



FINAL REPORT

http://www.nlcahr.mun.ca/research/Conference_Report.pdf

AGING RESEARCH IN NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR: ACHIEVEMENTS AND PROSPECTS

<http://www.nlcahr.mun.ca/research/ResearchonAgingConference2012.php>

Research Conference & Symposium on a Provincial Centre on Aging

September 24-25, 2012
The Pepsi Centre, Corner Brook, NL

Featuring Keynote Speakers:

Dr. Howard Bergman

Dr. Neena Chappell

Dr. Janice Keefe

Dr. Anne Martin-Matthews

Supported by:

*Grenfell & St. John's Campuses, Memorial University of Newfoundland
Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Applied Health Research (NLCAHR)*

Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

Western Regional School of Nursing

Western Health

City of Corner Brook

Brooke's Bridal

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Summary

The conference and symposium were very successful, bringing together 85 university faculty and graduate students from both Grenfell and St. John's campuses of Memorial University of Newfoundland, clinicians and staff from the Eastern and Western Regional Health Authorities and representatives from seniors' community groups in St. John's and Corner Brook. Approximately 40 potential or actual registrants were unable to attend from government and health authorities because of recently imposed travel restrictions.

Sessions were held in the Pepsi Centre in Corner Brook with an evening dinner and keynote presentation at the Royal Canadian Legion. The conference planning committee included university, government, health authority and community members.

Ten graduate students were provided with financial support from NLCAHR and Graduate Studies, Memorial University.

Funding and in-kind support were provided by the Grenfell and St. John's campuses of Memorial University of Newfoundland, the NL Centre for Applied Health Research, Western Regional School of Nursing, Western Health as well as the City of Corner Brook and Brooke's Bridal.

Overview of the Program

September 24 Research Conference

Four prominent Canadian researchers in aging delivered keynote addresses (which can be viewed using the hyperlinks below):

Keynote Address: Aging Research in Atlantic Canada

Dr. Janice Keefe, Canada Research Chair on Aging and Caregiving, Professor of Family Studies and Gerontology, Director of NS Centre on Aging, Jodrey Chair in Gerontology, Mount Saint Vincent University

http://www.nlcahr.mun.ca/research/Janice_Keefe.pdf

Keynote Address: The Quebec Alzheimer Plan: the Never-Ending Cycle from Practice to Policy to Research and Back

Dr. Howard Bergman, Chair of Family Medicine and Kaufman Professor of Geriatric Medicine, McGill University

http://www.nlcahr.mun.ca/research/Howard_Bergman.pdf

Keynote Address: Community Engagement in Aging Research

Dr. Anne Martin-Matthews, Scientific Director of the Institute of Aging, CIHR (2004-2011), Director of Gerontology Research Centre, University of Guelph (1983-1996), Professor of Sociology, UBC.

http://www.nlcahr.mun.ca/research/Anne_Martin_Matthews.pdf

Keynote Address: An Appropriate and Cost-Effective Health Care System for an Aging Society.

Dr. Neena Chappell, Canada Research Chair in Social Gerontology, Professor in Centre on Aging (Director, 1992-2002) and Sociology, President of Canadian Association of Gerontology

http://www.nlcahr.mun.ca/research/Anne_Martin_Matthews.pdf

Interspersed among these keynote presentations were 22 oral concurrent sessions and 9 poster presentations and an interactive strategic planning session based on a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) on the initiative to create a centre on aging in this province. Research presentations ranged from the impact of hearing impairment on memory and compliance with medical instructions, cognitive rehabilitation through art, a nurse based program of eldercare, elder abuse, spousal caregiving following institutionalization, support for stroke survivors in rural NL, and a synthesis of evidence on age-friendly acute care.

The full program of oral and poster presentations can be found at

http://www.nlcahr.mun.ca/research/Conference_Program.pdf

September 25 Planning Symposium for a Provincial Centre on Aging

Five panels were the focus for discussion of the establishment of a provincial research centre on aging. The first panel presented the results of a HARP (Healthy Aging Research Program) funded study that visited 10 centres on aging across Canada and interviewed 38 key personnel at these centres. This project was guided by a research team of university, health authority, and community representatives headed by Dr. Les Cake, Honorary Research Professor, Grenfell Campus, Memorial University. The program for Day 2, including the names of the panelists, can be found at http://www.nlcahr.mun.ca/research/Conference_Program.pdf

In the second panel session, our four visiting keynote speakers provided advice from their wide experience with establishing and directing Canadian research centres on aging.

In the third panel, to stimulate discussion on what a provincial centre on aging should do, representatives from a health authority, the community and the university presented their views and engaged the attendees in further discussion.

Panel four discussed how to build partnerships and how to engage the community in a provincial centre on aging.

Panel five discussed how a provincial centre might be structured and administered.

The final panel looked at next steps and Dr. Mary Bluehardt, Vice-President of Grenfell Campus stated that Grenfell was in support of the establishment of a provincial centre or institute on aging. Dr. Bluehardt has undertaken to work with the Pepsi Centre Board to identify an appropriate space in that facility, and has

allocated funds to assist in partial support of operations in the amount of \$75,000 each year for two years.

The symposium's speakers and attendees provided strong encouragement for this initiative to provide a research centre on aging for NL, the second-oldest and fastest aging province in Canada and the only province that does not have such a centre. A distillation of the advice from the visiting speakers and from the two days of discussion yields the following useful suggestions and admonitions:

- Investigate a governance model for the proposed centre.
- Explore the option for a Director – a researcher who can publicize and champion the NL Centre, recruit and engage research affiliates, and has a track record to secure tri-council funding.
- Explore the need for administrative support to assist the Director, help with grant applications, maintain account records, schedule meetings, and handle distribution of information.
- Identify a research niche built on the research strengths of the Director and research affiliates.
- Negotiate teaching releases to facilitate director/champion tasks.
- Begin communications with the media and constituencies early and expand through all venues to all communities.
- Convene the clinicians, managers, researchers, community as soon as possible to build trust within the network and identify what the centre needs and can live without, and identify what in-kind and financial support are required.
- Engage the community from the beginning to clarify the roles and expectations of the community and of the researchers.
- Start low and go slow; build collaboratively and not competitively.
- Focus on research, knowledge exchange and education; don't provide services – promote them.

Financial Report

The conference was conducted with a cost recovery budget of \$22,000.00. This was made possible through financial and in-kind support from the Grenfell and St. John's campuses of Memorial University of Newfoundland, the NL Centre for Applied Health Research, Western Regional School of Nursing, Western Health as well as the City of Corner Brook and Brooke's Bridal.

Respectfully submitted,

Carla Wells, RN, PhD, Conference Planning Committee Chair
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Nov. 8, 2012