL, BSc(Hons), MSc.OT, registered occupational therapist, Master's of Applied Health Services Research student, and adult-diagnosed Autistic</li> </ul>	92 members
<b>Arts &amp; Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dr. Jane Gosine, Professor, School of Music, cross-appointed to Faculty of Medicine</li> <li>Dr. Natalie Beausoleil, Professor, Population Health and Applied Health Sciences, Faculty of Medicine</li> </ul>	125 members
<b>Chronic Disease</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anne Wareham, Clinical Psychologist, Janeway Lifestyle Program, NL Health Services Eastern Zone</li> <li>Dr. Jennifer Collins, Assistant Professor and Researcher, Faculty of Nursing</li> </ul>	65 members
<b>Climate Change</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dr. Stephanie Atkinson, orthopedic surgeon, Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment, Newfoundland and Labrador</li> <li>Yasamin Atabaki, graduate student in Population Health and Applied Health Sciences</li> <li>Pablo Navarro, Research Officer at the NL Centre for Applied Health Research</li> </ul>	60 members
<b>Cost &amp; Value in Healthcare</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dr. Hai Van Nguyen, Associate Professor, School of Pharmacy</li> </ul>	96 members
<b>Critical Disability Studies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dr. Laura Pacheco, Assistant Professor, School of Social Work</li> <li>Dr. Andreae Callanan, Memorial University Office of Public Engagement</li> </ul>	75 members
<b>Eating Disorders, Disordered Eating &amp; Body Image</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dr. Pamela Ward, Research Coordinator, Centre for Nursing Studies, Adjunct Professor, Population Health and Applied Health Sciences, Faculty of Medicine</li> <li>Holly Grant, Registered Dietitian, PhD (c), Division of Population Health and Applied Health Sciences, Faculty of Medicine</li> <li>Dr. Susan Pardy, Clinical Psychologist and Research Coordinator at the HOPE Intensive Outpatient Program for Eating Disorder Treatment</li> </ul>	65 members
<b>Gender, Sexuality, and Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mary Walsh, Executive Director of End Sexual Violence NL and community-based researcher</li> </ul>	73 members
<b>Global Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dr. Kimberly Jarvis, Associate Professor and global health researcher, Faculty of Nursing</li> </ul>	64 members

<b>Harm Reduction &amp; Critical Drug Studies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jane Henderson, Provincial Harm Reduction Consultant at the Newfoundland and Labrador Centre on Substance Use, NL Health Services (NLHS)</li> <li>Dr. Gillian Kolla, Assistant Professor, Population Health and Applied Health Sciences, Faculty of Medicine</li> </ul>	90 members
<b>Health Human Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dr. Rick Audas, Professor and Health Economist, Population Health and Applied Health Sciences, Faculty of Medicine</li> </ul>	84 members
<b>Horticultural Therapy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dr. Jan Buley, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Education</li> <li>Jennifer Joy Russell, Occupational Therapist, Government NL</li> </ul>	77 members
<b>Human-Animal Interaction &amp; Wellness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dr. Carolyn Walsh, Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Faculty Lead of the Canine Research Unit</li> <li>Dr. Katherine Wayne, student in the Master's of Applied Health Services Research program, former postdoctoral fellow on human-domestic animal interactions</li> <li>Sam Morton, member of the Civic Laboratory for Environmental Action Research (CLEAR lab), PhD student in the Department of Geography</li> </ul>	61 members
<b>Indigenous Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dr. Fred Andersen, Assistant Professor, School of Social Work</li> </ul>	106 members
<b>The Learning Health &amp; Social System</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dr. Brendan Barrett, Professor of Medicine and former Chief Scientific Officer, NL SUPPORT, former Clinical Lead, Quality of Care NL</li> <li>Dr. Robert Wilson, Associate Researcher, Faculty of Medicine, Interim Director, Quality of Care NL, and Scientific Lead NL SUPPORT</li> </ul>	110 members
<b>Mental Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dr. Tyler Pritchard, Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychologist and visiting professor at Grenfell Campus</li> </ul>	173 members
<b>Midwifery &amp; Maternal Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dr. Ann Noseworthy, Retired Faculty, School of Nursing, Retired Midwife, Association of Midwives of Newfoundland and Labrador</li> <li>Sarah Harnum, Registered Midwife, NL Health Services Eastern Zone, Master's student in Applied Health Services Research</li> </ul>	88 members
<b>Oral Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cindy Holden, MPH, RDH, Newfoundland and Labrador College of Dental Hygienists</li> </ul>	38 members
<b>Palliative and End-of-Life Care</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dr. Susan MacDonald, Family Medicine, Palliative Medicine, Professor, Faculty of Medicine, instructor at Centre for Nursing Studies</li> <li>Dani Taylor, BA, MSW, RSW, social worker with Young Adult Cancer Canada</li> <li>Jessica Wall, BA, BSW, MSW, Community Support Manager and Palliative/End of Life and Residential Lead, NL Health Services, Western Zone</li> </ul>	65 members
<b>Rural Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dr. Jennifer Shea, Associate Professor of Indigenous Health, Division of Population Health and Applied Health Sciences, Faculty of Medicine</li> </ul>	89 members
<b>New in 2025: Implementation Science and Change Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dr. Amanda Hall, Associate Professor, Family Medicine, Implementation Science researcher at the Primary Health Research Unit, Faculty of Medicine</li> <li>Dr. Joshua Rash, Associate Professor, Department of Psychology</li> <li>Krista Butt, MSc., Program Evaluation Consultant, Planning, Performance and Evaluation, Quality and Learning Health Systems, NL Health Services</li> </ul>	59 members



## Activities and Events of the Research & Knowledge Exchanges

Following are highlights from the diverse and engaging events and presentations hosted by the NLCAHR Research & Knowledge Exchanges in 2024-2025. Our thanks to the presenters and conveners who shared their knowledge and expertise this year and, as always, our thanks to the hundreds of participants who took part in many lively conversations that foregrounded lived and living experiences, applied health research and practice, and the development of community connections, make this year another resounding success.



### Global Health Symposium

NLCAHR partnered with a team from the Faculty of Nursing to host a symposium on Global Health in May, 2025. The Faculty of Nursing's Global Health Committee under the leadership of Dr. Kimberley Jarvis and Dr. Hrag Yacoubian, invited an impressive line-up of speakers. Rochelle Baker, Manager of the RKE program at NLCAHR moderated the event, which was funded by Memorial University's Office of Public Engagement. The symposium was a meaningful exchange of knowledge among global health professionals, researchers, students, and people from across our communities and it initiated some important conversations about how we can build capacity for local actions that support global health issues here in in Newfoundland and Labrador.

The first panel, entitled, *"Bridging Gaps: Equity, Innovation, and Community in Health Access,"* featured Dr. Pammla Petrucka, a professor at the University of Saskatchewan's School of Public

Health, Ms. Angie Follett, a disabilities rights advocate and patient adviser at NL Health Services, Stephen Pike of Memorial's Faculty of Nursing, Dr. Jill Allison, a global health researcher and former Global Health Coordinator at Memorial's Faculty of Medicine and Maryan Abdikadir, an advocate for survivors of female genital mutilation and for refugee and immigrant communities seeking equitable healthcare in Canada.

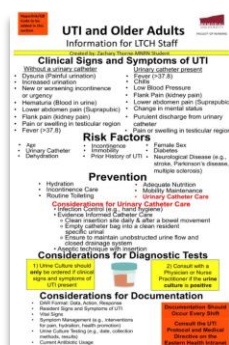
The second panel was entitled *"Healing People, Healing the Planet"* and included Dr. Erica (Samms) Hurley, a Mi'kmaw scholar from the west coast of Newfoundland and a registered nurse with degrees from Memorial University, Athabasca, and a doctorate from the University of Alberta. Dr. Hurley's work is grounded in a lifetime of fighting for Indigenous rights and the importance of place-based Indigenous knowledge in academic and community settings. Also featured were Dr. Maisam Najafizada, Associate Professor and Interim Assistant Dean for Social Accountability, Faculty of Medicine, Memorial University, whose talk addressed how health systems, particularly in rural and remote regions, can respond to the challenges and opportunities posed by planetary health, exploring the role of community-engaged, socially accountable health systems in promoting sustainability and resilience. The session also included Raluca Radu, the Planetary Health Lead for Providence Health Care. Ms. Radu has worked in public and private health care contexts, in addition to teaching at the UBC School of Nursing where she played a key role as a content expert on Climate Change & Health. The final panelist for this session was Dr. Stephanie Atkinson, an orthopedic surgeon and the former chair of the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment. Dr. Atkinson also co-convenes the NLCAHR RKE on Climate Change. She spoke about nature prescribing and its simultaneous benefits for individuals and for the planet.



### Community Research Priority Setting: Aging Research Centre of Newfoundland and Labrador (ARC-NL)

Principal Applicant Dr. Karen Doody, ARC-NL Director and convener of the NLCAHR Research & Knowledge Exchange on Aging members of the ARC-NL Core Leadership Team were awarded a CIHR Planning and Dissemination Grant to host two community events in which older adults and researchers from across the province identified research priorities and needs, common research interests, and established relationships to support project planning. On September 25, 2024, ARC-NL hosted a virtual event through the RKE on Aging to hear from seniors and older adults about their research priorities, with conversations broadly themed on ARC-NL's Strategic Pillars: Biology of Aging, Lived Experience of Aging, and Aging in Place. Participants shared ideas about health and aging in the province and discussed priorities for research on aging. Next, on November 15-16, 2024, ARC-NL hosted a 2-day in-person event in Corner Brook to engage researchers, students and trainees, representatives from the

healthcare system, patient and caregiver partners, and older adults. Attendees from across the province gathered to take part in discussions around aging research priorities, to create new research partnerships, and start planning research projects together. Julia Li, a Research Officer at NLCAHR, provided moderating and logistical support at this event. Researchers and students at ARC-NL are currently working to organize and analyze the abundant knowledge provided by attendees at both events. Community, health system and university partners identified a series of research priorities that included: Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities, Working in Older Age, Sense of Loss and Social Isolation, Importance of Choice/Autonomy, Complex Mental Health Issues, Civic Engagement and Advocacy, Dementia, Environmental Impacts on Chronic Disease, and Aging in Place.



### Supporting Early Identification and Prevention of Urinary Tract Infections in Older Adults Living in Long-Term Care (LTC) Settings

Zachary Thorne, RN, M.Sc. in Nursing whose research focuses on geriatrics and nursing education, outlined his work creating a practical infographic to support LTC staff in the early identification of urinary tract infections. Urinary tract infections (UTIs) can lead to serious complications resulting in hospitalization and death. Older adults are at a higher risk of developing UTIs as the result of decreased immunity, an issue further exacerbated by increased rates of bladder and bowel incontinence. UTIs are among the most frequently diagnosed infections in older adults and may either be preventable or less severe if they are detected early and if modifiable risk factors (i.e.,

hydration) are identified and addressed. This presentation, attended by members of the RKE on Chronic Disease and the RKE on Aging, outlined a quality improvement project that led to the development an evidence-informed infographic to support the identification and prevention of urinary tract infections. The work involved an infographic for LTC staff and for older adults and their family members. The educational resource was designed to provide a quick reference for evidence-informed care to prevent and identify UTIs within older adults living in Long-Term Care settings. The infographic includes current evidence, best practices, and preventative measures and facilitates professional and family support for people in LTC who develop urinary tract infections.



### **ElderDog Canada**

*"The human-animal bond is perhaps stronger and more profound in late life than at any other age."* (Suthers-McCabe, 2001) Dr. Gail Wideman, retired faculty from Memorial's School of Social Work and leader of ElderDog St. John's Metro spoke to the RKEs on Human-Animal Interaction and on Aging about ElderDog Canada, a national, registered charitable organization dedicated to aging people, aging dogs, and the important relationship they enjoy. ElderDog volunteers assist and support older adults in the care and well-being of their canine companions; and promote the welfare of older dogs whose lives have been disrupted due to illness, relocation or death of a human companion. The NL branch of ElderDog Canada was initiated by a team from the NLCAHR RKE on Human-Animal Interaction and Wellness and is now up and running

and serving older adults and their canine companions in St. John's. This information session was intended for older adults, their families and care providers to inform them about how ElderDog can help them maintain this vital connection.



### **More than (just) movement - Dance and Health**

Rebecca Barnstaple, Assistant Professor Theatre Studies & Creative Arts, Health and Wellness, School of English and Theatre Studies, College of Arts, University of Guelph, is an interdisciplinary scholar in arts and health. With a PhD in Dance Studies completed in tandem with the Graduate Program in Neuroscience from York University, Rebecca's research investigates biological dimensions of culture and the impacts of participation in the arts. Dr. Barnstaple presented to the RKEs on Arts and Health, on Aging, and on Chronic Disease about the health benefits of dance for Parkinson's and movement disorders, Alzheimer's and cognitive impairments, and a range of other complex health conditions, an area of health research that is rapidly evolving. Dr. Barnstaple shared her work in this emerging field as a facilitator of dance for health programs and researcher on the neurobiological effects of dance, complemented by discussion of the importance and impacts of culture for health and wellbeing.





### Efficacy of the DISCAN for Assessment of Pain in Older Adults

This research project was carried out in two stages, with Part 1 focusing on acute pain and Part 2 on chronic pain. Presented by Dr. Roberta DiDonato, Adjunct Professor, Division of Anesthesiology, Faculty of Medicine, (Research co-investigators are Michael Bautista, MD, and Elizabeth Woodford, MD) to the RKEs on Aging and on Chronic Disease, this talk outlined a project that aims to improve the way we measure and assess pain in older adults. Older adults commonly experience both acute and chronic pain and their pain has traditionally been assessed using a scale, such as the Numerical Rating Scale (NRS), the Brief Pain Inventory (BPI), or the Visual Analog Scale (VAS).

However, older adults, their caregivers, and healthcare providers have expressed concerns regarding the use of these scales for pain control and management. Systematic literature reviews support that the two current pain scales used (NRS or VAS) have limitations when used for aging populations, particularly those with hearing, vision, or mental health and cognitive issues. Limitations of the NRS and VAS for an aging cohort are numerous. Dr. DiDonato outlined her work looking at how the DISCretized ANalog Scale (DISCAN) method of pain-intensity assessment may be useful for addressing these limitations.



### Building a Continuum of Care for Healthy Aging in the City of St. John's: How can we improve food security for older adults?

The task force Health Accord NL identified several action items that would improve population health and make our health system more effective and sustainable over the long term. One action item of particular interest is the need to: "Implement a continuum of care for older adults." A continuum of care includes options for care that follow a person through time, adapting to their changing needs. Improving food security for older adults aligns strongly with implementing a better continuum of care throughout the lifespan. For his Master's of Public Health Practicum project carried out at NLCAHR, Ronan Martel researched services and policies that support food security for older adults living at home in St. John's. He identified approaches that may currently be missing from the

continuum of care for healthy aging in this city. By reviewing available data and conducting stakeholder interviews, Mr. Martel created a map of the current healthy aging continuum of care, identified service gaps related to food security, and proposed solutions that will fit the local context of St John's. He presented the final report from this project to the RKE on Aging and to stakeholders in the municipal and provincial government.

### Old School Intergenerational Projects

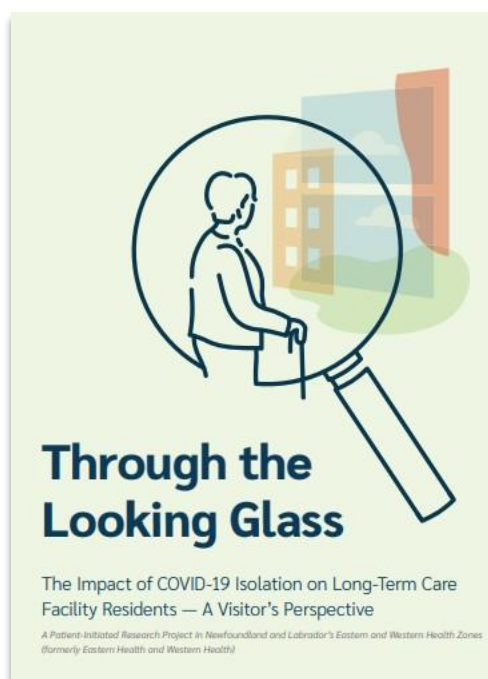


Claire Rouleau and Erin Winsor  
(CBC news photo)

Erin Winsor is the Executive Director of the charitable organization Old School Intergenerational Projects. Ms. Winsor met with the RKEs on Arts and Health and on Aging to talk about this organization's work in connecting older and younger people through arts programming and performances – using a retrofitted school bus to deliver arts to our communities. Old School is working with Government NL's Department of Health and Community services to offer dementia education and awareness in the community and in schools, to provide arts opportunities for people living with dementia and their

caregivers, and to support the implementation of intergenerational arts initiatives across the island.





### Through the Looking Glass: The Impact of COVID-19 Isolation on Long-Term Care Facility Residents – A Visitor's Perspective

This research project represented an important step in the work of the NL SUPPORT Unit at Memorial (the unit provides support for patient-oriented research) being the Unit's first patient-initiated research project. This project was both initiated and led by Patient and Public Partners Cris Carter and Rosemary Lester. Ms. Carter, Ms. Lester and Dr. Robert Wilson of NL SUPPORT outlined the findings to invited government and health system stakeholders and to members of the NLCAHR RKE on Aging. Their research addressed a critical concern for patient partners who wondered in 2020 about the impact of COVID-19 visitor restrictions on residents in long-term care facilities in Newfoundland and Labrador. NL SUPPORT's report outlined research findings based on the results of a series of surveys. Titled *Through the Looking Glass: The Impact of COVID-19 Isolation on Long-Term Care Facility Residents – A Visitor's Perspective*, the report puts forward five recommendations that the project team hopes policy-makers

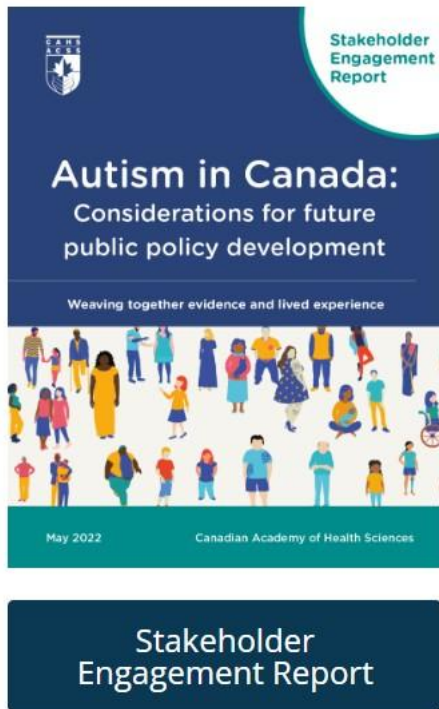
will consider in developing future long-term care policies and pandemic preparedness plans. As the researchers state in the introduction to this report: *"From our point of view, the recommendations boil down to one thing: put the residents and their families first."* [Link to Source here.](#)



### Social Prescribing for Older Adults

SeniorsNL and Newfoundland and Labrador Health Services (NLHS) are working together to develop, implement, evaluate, and integrate social prescribing into the healthcare system in NL. Patients of designated Family Care Teams who are 50 years of age or older will have access to Link Workers via either a health worker referral or a self-referral. Link Workers will then meet with referred individuals to address their non-clinical social needs, connecting them to appropriate programs and services, and working with them to help overcome roadblocks to a healthier, more connected life. The Social Prescribing pilot project aims to successfully integrate this model of social

prescribing into the healthcare system in Newfoundland and Labrador. Project leaders Dr. Suzanne Brake, Heidi O'Brien and Kathy Stock presented this project to the RKEs on Arts and Health and on Aging. The concept of social prescription has long been the subject of advocacy work among members of the NLCAHR Research and Knowledge Exchange on the Arts and Health who have made numerous presentations to government and health system decision makers on the benefits of an approach that asks "What matters to you?" rather than the more typical healthcare question, "What's the matter with you?"



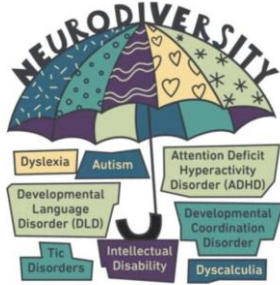
### Results from the Canadian Autistic Adult Needs Assessment

Dr. Mackenzie Salt is an Autistic autism researcher and a research associate with the McMaster University Autism Research Team and the National Centre for Autism Collaboration. He is also a part-time assistant professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioural Neuroscience at McMaster. He is a Health System Impact Fellowship program alumnus with a background in qualitative research and research engagement. He is currently working on several projects, all involving gathering information and learning from the experiences of Autistic adults and using the findings to inform policy change. Dr. Salt is also currently the Editor-in-Chief of the all-Autistic editorial board of the Canadian Journal of Autism Equity. This year, Dr. Salt presented to the NLCAHR RKE on Autism to provide an overview of the results from the Canadian Autistic Adult Needs Assessment, a national survey of over 1,900 Autistic adults conducted in the summer of 2023 to understand the daily lives of Autistic adults in Canada. He also covered the design of the survey and an overview of its key findings as well as outlining the broader impact of the Needs Assessment.

### Autism, Neurodivergence and Creativity

Autism and neurodivergence can result in unique ways of thinking and expressing creativity. Autistic people may have what some would consider to be creative advantages, such as an ability to detect complex patterns, linguistic originality, or the capacity to generate highly original ideas. Not surprisingly, many neurodiverse individuals, including Autistics, Dyslexics, and the ADHD community have talents in various artistic forms and may often express creativity in ways that defy expectations, reflecting innovative thinking, attention to detail, and unconventional perspectives. On the other side of the coin, the demands of artistic practice on Autistic and neurodiverse people can pose unique challenges. This panel discussion among the RKEs on Autism, on ADHD, and on Critical Disability Studies explored these issues and more. Our panelists were: Dr. Andreae Callanan, a poet, essayist, scholar, and activist from St. John's, NL who holds a doctorate in English literature from Memorial; her PhD research focused on the overlap between poetic and autistic modes of language use; Anne Pickard, an interdisciplinary artist, educator, scholar, and activist whose practice is rooted in community engagement, anti-racism, equity, and de/colonization, and is informed by her lived experience as an Autistic person with a hearing disability; and Kate Lahey, a musician, writer, scholar, community organizer and postdoctoral fellow at the Office of Public Engagement and the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Memorial University whose research centers trauma-informed values such as healing, care, empathy, and social justice.





### Neurodiversity in the Classroom: From Accommodation to Collaboration

For the RKEs on Autism, Critical Disability Studies, and ADHD, Dr. Andreae Callanan shared material she had presented as part of the Memorial University Centre for Innovation in Teaching and Learning (CITL) Instructor Series in October, 2024. This presentation introduced vocabulary around neurodiversity, and offered insight into some of the challenges and frustrations that neurodivergent learners might experience in the university setting. Dr. Callanan shared pragmatic suggestions for instructors who are interested in embracing the principles of neurodiversity in their course planning and evaluation, and

spoke about the benefits of making space for neurodivergent learners (and all learners) to be co-creators in their learning processes. She drew on her own experience as an instructor who has worked closely with neurodivergent learners, as a parent of neurodivergent learners, and as a neurodivergent person who spent many, many years as a university student. Andreae Callanan is autistic, is a writer, and attained her Ph.D. in English literature at Memorial University in 2023. Her research includes poetry and autism, lived experience of autism and autism memoir, among other areas of exploration into the worlds of neurodiversity and critical disability studies. She is the former Framework Coordinator with Memorial University's Office of Public Engagement.

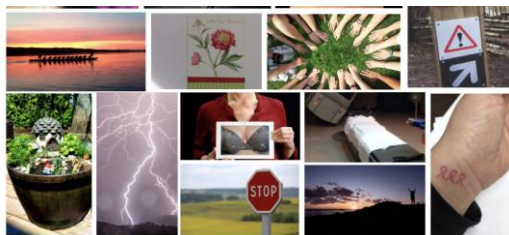


### Student Projects: A Two-Step Presentation on Dance and Health

The RKE on Arts and Health welcomed presentations on two research projects recently undertaken by Memorial University medical students.

"Dance on Prescription: Exploring the Potential Applications of Healing and Health Promotion through Movement to Music in Newfoundland and Labrador" with medical student Lauren Jackman and "Using Dance as a Beneficial Instructional Tool in Medical Education" with medical student Abigail Druken. The first project related to Dance on Prescription, explored how dance might be integrated into social prescribing frameworks to promote physical, mental, and social well-being. The second project looked

at the potential for dance in medical education, exploring how dance and other art forms can be used to positively impact both the learning and wellbeing of medical students. Both projects used qualitative methods as a means of exploring the positive impact dance may have on individuals facing challenges such as chronic illness and social isolation, and on its role in the education of medical students. Both presenters outlined their respective studies and highlighted the importance of recognizing dance and other art forms as therapeutic and educational tools. Lauren Jackman and Abigail Druken are third-year medical students at Memorial University, both with a lifelong passion for dance.



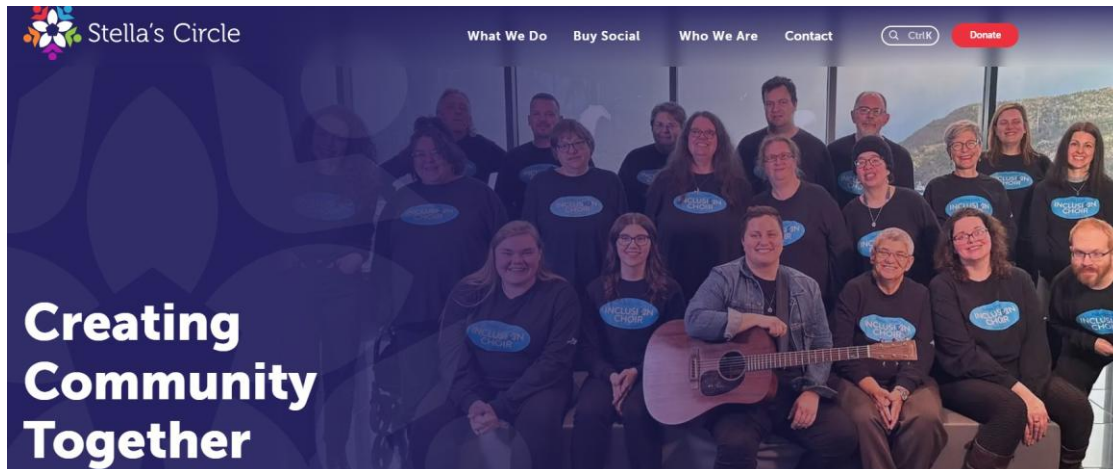
### Using Digital Performance and Patient Voice in Healthcare Education

For members of the Research and Knowledge Exchange on the Arts and Health, a team of researchers presented interim outcomes from a medical and nursing education research project funded by the Medical Education Research Fund. The project involved patient-voiced digital performance methods

to support the pre-service curriculum for nursing and medical education students. The researchers focused on social-emotional learning within patient and care provider relationships, and asked learners to consider the core role that patient experience and knowledge can play in navigating decision making for people living



with complex health conditions. *The Dialysis Project* and *The Cut of It* are two performance narratives that explore the intersection of identity, relationships, illness and medical intervention, and show how patient agency in healthcare directly informs health outcomes. Presenting from Memorial University: Dr Leah Lewis (Education) and Dr. Pamela Ward (Nursing), Dr. Jan Buley (Education) and Dr. Natalie Beausoleil (Medicine) with Dr. Kathleen Sitter (Social Work, U Calgary)



#### **Programming at Stella's Circle: Impacts and Alignment with Social Prescribing Principles**

This presentation to the RKE on Arts and Health and to the Exchange on Cost and Value in Healthcare examined the impacts of community programming on the psychosocial well-being of participants engaged in programs that are offered by the non-profit organization, Stella's Circle, which supports individuals facing barriers in St. John's. Stella's Circle programming is designed to support the social determinants of health and to encourage the development of life skills through recreational programs, including participation in activities such as the Inclusion Choir. Presenters shared the findings from a study that involved interviews with participants and discussed how practices at Stella's Circle align more broadly with the principles of social prescribing and can serve as model for approaches to social prescribing elsewhere. The presentation was led by Hannah Wadman-Scanlan who completed a Bachelor of Music at Memorial and is now a third-year medical student. Hannah began volunteering with the Stella's Circle Inclusion Choir in 2017 as a chorister and, since becoming Choral Director in 2020 has led this non-audition choir for individuals facing barriers such as mental health challenges and poverty. As co-founder of MUN's Social Prescribing Interest Group, Hannah raises awareness about social prescribing and its role in addressing social determinants of health. Presenting with Ms. Wadman-Scanlon was Dr. Jane Gosine, professor in the School of Music, cross-appointed to Population Health and Applied Health Sciences in the Faculty of Medicine. Her research explores the health benefits of group singing and social prescribing. She directs the Better Breathing Choir and is a researcher with SingWell and a partner with the Music and Health Research Institute in Ottawa.



#### **Respire-Chœur/ SingWell: the cheerful hybrid choir for afflicted respiratory systems**

Dr. Louise Drouin, is a long-time choir member. She holds a bachelor's degree in music and a Ph.D. in gerontology from the Université de Sherbrooke. Her research focuses on optimizing the health of people with chronic, incapacitating illnesses through the practice of adapted choral singing. Dr. Drouin presented her

considerable research on the health benefits of choral singing for people with chronic lung disease to the RKEs on Chronic Disease, Arts and Health, and on Aging. Choral singing is said to reduce anxiety, improve

quality of life, possibly increase lung capacity, and reduce stress: all valuable benefits when breath is in decline. Within an arts and health framework, innovative choral singing programs for people with chronic lung disease are enjoying growing enthusiasm in the UK, Denmark, and Canada. Dr. Louise Drouin's multidisciplinary research team, having compared the effects of choral singing with Pulmonary Rehabilitation (PR), is proposing a hybrid mode of choral singing (online and in person): the Respire-Chœur/SingWell research project. Although the chronic disease persists, this intervention prolongs breath and brings the pleasure of learning and singing with peers, encouraging participants, and a dedicated research team, to promote the development of Respire-Chœur/SingWell approach nationally. Under the leadership of Dr. Nicole Marquis, Professor of Health Sciences at Université de Sherbrooke, many researchers have collaborated on this project, including Dr. Jane Gosine, Memorial University, Dr. Yves Couturier, McGill University, and Dr. Véronique Provencher, Université de Sherbrooke.



### Connecting to Place through Disaster Response: New Opportunities for Community-Campus Partnerships

The RKE on Climate Change held a forum to discuss a SSHRC Partnership Grant (PG) application being undertaken by the Exchange for a new research project entitled "Connecting to Place through Disaster Response: New Opportunities for Community-Campus Partnerships." Faculty from the University of Regina are submitting this funding application which consists of six case studies with research partnerships across the country. The NLCAHR RKE on

Climate Change will lead the Newfoundland and Labrador case study along with partners at Food First NL and with subject expert Dr. Atanu Sarkar, a researcher from Memorial's Faculty of Medicine whose work is dedicated to health and the environment. At this meeting, the group explored the process of designing a project that will look at the role Memorial University campuses in the province can play in supporting food security during climate change-related disasters.



### Climate Change and Mental Health: Research, Practice, and Integrating Local Knowledge

Climate change is a global health crisis, and that includes our mental health. At this meeting, the RKEs on Climate Change and on Mental Health talked about ways to address the various mental health impacts of the climate crisis, which can include: anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) after extreme climate events such as floods, storms and fires; eco-anxiety and a sense of hopelessness about climate change; community displacement and the loss of cultural heritage, biodiversity, and traditional ways of living, and the myriad implications of the climate crisis on our collective mental well-being. NLCAHR welcomed a panel of counsellors from the

Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA) Climate Informed Chapter to talk about the impacts of climate change on our mental health. Julia Clarke covered research and theory; Nancy Blair spoke about her extensive experience in practice; and Corrine Hendricken-Eldershaw talked about applied local knowledge in her experience working with survivors of Hurricane Fiona in PEI.





### Is Outdoor Recreation Associated with Greater Climate Change Concern?

Researchers have carried out extensive work on the association between environmental attitudes and outdoor recreation (or nature-based leisure activities) since the 1970s. There is now considerable evidence to support the theory that spending time in nature leads to greater connectedness to nature and thereby greater pro-environmental attitudes and behavior. However, there is an absence of research focused specifically on the association between outdoor recreation and concern for climate change. In a presentation to the RKE on Climate Change and the RKE on Horticultural /Nature-based) Therapy, Dr. Kyle Knight and Dr. Feng Hao discussed their work building on previous research by using the 2021 General Social Survey and structural equation modeling to analyze the association between the frequency of engaging in outdoor recreation and a concern for climate change among adults in the United States, with special attention to the role of enjoying being in nature. Controlling for other factors, the

researchers found that frequency of outdoor recreation has a positive, significant effect on climate change concern, but only indirectly, through their enjoyment of nature. Individuals who more frequently engage in outdoor recreation activities tend to report a greater sense of enjoyment of being outside in nature, and this enjoyment of nature is associated with a higher level of concern for climate change. Our presenters were Dr. Feng Hao, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, University of South Florida, and Dr. Kyle Knight, Professor and Department Head, Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences, South Dakota School of Mines and Technology.



### Making Climate Conscious Decisions for Our Common Future

Ashley Smith spoke about her work as the Owner and Managing Director of Fundamental Inc., a socially-focused firm that provides consulting for climate-based action. Her company facilitates emissions reductions, energy efficiency, and strategic climate adaptations by taking a science-based approach using

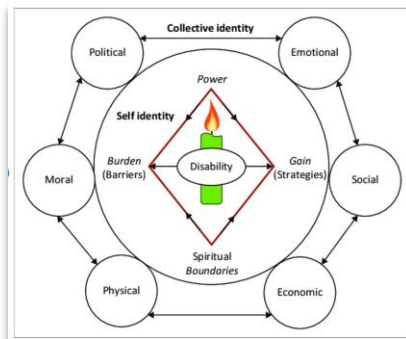
climate-conscious decision metrics. She works on creating opportunities and programs that successfully achieve both financial and sustainability goals among client in both private and public sectors: commercial, residential, governmental and institutional. The focus of this presentation was on developing opportunities and solutions that address climate change – both mitigation (emissions reductions and energy efficiency) and adaptation (infrastructure resiliency and eco-asset management). Ashley Smith holds a degree in Environmental Science and Chemistry from McGill University and a Master's degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Toronto. Ashley is LEED® Accredited, trained in ISO 14064 for GHG emissions quantification, and has over 18 years' experience in building design, community planning, construction project management, and renewable energy.



### A discussion about Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD) through the lens of Critical Disability Studies

The RKE on Critical Disability Studies hosted a group discussion about the ethical implications of Medical Assistance in Dying for Canadians with disabilities, encompassing the lenses of disability and poverty justice. This meeting was convened with the intention of providing Exchange members the opportunity to discuss and to reflect upon their responses to a CIHR-sponsored MAiD Café at Memorial University. That event, which took place on April 17, 2025 included a panel of provincial MAiD Coordinators and physicians working within

NL Health Services who outlined MAiD Track 2 legislation which now extends medical assistance in dying to Canadians for whom death is neither imminent nor expected. Given that the April meeting was not intended to address ethical concerns, members of the RKE on Critical Disability Studies sought a discussion that would consider the legislation in the context of the March 2025 report of the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities calling on Canada to reconsider MAiD Track 2. Exchange members framed the MAiD discussion within the lens of Critical Disability Studies, expressed concerns about the April 2025 MAiD Café, talked about ethical dilemmas with MAiD in terms of Disability Justice, and highlighted the need for advocacy and mobilization, as well as raising numerous issues related to patient autonomy, decision-making, and societal concerns.



### The Ubuntu Model of Disability

Ms. Sibusiso Moyo is an emerging scholar in the field of Critical Disability Studies. Ms. Moyo discussed the Ubuntu model of disability, an African, communitarian approach that views disability not as a problem, but as a facet of shared human diversity that requires collective support, respect, and inclusion within the community. Ms. Moyo is a Ph.D. student in the School of Social Work at Memorial University whose research examines how the Ubuntu Model of Disability could be used in relation to the experiences of parents with intellectual disabilities within Zimbabwe. Included in her discussion

were the key principles of the Ubuntu model of disability and how this framework might expand our understanding of disability as being rooted in culture, relationships, community, solidarity and support. Ms. Moyo discussed her plans to examine the experiences of parents with intellectual disabilities in Zimbabwe and how this research will contribute to a broader conceptualization of caregiving that considers the intersections of race, culture, gender and disability.

### Ableism

The Assumptions People Make About Disability



### Ableism Within the Healthcare System and Post-Secondary Education

Jaime Blenus, a Ph.D. student in Health at Dalhousie University and an Accessibility Health Consultant with IWK, shared her proposed research on ableism within the healthcare system and post-secondary education. Her presentation focused on the use of autoethnography and narrative approaches to identify the experiences of ableism, internalized ableism and to explore the often-ignored effects of ableism on the personal level.



### Some Stutter, Luh!

Dr. Paul DeDecker of Memorial University spoke with the RKE on Critical Disability Studies about the marginalization of people who stutter. His work as a sociolinguist explores this marginalization through the lens of something known as "discommunication," which refers to how stuttering and other kinds of non-fluent speech are perceived as deficits, leading to the social exclusion of people who stutter and limiting the exchanges that help us to better understand the social factors that have an impact on language use. Drawing on an analysis of stories from his podcast, "Some Stutter, Luh!" Dr. DeDecker outlined how ableism positions fluency in language and speech as "the norm," resulting in the perception that those without such fluency are "other" and reinforcing stigma. He also

explored how people who stutter often resist such ableist marginalization by fostering community and reframing stuttering as a valuable aspect of their identities. By highlighting the dynamic nature of marginalization — something that is both imposed by "societal norms" and actively negotiated by marginalized individuals— Dr. DeDecker invited Exchange members to participate in a broader discussion about language, identity, and resistance. Through the lens of the lived experiences of people who stutter, he reframed marginalization as an interactive and evolving process shaped by social perception and by linguistic practices. Greg O'Grady from the "Some Stutter, Luh!" podcast and members of the NL Stuttering Association joined in the discussion. Dr. Paul DeDecker is a sociolinguist at Memorial University whose research includes SSHRC-funded, qualitative and quantitative studies of linguistic variation and language change in varieties of English spoken in Newfoundland and Labrador, including differences across region and time.



### Accessibility Panel and Roundtable Discussion

The RKE on Critical Disability Studies talked about accessibility with panelists Dr. Melanie Coughlin, Ms. Angie Follett and Ms. Christine Taylor Fearing. Dr. Coughlin is an Assistant Professor in the Departments of Religious Studies and Philosophy. She discussed how framing accessibility as "a problem to be resolved" often depicts ableism as an issue from the past while disregarding perpetual and ongoing attempts to build *in*accessibility into all

levels of society. She discussed access needs as intrinsic to how we might approach and design our world. Dr. Coughlin asked the Exchange to consider the limitations of "more and greater accessibility" as an overarching goal in certain contexts. Panelist Angie Follett is a Patient and Family Experience Advisor for NL Health Services and a community-based Autistic, Disability, Aging and Poverty Consultant, and Co-Creator of the AltermindsNL Podcast. She spoke about the many challenges she has encountered in accessing healthcare, social support, and other community supports, sharing her experiences as an Autistic person who is also blind, hearing impaired, and physically disabled. Panelist Christine Taylor Fearing is an interdisciplinary queer writer, performer, and SSHRC doctoral fellow pursuing an Interdisciplinary Ph.D. at Memorial University. Profoundly Dyslexic and Neurodivergent with a visual disability, she describes herself as a writer who can't read and a scholar who can't spell. Her research connects research and creativity, using disruptive arts practice and Crip theory— an academic/activist perspective that merges queer theory and critical disability studies, to challenge academic and artistic norms. She highlighted the embodied experiences of Neurodivergence and Disability within academic and artistic contexts.





### How Effective is Conventional Disability Advocacy?

Given the post-COVID deterioration in quality of life (locally and globally), having polite meetings with elected officials to advocate for disability justice does not seem to be working. In fact, it has not worked in decades. The organizational model of advocacy has, in itself, become a barrier to disability justice. How do independent people (i.e., people who are not working for any organization) activate and organize with no access to funding, no organizational support, in an environment that is rife with barriers, most notably the complexity of doing something as basic as congregating? Is there space for (more) militant, human-rights focused advocacy in Newfoundland and Labrador? Anne Malone spoke to the RKE on Critical Disability Studies

about Disability Advocacy from her perspective as a Disability Rights Activist who has a sensory disability (sight loss), and whose work emanates from her own experiences of ableism after many years of living in a world that perceived her as “normal”. Anne Malone is a TED-X St. John’s alumni (License to Beg, 2015), emerging author (Popcorn for the Blind (essay), Voices from The Shore anthology), and has appeared in two documentaries (Honk If You See Me in The Road, How to Fail at Accessibility) and broadcast news media productions. In 2021, as an expression of protest, she stood as a candidate-at-large in the St. John’s, NL municipal election. Her platform advocated that the City adopt a universal design policy as a solution to the inaccessible conditions experienced by people with disabilities or other mobility barriers in St. John’s. She lives in St. John’s where she navigates a complex urban environment with the support of her Guide Dog, Purdy.



### Facilitating Access to Eating Disorders Education and Resources in NL Schools

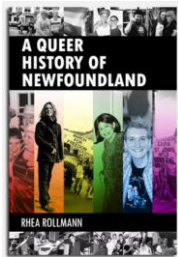
The National Eating Disorders Information Centre (NEDIC) provides evidence-based information about eating disorders. The Research and Knowledge Exchange on Eating Disorders, Disordered Eating and Body Image held a series of meetings to identify areas where improved knowledge on issues of health promotion and eating disorder prevention might be required in Newfoundland and Labrador. Overwhelmingly, participants in the exchange identified access to evidence-based resources for school teachers, parents, and young people as a top priority, noting that learning resources about eating disorders are often needed in the K-12 education system. To address this issue, the RKE organized two meetings. In the first, a representative from NEDIC outlined the information, resources, referrals and support available to anyone in Canada affected by an eating disorder. Ary Maharaj, M.Ed. RP (Qualifying), Outreach & Education Coordinator at NEDIC met with RKE members to share information that can help educators, families, and young people gain a better understanding about eating disorders and their prevention. He noted that NEDIC’s work extends from a life-saving helpline to prevention-based outreach and education programming. NEDIC offers an extensive catalogue of useful workshops and educational opportunities as well as online information. After his presentation, the RKE initiated a pragmatic conversation among decision makers in the NL Department of Education and representatives from NL Schools, together with NEDIC and the Eating Disorder Foundation of NL to outline how teachers, students and families can access the resources required to facilitate evidence-informed information sharing about eating disorders and positive body image in our province’s schools.



### **The Fireweed Counselling Collective (FCC):**

#### **Supporting survivors of gender-based violence and the people who help them**

In partnership with the Mokami Status of Women Council and End Sexual Violence NL, the Fireweed Counselling Collective (FCC) is a project offering free counselling to people in Labrador affected by gender-based violence. Deirdre Connolly, the project coordinator for FCC, spoke to the RKEs on Gender, Sexuality and Health, Indigenous health, Rural Health, and Mental Health about how this project is centring care as an integral part of gender-based violence (GBV) intervention, embedding it into the foundation of programming. This presentation explored the co-creation of a model that supports not only people impacted by violence, but also the practitioners supporting them. Through stakeholder training, practitioner support, and the development of a community of practice, the Fireweed Counselling Collective is centering care as an active intervention. At the heart of this work is the recognition that care itself interrupts cycles of harm. The impacts of gender-based violence ripple through communities in ways we often overlook, and the collective has observed that those who cause harm are often dealing with their own histories of trauma. Yet both groups face substantial gaps in access to support, accountability, and safe spaces. By prioritizing care, FCC aims to break these cycles, keep practitioners well, and support healthier communities overall.



### **A Queer History of Newfoundland with Rhea Rollman**

Author Rhea Rollman spoke with the RKE on Gender, Sexuality and Health about her research into the history of queer activism in this province. Through decades of repression, the story of 20th century queer community-building and activism in Newfoundland & Labrador has remained largely ignored. Through interviews, archival work and investigative reporting, Rhea Rollman brings that history to light in *A Queer History of Newfoundland* published by Engen Books and long-listed for 2023 BMO Winterset Award. Organized queer activism dates back to the 1970s in NL, but queer presence and community stretches back much farther. Rollman spent years scouring archives, newspapers and court records to chronicle that history. Her archival research and first-hand interviews with activists and community members document the story of the queer rights movement in this province, one of great pride and joy; one of hardship and struggle; and ultimately, one of triumph. Rhea Rollman is an award-winning journalist, writer and audio producer based in St. John's, NL, and is the author of *A Queer History of Newfoundland* (Engen Books, 2023). She's a founding editor of *The Independent NL* whose journalism has appeared in a wide variety of journals and magazines. Her academic work has been published in the *Journal of Gender Studies*, *Labor Studies Journal*, *Canadian Woman Studies*, *Just Labour: A Journal of Work and Society*, *Canadian Theatre Review*, *Canadian Review of Sociology*, *Screen Bodies* and elsewhere.



### **Kinship, lineage resources and intimate partner violence among women in Ghana**

This presentation to the RKE on Global Health outlined research that used self-reported and multidimensional measures of lineage to explore its relationship with intimate partner violence (IPV), focusing particularly on resources as the mechanisms linking the two. Dr. Eric Y. Tenkorang, a Professor of Sociology, cross-appointed to the Division of Population Health and Applied Health Sciences at Memorial University, had hypothesized that wielding resources would be negatively associated with IPV. Furthermore, matrilineal women's access to lineage resources would reduce their vulnerability to IPV relative to patrilineal women. To examine these hypotheses, his research team collected data from 1700 ever-married Ghanaian women residing in three ecological zones (coastal, middle, northern). The authors found that part of matrilineal women's reduced IPV risk was explained through access to maternal resources. While



patrilineal women experienced higher levels of IPV, this was reversed with resources from paternal kin members. The IPV outcomes for bilateral women were mixed. Dr. Tenkorang's research suggests that as resources are fundamental to reducing IPV, lineage can serve as an important conduit for resource exchange and wealth transfer. Dr. Eric Tenkorang is a Harry Frank Guggenheim Distinguished Scholar and a Member of the Royal Society of Canada (The College of New Scholars, Artists and Scientists). Dr. Tenkorang has served as a member of the Institute Advisory Board for Gender and Health of the Canadian Institute of Health Research. He is currently a member of the National Taskforce for Women's Economic Justice of the Canadian Centre for Women's Economic Empowerment, dedicated to dealing with economic abuse among Canadian women. He has broad research interests in population health, especially in limited-resource settings. This includes investigating the sexual and reproductive health of marginalized populations in sub-Saharan Africa.



#### **A National Survey on Navigating Mental Health and Substance Use Services and Early Intervention for Children and Youth**

Rahme Daoud, Program Lead, Performance Improvement and Capacity Building (PICB) at the Canadian Institute of Health Information (CIHI) shared information with the Harm Reduction and Mental Health RKEs about a national CIHI survey. CIHI is an

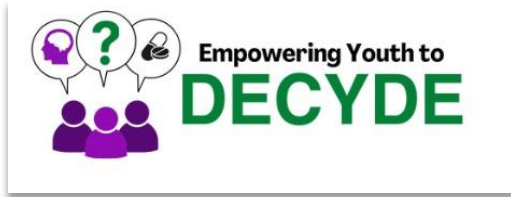
independent, not-for-profit organization that provides comparable and actionable data and information on Canada's health systems performance and the health of Canadians. As part of its commitment to *A Common Statement of Principles on Shared Health Priorities*, CIHI is working with system leaders to understand Canadians' experiences when accessing mental health and substance use services by reporting two self-reported indicators through a national survey. The survey calculated measures of: Navigation of Mental Health and Substance Use Services (age 15+); Early Intervention for Mental Health and Substance Use Among Children and Youth (age 13-24, exception Québec age 14-24). This presentation was instrumental in obtaining data from NL for this national survey.



#### **Supervised Consumption Sites: Evidence and Controversies**

Canada's first Supervised Consumption Site for people who use drugs opened over 20 years ago, and decades of research has demonstrated the effectiveness of such sites on key health and social outcomes. Despite the evidence, this public health intervention continues to be subject to controversy and politicized rhetoric that obscures both the role and purpose of sites within communities, and the evidence for their effectiveness. In light of the

continuing contention about sites and the recent push by several provincial governments to close them down amidst a continuing overdose crisis, Dr. Gillian Kolla spoke with the RKEs on Harm Reduction and on Mental Health to outline the evidence base on supervised consumption sites and to explore controversies about them. Following the presentation, a facilitated group discussion provided participants an opportunity to examine the potential role for supervised consumption sites in Newfoundland and Labrador, and the considerations that would need to be explored to open them here. Dr. Gillian Kolla is Assistant Professor of Population Health and Applied Health Sciences in the Faculty of Medicine at Memorial. She uses community-based research methods to examine the role of harm reduction interventions in addressing barriers to healthcare and social service access among people who use drugs. Dr. Kolla has also conducted research examining the response to the drug toxicity overdose crisis in both Ontario and British Columbia. She was a member of the coordinating committee for the Toronto Overdose Prevention Society, which opened Ontario's first overdose prevention site in a Toronto park in 2017 as part of a community-led response to the overdose crisis.



#### **Empowering Youth to DECIDE:**

#### **(Drug Education Centred on Youth Decision Empowerment)**

Dr. Lisa Bishop and Dr. Jennifer Donnan from Memorial's School of Pharmacy spoke with the RKE on Harm Reduction and on Mental Health about their work on the DECIDE project (Drug Education Centred on Youth Decision Empowerment). DECIDE is a new education strategy

created by an interdisciplinary team of researchers, clinicians, and educators at Memorial University. The vision of DECIDE is to empower youth to make safe and informed choices regarding their substance use health. DECIDE's mission is to provide evidence-based, trauma-informed, substance use education and resources with a focus on prevention and harm reduction for youth, educators, and guardians. The DECIDE strategy was informed by diverse research and engagement methods, including surveys, focus groups, scoping reviews, and community and citizen consultations. This ensures that the materials included in the program are relevant, useful, and based upon the best available evidence. DECIDE aligns with the NL Department of Education's updated health education curriculum being implemented across the province in 2025. DECIDE is also featured on Bridge the Gapp NL, an online resource providing information on mental health and substance use for youth and adults. Dr. Lisa Bishop is a pharmacist and Professor with the School of Pharmacy at Memorial University. Dr. Jennifer Donnan is an Associate Professor with the School of Pharmacy at Memorial University. They are co-leading the DECIDE strategy and have a passion for supporting youth's mental health and well-being.



#### **Back to the Garden: A Return to California's Insight Garden Program**

Members of the RKE on Horticultural Therapy first learned about the Insight Garden Program (IGP) in 2020 when they welcomed a presentation about how an innovative curriculum, combined with vocational gardening and landscaping training was helping people in nine California prisons, including San Quentin, reconnect to self, community, and the natural world. This "inner" and "outer" gardening approach was the inspiration for the creation of the Phoenix Garden

Program at Her Majesty's Penitentiary in St. John's, a university-community project proudly supported by NLCAHR. This year, we welcomed Insight Garden leaders Andrew Winn and Jamala Taylor back for an update, virtually connecting them with Inside Gardeners serving time at HMP. Mr. Winn and Mr. Taylor outlined recent developments in the ecosystem of care being nourished by IGP and its work with people inside and outside the corrections system in providing green spaces to currently incarcerated people and access to nature to previously incarcerated people. New IGP initiatives include the first Free Farmers' Market inside a US prison and new approaches that connect people in re-entry with camping trips. Andrew Winn is a distinguished leader at the intersection of environmental and criminal justice, currently serving as Executive Director of the Insight Garden Program. As a formerly incarcerated individual, Mr. Winn emphasizes the transformative power of horticultural therapy in prison settings and supports holistic reentry support. He played a pivotal role in building and developing the Underground Scholars Initiative at UCLA and Project Rebound at Sacramento State University. Jamala Taylor has successfully overcome a past marked by lengthy incarceration. He was initially sentenced to a daunting 99-year-to-life term and spent 15 years in solitary confinement at Pelican Bay State Prison. After a 31-year incarceration in various maximum-security facilities across California, his journey took a significant turn when he was granted release on December 30, 2020. Since his release, Mr. Taylor has earned a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology from CSU-Fullerton and is currently pursuing a Master's in Public Administration (MPA) from the University of Southern California. He is a certified life coach, having completed the rigorous 9-month Coaching for Healing, Justice, and Liberation certification program (CHJL). His coaching approach emphasizes organizational and leadership development. Mr. Taylor is an Insight Garden Program Alumnus and currently serves as the Senior Reentry Manager for IGP.



### **Overworking Animals: Is a post-work animal agriculture possible?**

This presentation to the RKE on Human-Animal Interaction and Wellness examined the problem of industrial animal agriculture through a discussion of work. The fundamental problems of industrial agriculture can be summarized as: overworking animals, overworking humans and overworking the environment. The majority of literature on industrial animal agriculture highlights political-economic, ethical, environmental, and social problems through, for example, consumption politics, animal welfare and rights, the need to feed future populations,

environmental degradation etc. This research presentation marked a pivot from these approaches to focus on the problems of work and overwork in animal agriculture by examining the work involved in industrial animal agriculture and speculating on what post-work animal agriculture might look like. Dr. Sarah Martin is an Associate Professor & Graduate Coordinator in Political Science at Memorial University, specializing in the global political economy of food and agriculture, and her research explores questions about the governance of food and agriculture at the local and global scale. Dr. Charlie Mather is a professor in the Department of Geography at Memorial University with a research focus linked to an Ocean Frontier Institute Large Research Grant on social license and aquaculture. He is most involved in the 'social license' and 'community dynamics' components of this large project.



### **What do we owe our pets for their trouble? A roundtable discussion of Dr. Jean Harvey's work**

The majority of Canadian households include at least one pet (or companion animal), and most would say they love their pets, which is no surprise: the physical and mental health benefits of pet ownership are widely touted. For those with service animals, the therapeutic nature of the relationship is underscored. But are our choices to have pets justifiable? What is it about our relationships with pets or service animals

that may render them (in)defensible, and how do those features relate to their therapeutic benefits? The RKE on Human-Animal Interaction and Wellness explored these and other questions in a session led by convener, Dr. Katherine Wayne. The session began with a brief presentation followed by a discussion about Dr. Jean Harvey's seminal article, *"Companion and Assistance Animals: Benefits, Welfare Safeguards, and Relationships."*



### **Community Oral Health Services (COHS) within Indigenous Services Canada (ISC)**

Ashley White, the National Oral Health Promotion Officer for Community Oral Health Services within Indigenous Services Canada provided an overview of Community Oral Health Services (COHS) within Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), highlighting the full range of oral health services of this program. This presentation to the RKEs on Indigenous Health and on Oral Health covered the COHS mission and commitment to improving oral health outcomes



in First Nations and Inuit communities, recent program enhancements, and key initiatives. Additionally, the presentation outlined a new strategic plan for future program development and expansion, ensuring sustainable, culturally appropriate, and community-driven oral health care.



**Research Funding: SSHRC Grants through First Light**  
First Light Indigenous Friendship Centre has achieved Institutional Eligibility from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC). This significant milestone enables First Light to administer SSHRC grants, opening new avenues for collaboration in Indigenous-focused research. As a holder of Indigenous not-for-profit eligibility, First Light is now positioned to engage in and support research initiatives through Connection Grants, Knowledge

Synthesis Grants, Partnership Development Grants, and Partnership Grants. In a special presentation to the RKE on Indigenous Health, Chad Bedard of First Light discussed potential partnerships that align with the 42 calls for change outlined in First Light's community action plan, "Our Shared Vision," as well as commitments to advancing TRC, MMIWG, and UNDRIP objectives within St. John's and Newfoundland and Labrador. Researchers and academics were invited to review the relevant details and begin the collaboration process by submitting an initial proposal to First Light. Sharing this news was seen as a way to significantly impact the ability to connect with like-minded individuals and expand collaborative opportunities.



**Choices for Youth (CFY), Integrated Youth Services and a Learning Health and Social System: A CIHR-funded study** Matthew Cooper is the Newfoundland and Labrador Data Lead for a Canadian Institute for Health Research project that aims to build a Learning Health System to gather and analyze data from Integrated Youth Service sites across the country. Our RKE on The Learning Health and Social System welcomed him to outline this project and its use of community data to build a learning health and social system. Here in Newfoundland and Labrador, CFY offers

Integrated Youth Services that include mental health/ substance use supports, youth and family peer support, primary care, social services, housing, food security, social enterprise, education, and employment. One Integrated site is currently operational in NL and now, with the support of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, Newfoundland and Labrador Health Services, and philanthropic and community partners, CFY is aiming to create new Integrated Youth Services hubs across Newfoundland and Labrador. Matthew Cooper has been providing evaluation work for Choices for Youth for the past five years. Currently he is the Manager of Impact Measurement and Engagement, taking a lead role in the organization's data, research, evaluation and youth engagement through impact measurement, developmental evaluation and quantitative data collection tools.



### **Making Connections: How Can Academic Research Support a Learning Health System in Newfoundland and Labrador?**

The Research & Knowledge Exchange on the Learning Health and Social System sought to improve participants' understanding of the connections we can make between academic researchers and health systems partners to create

a Learning Health System, in practical terms, in Newfoundland and Labrador. For this discussion, researchers working across disciplines at Memorial University met with research and innovation leaders at NL Health Services, together with NLHS and government decision makers who are developing the Learning Health System to discuss ways to connect their work.



### **"I know you!" Navigating Dual Roles among Mental Health Service Providers Working in Rural, Northern, and Remote Canada**

Members from the section on rural and northern psychology of the Canadian Psychology Association conducted an environmental scan of existing resources and literature to aid in the creation of guidelines to support the ethical navigation of dual relationships in rural, northern, and remote areas of Canada. A dual role exists when a psychologist is in a professional role with a person and simultaneously in another role with the same person, or with someone closely associated with, or related to, that person. Dual relationships can create ethical dilemmas because they can blur boundaries and potentially compromise objectivity. This presentation to the RKEs on

Mental Health, Rural Health and Indigenous Health by three of the working group's members, including one of the co-chairs, summarized the findings from their scan, including an overview of the different types of dual roles documented and a discussion of the various themes identified (e.g., the impact of euro-western ethical perspectives, urban bias, professional isolation, and lack of community voice). Attendees were offered suggestions about how to determine whether a dual role is problematic, and the speakers outlined some preventative measures to consider. Amanda Lints-Martindale, PhD, C. Psych is an assistant professor within the Department of Clinical Health Psychology with the Rady Faculty of Health Sciences of the University of Manitoba, a Consulting Clinical Psychologist in Steinbach MB and past chair of the CPA's section on rural and northern psychology. Tanya Dawn McDougall (Dipiskew geezik) is from St. Theresa Point Ansininew Nation, a remote First Nation community in northern Manitoba. She has a Master's in Educational Administration and a Masters in School Psychology and serves her home community as a mental health advocate in the school. Veronica Hutchings, PhD, R. Psych is an associate professor at Memorial University's Grenfell Campus where her primary duties involve the provision of psychological services to the students of the campus. She is the current chair of the Canadian Psychology Association's section on rural and northern psychology and an associate editor for the Journal of Rural Mental Health.

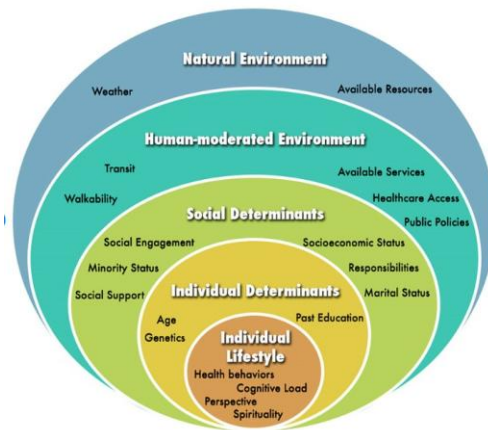


### **Unmet Birth Expectations and Postpartum Mental Health**

Katie Steeves (she/her) is a second-year medical student from St. John's, NL with an interest in perinatal mental health. Melissa Williams is a fourth-year kinesiology student whose personal experiences have piqued her interest in women's health. Together, they are conducting a research project investigating the sources of information that pregnant individuals use to prepare for birth and the association between unmet birth expectations and



postpartum mental health. They are currently recruiting participants and are seeking the assistance of care providers in this task. This presentation covered the current literature on information usage during pregnancy, unmet birth expectations, and how this impacts postpartum mental health. Ms. Steeves and Ms. Williams hope the results of their work will elucidate some of the mechanisms underlying the current state of maternal mental health in this province to increase meaningful engagement between birthing persons and care providers in the future.



### Embracing complexity and context in research to prevent and address mental disorders and promote positive mental health

Mental health and mental disorders are inherently complex, shaped by an interplay of biological, psychological, social, and environmental factors. This “multifactorial” influence underscores the need to recognize and address the interactions that contribute to the development of mental health. While reductionistic models often dominate mental health research—focusing on isolated factors or a single domain—other approaches, such as using a socioecological model, can offer a more holistic perspective. Socioecological models attempt to capture the dynamic interplay between individual, relational, community, and societal influences, providing a framework for understanding mental health in context.

Despite their potential, socioecological models remain underrepresented in mental health research. In conversation with RKE Convener Dr. Tyler Pritchard, the RKE on Mental Health discussed journal articles about how socioecological approaches can deepen our understanding of mental health. Building on this work, we can gain insight into prevention and intervention strategies that reflect the complexity of mental disorders. The Exchange hosted a productive discussion on the intricate nature of mental disorders and how—as researchers, clinicians, those with lived experience, and otherwise invested in our well-being—embracing complexity can enhance our efforts to prevent and address mental disorders and promote positive mental health.



### Postpartum Emergency Department (ED) Use

For the RKE on Midwifery and Maternal Health, Carla Sorbara presented the results of her recently published research paper, "Postpartum emergency department use following midwifery vs. obstetrical prenatal care: a population-based cohort study using propensity score-based overlap weights." Emergency Department use postpartum is a common, and often-preventable, event. The current study helps to resolve an important clinical question: “Can postpartum ED use be reduced in low-risk women?” The findings from this research provide important insights regarding the care of the postpartum woman, both in terms of the coordination and provision of clinical care, and in terms of public health policy for new mothers. Traditionally,

comparisons of women in midwifery vs conventional obstetrical care have been challenging, due to unmeasured confounders. By using a propensity-score based overlap weights study design, Ms. Sorbara and team compared ED use in an unbiased fashion. This study then observed differences in rates of ED use between people receiving midwifery care and people receiving obstetrical care. The findings can help to resolve the known gaps in early postpartum care that are typically seen in women who receive obstetrical care, suggesting that a midwifery approach in the early postpartum period can alleviate some ED visits. Carla Sorbara has worked as a registered midwife since 2006 at North York General Hospital and currently works as

a full-time midwife at Toronto's Uptown Midwives and Family Wellness. Before completing the Midwifery Education program at Toronto Metropolitan University, she obtained an undergraduate degree in medical anthropology at McGill University. She has worked with BORN, PCMCH and OMAMA on several quality initiatives. She has completed a Master's in Public Policy and a Master's of Science in Clinical Epidemiology at the University of Toronto.



**The Quality Maternal and Newborn Care Framework: Exploring the Evidence for Integrating Midwifery Care**

The Quality Maternal and Newborn Care (QMNC) Framework was developed using the evidence from the 2014 Lancet Series on Midwifery. It presents the scope of care to which all women and newborns should have access, and which improves outcomes. There is certainly evidence that continuity of care - increasingly a focus of maternity care policy - contributes to improving

outcomes. Dr. Joan Combelick of Yale University's School of Nursing presented the evidence for integrating midwifery care into a Maternal and Newborn Care Framework in a presentation to the RKE on Midwifery and Maternal Health. Joan Combelick PhD, MPH, CNM, FACNM is an assistant professor at Yale School of Nursing and Operations Research Analyst at the Veterans Health Administration where she leads the maternal outcomes review. Her work has focused on various care models including integration of the midwifery model of care and practices that promote and protect undisturbed childbirth. Her research has also focused on improving maternity and reproductive health care for high-risk individuals, particularly those who experience psychological trauma or those whose care is suboptimal due to mental health conditions.



**More Milk Sooner with Naida Hawkins**

The reason most women stop breastfeeding is that they fear they do not have enough milk. More Milk Sooner is a volunteer program that targets this fear by supercharging mothers' milk supply through prenatal and early postnatal hand expression, an approach that has helped many families start and continue breastfeeding. Naida Hawkins is a Registered Nurse, IBCLC, and founder of "More Milk Sooner" in Saskatchewan. The program provides education about prenatal hand expression and breast stimulation in the first hour after birth as the foundation of robust milk supply. Ms. Hawkins has taken this message across Canada and internationally, recently sharing it with Doctors without Borders who serve families in crisis around the world. Ms. Hawkins shared this program with members of the RKE on Midwifery and Maternal Health.



### **Women's Health Advocacy and the Women's Health Coalition**

The RKEs on Midwifery and Maternal Health and on Gender, Sexuality, and Health hosted a discussion about women's health advocacy and the work of the Women's Health Coalition (WHC) with WHC Founder and President, Carmen Wyton. The WHC is committed to advancing a movement to speak openly, learn, and engage, to address barriers, gaps, and biases in menstrual, reproductive and sexual health. It envisions every woman being supported through all the ages and stages of their unique health experience and values choice, equity, and credibility. Its mandate is to be guided by patient experiences, informed by healthcare professional expertise, and enabled by partnerships, to advance evidence-informed recommendations to decision makers in government and health systems.

### **The Progress of Midwifery in Newfoundland and Labrador**

THE RKE on Midwifery and Maternal Health met with leaders of various organizations to review recent changes at the Association for Midwifery NL and at the College, the Innu Midwifery program, and progress with rolling out midwifery services across the province.



### **Canada's National Oral Health Research Strategy**

This presentation to the RKE on Oral Health explored Canada's National Oral Health Research Strategy, focusing on its purpose, development, and impact on public health. The Exchange discussed the guiding principles and strategic priorities that shape the strategy, as well as the key initiatives aimed at addressing access to care, oral health disparities, and the integration of oral health into broader healthcare systems. Additionally, the presentation outlined the timelines for success and examine steps for moving the strategy forward. The session concluded with insights into how policymakers, researchers, and healthcare professionals can contribute to the continued evolution and implementation of these strategies. Abdulrahman Ghoneim, a registered dental hygienist and dental public health specialist, is an assistant professor at Dalhousie University's School of Dental Hygiene. With over eight years of research experience, his work focuses on access to care, health economics, and professional issues in dentistry and dental hygiene. His master's thesis examined how competition influences dentists' clinical decision-making in Ontario. His PhD research involves a costing analysis and economic evaluations of a comprehensive dental care program for individuals facing financial barriers.



### **Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD): Updates, Evidence, Legislation**

Members of the RKE on Palliative and End-of-Life Care participated in this province's event, which was part of a national information session on Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD). MAiD is governed by federal law and operationalized in this province by Newfoundland and Labrador Health Services. This event provided an opportunity to learn more about MAiD legislation, implemented in 2016 and modified in 2021. Panelists were: Aaron McKim, MD, Medical Director, MAiD NL Health Services (NLHS) Eastern Zones; Kathy Cahill, RN, MAiD Coordinator & Palliative Care Navigator for NLHS Eastern Zones; Kimberly Pottle, BN RN, MAiD Coordinator & Palliative Care Navigator for NLHS Eastern Zones; Mari Lynne Sinnott, MD CCFP, Primary Care Physician in St. John'. The discussion was moderated by the convener of the RKE on Palliative and End-of-Life Care, Dr. Susan MacDonald. This event was co-supported by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and a research team at the University of British Columbia.

## Other Public Engagement Activities and Partnerships

The Centre's Director and Staff continued this year to engage with local, provincial and national partners in a variety of ways.



### **Aging Research Centre - Newfoundland & Labrador (ARC-NL)**

The Centre's Director, Dr. Rick Audas, serves on the Core Leadership Team of ARC-NL - a provincial research centre devoted to studies on aging. ARC-NL was established in 2018 by a working group of NLCAHR's Research and Knowledge Exchange on Aging. NLCAHR also provides ARC-NL with ongoing administrative support. Today, with funding from Memorial University and the province's Department of Seniors, ARC-NL is situated at Grenfell Campus with its satellite office at NLCAHR. This research centre fosters collaboration between the Grenfell and St. John's campuses to create a provincial network of researchers studying late life issues, prioritizing knowledge mobilization, and promoting engagement with older adults. NLCAHR staff helped support ARC-NL this year in several ways: Rochelle Baker, Manager, Communication, Partnerships and Research Exchange Groups, helped to promote and communicate ARC-NL activities, to broker opportunities for research and collaboration, and connected ARC-NL with members of the RKE on Aging. Tyrone White, Manager Finance, Administration and IT, provided administrative and communications support, website management, and administered the ARC-NL Awards Program.



### **NL SUPPORT Public Patient Advisory Council**

Sarah Mackey, CHRSP Research Officer and Patient Engagement Coordinator participated and presented again this year at meetings of the NL SUPPORT Public Patient Advisory Council to talk about patient engagement and the CHRSP approach to research, collaborating with the team at NL-SUPPORT.



### **The Phoenix Garden at Her Majesty's Penitentiary**

Rochelle Baker continued her work supporting the Phoenix Garden Program which provides arts-based education and supports for incarcerated individuals at Her Majesty's Penitentiary in St. John's- the brainchild of a group from the RKE on Horticultural Therapy. She served on a committee that included mental health professionals and educators to develop a new user-friendly and accessible information resource to support people on entry into provincial corrections facilities.



### **The Building Healthy Communities Collaborative (BHCC)**

The BHCC was co-chaired by Pablo Navarro, Senior CHRSP Research Officer, and includes representatives from the provincial government, the health system, and Memorial University, as well as planners and community representatives. The BHCC received funding from the Department of Health and Community Services to develop an online platform that will support communities in creating and maintaining healthy built environments at the local level.

### **Newfoundland and Labrador Provincial Harm Reduction Committee**

Pablo Navarro serves on the Provincial Harm Reduction Committee, a group whose purpose is to oversee the province's Take Home Naloxone Program, work with the AIDS Committee of Newfoundland and Labrador's Safe Works Access Program, and to inform and advocate for on-going harm reduction approaches in Newfoundland and Labrador.



### Learning Health and Social System Committee: NL SUPPORT/Quality of Care NL



Sarah Mackey, CHRSP Patient Engagement Coordinator, serves on the NL SUPPORT/Quality of Care NL Learning Health and Social System Committee. The NL SUPPORT/Quality of Care NL governance structure reflects the Canadian Institute of Health Research's Strategy for Patient-Oriented Research defined core

components for SUPPORT Units; Data Platforms and Services, Learning Health System, Capacity Development, and Patient Engagement. Within the NL SUPPORT Unit, a committee has been set up to lead each of the core component areas. These Core Component Committees meet at least quarterly and are responsible for determining the direction and focus of work in each area, managing day-to-day operations, taking remedial actions where necessary and providing updates to the Executive Committee. The Learning Health and Social System Committee is responsible for developing and delivering annual priorities to encourage and support the emergence of learning health and social systems (LHSS) in the province.



### Partnering with Transition House Association of Newfoundland and Labrador (THANL)

NLCAHR continued its partnership this year with the Transition House Association of Newfoundland and Labrador (THANL) and is working with this community organization on research to support new data frameworks of violence against women (VAW) shelters in

the province, including examining the practices for data collection, analysis, and use. Pablo Navarro, Senior Research Officer at NLCAHR has been working with Dan Meades, Provincial Coordinator of THANL to coordinate this project, which now involves two MPH graduates, Amanda Michael and Taylor Anthony.

### Faculty of Medicine Strategic Planning: Wellness and Wellbeing Committee

Pablo Navarro served as a staff representative on the Faculty of Medicine's Wellness and Wellbeing Committee which aims to build awareness about activities and strategies that will support the wellness and wellbeing of faculty, staff, and learners within the Faculty of Medicine.



### The National Collaborating Centre for Environmental Health: Healthy Built Environment Forum Champions

The National Collaborating Centre for Environmental Health developed an online discussion forum to enhance networking and to foster linkages among Healthy Built Environment (HBE) practitioners,

policymakers, and researchers. Research evidence has established HBE as a critical influence on human physical, mental and social health. As a result, public health agencies and educational institutions across Canada have incorporated HBE into their mandates and curricula as part of their efforts to improve population health outcomes. Pablo Navarro was invited to participate and is one of two members from Newfoundland and Labrador to serve on this forum.



### CASCADES Summer Institute on Climate Change and Health

The Summer Institute on Sustainable Health Systems was created provide health services and policy trainees with the opportunity to increase awareness of sustainable health systems and current

action in Canada. The Centre's Director, Dr. Rick Audas, together with Pablo Navarro, Senior CHRSP Research Officer, continued this year to develop plans for the annual CASCADES Summer Institute on Climate Change and Health at Memorial University. CASCADES is led by the University of Toronto Centre for Sustainable

Health Systems, in partnership with the Healthy Populations Institute at Dalhousie University, the Planetary Healthcare Lab at the University of British Columbia, and the Canadian Coalition for Green Health Care to support Canada's healthcare community to transition towards an environmentally sustainable (net zero carbon emission) and resilient health system. Memorial University is one of eleven hubs across Canada bringing together graduate students, medical students, practitioners, and experts to examine the challenges posed by climate change and to think about ways the health system can change to reduce its environmental impact.



#### **Statistics Canada Research Data Centre, Memorial University**

Dr. Rick Audas is the Academic Director of the Statistics Canada Research Data Centre, Memorial University. The Research Data Centre houses a wide variety of Statistics Canada data sets, which can be made available to researchers, free of charge, with approved projects and is part of the Canadian Research Data Centres Network (CRDCN)

#### **Master's of Applied Health Services Research (MAHSR) Program**

Dr. Rick Audas is the Memorial University Academic Lead for the Master's of Applied Health Services Research (MAHSR) program. This degree is jointly offered by University of New Brunswick, University of Prince Edward Island, Saint Mary's University and Memorial University.

#### **Undergraduate Medical Curriculum at Memorial University**

The Centre's Director is the Undergraduate Curriculum Liaison in the undergraduate medical program for The Division of Community Health and Humanities and a member of the management team of Phase 3 of the undergraduate medical program.

Canada's Drug Agency  
L'Agence des médicaments du Canada

#### **Canada's Drug Agency**

The Centre continues its productive partnership with the former CADTH/ CDA team at the local level, through consultation with the provincial liaison officer, and nationally, through participation in annual conferences.



#### **Strategy for Patient-Oriented Research (SPOR) Evidence**

**Alliance NLCAHR**, as an organization that produces evidence syntheses for its health system partners, is a member of the SPOR Evidence Alliance, a partnership between researchers, patients, healthcare providers,

policymakers, and other decision makers who are committed to building a Canadian health system that is increasingly informed and improved using best available evidence and innovations uncovered by the health research community. The Alliance is jointly funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and 41 public agencies and organizations across Canada to create a collaborative research environment that is centred on patients and health system decision-makers as part of the Strategy for Patient-Oriented Research initiative.

## Brokering and Facilitating Connections

In addition to the engagement conducted through NLCAHR's core programs: CHRSP and the Research and Knowledge Exchanges, the staff at the Centre work every day in a brokering role— assisting university, healthcare system, and community partners in important ways by facilitating connections and sharing information. The following is a brief overview of these activities.

### Community Programs:

- promoting events and organizations
- community knowledge mobilization
- participating as volunteers
- connecting community agencies
- supporting program evaluations for our community partners

### Research Studies:

- helping researchers find partners/ funding
- helping recruit study participants
- research knowledge mobilization
- disseminating research findings
- connecting new/visiting faculty with research and community partners
- hosting focus groups for researchers

### New Project Start-ups:

- supporting proposals for new research projects
- supporting the development of new community programs and projects
- brokering partnerships to establish new projects
- providing resources and knowledge mobilization
- recruiting community volunteers

### Presentations:

- to university classes/ learner groups
- at community and health system events
- at university symposia

### Student Projects:

- connecting students with supervisors and mentors
- helping students access research resources
- helping students find community partners

- connecting students with fellowship opportunities
- helping students recruit research study participants
- providing connections for students to discuss their research with faculty and healthcare system advisers

### Requests from other Universities:

- connecting academics from outside NL with research/ community partners in NL

### Referrals to Health/ Community Support:

- individuals seeking support for their families, referrals, or information about health or community programs or services

### National Programs:

- Support for national programs seeking connections in NL





# Finances





## Operating Budget and Expenditures

### Fiscal Year April 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025

CATEGORY	BUDGET	SPENT	REMAINING
Salaries	\$407,563	\$418,448	\$10,885
Operating Expenditures	\$1,450	\$5,417	\$3,967
Travel/Events	\$0	\$0	\$0
External Consultants	\$3,000	\$0	\$3,000
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$412,013</b>	<b>\$423,865</b>	<b>\$11,582</b>

#### Funding Sources:

Operating Budget from the Department of Health & Community Services: \$378,500

Compensation for Administrative Support for Aging Research Centre NL: \$10,000

Funding from Memorial University's Faculty of Medicine: \$35,365