

News

Newsletter Issue #10 – October 2025



Veteran and Perley Health resident Gail Fugere, right, and Shreya Patel, Registered Practical Nurse, share connections and a smile. New research from the Perley Health Centre of Excellence in Frailty-Informed Care™ is studying the benefits of these intergenerational bonds. Find out more inside!

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Perley
Health

Centre of Excellence
in Frailty-Informed Care™

A Community of Care



Danielle Sinden
Director,
Centre of Excellence

I'm pleased to share the latest issue of the Centre of Excellence newsletter. The initiatives described in this issue reflect the Centre of Excellence's unique relationship with Perley Health. The Centre of Excellence exists in part to support and elevate the great work that is already being done at Perley, so that more people can benefit from this remarkable community of care.

In many cases, a Perley Health innovation presents the Centre of Excellence with an opportunity to conduct and disseminate research so that other long-term care homes can also benefit. Perley Health Intergenerational Child Care, a program of Andrew Fleck Children's Services, currently under construction, is a prime example. The Centre began as a pilot project made possible by a partnership between the Perley Health and Andrew Fleck Children's Services. The Centre of Excellence evaluated the pilot project and will continue to study key aspects of the new project, such as impacts on health and well-being. This research will help inform the decisions of other homes about implementing similar programs.

On other initiatives described in this newsletter, such as Skills Days, the e-module and care pathways, the Centre of Excellence aims to share Perley's point-of-care expertise with the staff of

other homes. The Centre of Excellence also leads its own initiatives and often collaborates with other organizations, such as the Bruyère Health Research Institute and the STEP initiative.

This fall, members of the Centre of Excellence team will present at several conferences and events hosted by key partners, including The Canadian Institute for Military and Veteran Health Research, The Ontario Long-Term Care Association, AGE-WELL and the Canadian Association on Gerontology. These presentations not only help disseminate best practices, but also nurture the partnerships needed to further improve care. Another partnership promises to develop future researchers: the Centre of Excellence is again mentoring two research trainees thanks to Fellowships through EPIC-AT, a training platform funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research in partnership with AGE-WELL and the University of Toronto.

For the latest list of research projects, presentations and webinars, please visit our website. As always, I encourage you to contact me directly with your comments and ideas for future editions.

Danielle Sinden,
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Who we are.

Established in 2019, Perley Health Centre of Excellence in Frailty-Informed Care™ aims to set a new benchmark in seniors' care, facilitating applied research that fuels innovation in education, best practices, and knowledge translation. Our goal is to ensure Seniors and Veterans living with frailty receive the highest level of care both within our walls and beyond. The Centre of Excellence is part of Perley Health, a unique and innovative community of care located on a 25-acre campus near The Ottawa Hospital. Perley Health is home to approximately 450 residents (many of them Veterans) in long-term care, along with approximately 200 seniors in 139 independent-living apartments. Funded by donations to the Perley Health Foundation, the Centre of Excellence supports Perley Health's mission of excellence in the health, safety and well-being of Seniors and Veterans.



Exceptional care, research, education and innovations at Perley Health are supported in part by the generosity of our community. To donate to the Centre of Excellence in Frailty-Informed Care™, please visit: www.PerleyHealthFoundation.ca





Perley Health's unique position as a long-term care facility, enriched with an established history of serving Veterans, highlights an ongoing dedication to providing specialized care to Veterans.

New Research on Veterans and Long-Term Care

A new study co-authored by Annie Robitaille, PhD, and Commissionaires Ottawa Research Chair at the Centre of Excellence in Frailty-Informed Care, sheds light on the unique experiences and needs of older Veterans and their family care partners during transitions to long-term care (LTC). Understanding the transition to long-term care: Perceptions of family care partners of older adult Veterans is published in the Journal of Military, Veteran and Family Health. The Journal is published by the Canadian Institute for Military and Veteran Health Research (CIMVHR), a key Centre of Excellence partner.

"Moving into LTC can profoundly affect older Veterans and their care partners, yet little research has been done on this topic," says Robitaille. "Our new study helps fill this gap and identify how to better support Veterans and their families."

The other co-authors are Georgia Stewart, who completed a master's degree in interdisciplinary health sciences at the University of Ottawa (under the supervision of Annie Robitaille), and Kelly A. Pilato, PhD,

an Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Health Sciences at Brock University. The study involved a series of semi-structured interviews with the family care partners of nine older adult Veterans living in LTC homes across Canada. The interviews identified three common themes before, during and after transitions to LTC:

- 1) Gaps in information and how to acquire and use relevant knowledge;
- 2) The importance of feeling valued, recognized, and supported;
- 3) The health and well-being of both Veterans and their care partners.

The study aims to increase awareness of relevant issues and to inform recommendations about how best to support Veterans during this major life change.

Read the study:
[utppublishing.com/doi/
full/10.3138/jmvfh-2024-0060](https://utppublishing.com/doi/full/10.3138/jmvfh-2024-0060)





Sue Davies, an educator, advocate and former nurse, participates in a round table discussion at the Partnering for Progress event.

Partnering for Progress: Guidelines for Effective Consultation

A recent Centre of Excellence publication promised to improve the relevance and value of long-term care (LTC) research. *Partnering for Progress: A Guide for Meaningful Engagement of Residents and Caregivers in Long-Term Care Research* provides a structured framework for the meaningful engagement of LTC residents and their caregivers.

Researchers in all fields increasingly recognize the importance of directly engaging and involving the people most likely to be impacted by their work, particularly during the design of studies. While the concept has various names, including community engagement and public participation, its advantages are clear: the focus of research tends to be more relevant, for instance, and the findings more useful. Despite these potential advantages, however, LTC residents and caregivers rarely play a meaningful role in the design of studies likely to directly impact them. The Guide provides researchers and LTC leaders with the practical strategies, guiding principles and concrete tools they need.

The Guide is the product of a multi-phase Centre of Excellence project that began in 2023. The centrepiece of the project was *Partnering for Progress*, a structured

consultation session held at Perley Health in 2024 and attended by more than 30 residents, caregivers, researchers and LTC workers. The project also included a review of relevant literature, a small survey of LTC residents, and participation in a series of resident-council meetings.

“We’re doing this not only for today’s residents but also for future residents,” says Devora Greenspon, who participated in the *Partnering for Progress* event. A tireless advocate for residents, Ms. Greenspon lives at Hillel Lodge, an Ottawa LTC home, where she serves on the Resident’s Committee. She is also a longstanding member of the Ontario Association of Residents Council.

“I think it’s important for the residents to tell these young people how we want to be treated and how we want to live our lives.”

A pdf version of the Guide is posted to the Centre of Excellence website. Staff will distribute printed copies at select conferences and events.

Scan QR code to view online.





Patrick Tan, Esprit-ai CEO, demonstrates their technology that combines motion sensors, transmitters and software. This technology aims to safeguard residents who often get up in the middle of the night.

Adopting New Technologies in Long-Term Care

A current Centre of Excellence study helps meet growing demand among long-term care (LTC) managers and operators for effective guidance on the adoption of new technologies. Factors Affecting Managers' Technology Adoption Decisions in Long-Term Care Homes: A Canadian Exploratory Study Post-COVID-19 Pandemic appears in the online version of *The Journal of Aging & Social Policy*, a peer-reviewed publication.

Many technologies have the potential to improve both quality of care and operational efficiency in LTC homes. When it comes to the adoption of new technologies, however, the LTC sector lags significantly behind other sectors, such as acute care. With technology companies increasingly marketing to the LTC sector, managers and operators of LTC homes have expressed a need for effective decision-making tools. The Centre of Excellence study helps meet this need.

"Part of what makes this study both unique and valuable is that it focuses on managers and directors," says Danielle Cruise, lead author of the study and currently a PhD candidate at the University of Ottawa's Telfer School of Management. "Many studies evaluate individual technologies used in long-term care homes, but this is the first to focus on how homes decide whether to adopt particular technologies."

The study identifies the top five decision-making factors as: availability of funding; impact on workload and efficiency; value proposition (i.e. what problem does the technology propose to address?); ease of use; and impact on resident outcomes.

To complete the study, Ms. Cruise and her team (Mirou Jaana, Professor, Telfer School of Management; Danielle Sinden, Director Centre of Excellence; and Linda Garcia, Professor Emerita, University of Ottawa) recruited a panel of 19 managers of LTC homes in Ontario. All had previously been approached by vendors seeking to interest them in one or more technologies. Panelists completed a series of questionnaires to identify and rank decision-making factors. After initially identifying a total of 102 factors, the panelists reduced the list down to the 27 most common factors, then ranked them in order of importance.

"The number and variety of technologies on the market that promise to improve long-term care will only continue to grow," says Danielle Cruise. "This study provides managers and directors with some of the support they need as they consider which ones are right for their home."

Supporting Residents' Decisions Regarding Transfers to Hospital

The Centre of Excellence is partnering in a project to support long-term care (LTC) residents in making informed decisions about whether to transfer to hospital after an acute health event, such as a fall. STEP (Supporting Transitions and Empowering Preferences Training) is a multi-phase project led by Bruyère Health Research Institute with a grant from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. According to Dr. Dan Kowbeka, an investigator at Bruyère and internal medicine physician at The Ottawa Hospital, the project addresses a common challenge for residents, clinicians and families.

“Many people living with frailty face difficult decisions about hospital transfer after a sudden decline in their health,” Kowbeka says. “Often, the challenge lies in weighing longevity against comfort—living as long as possible versus prioritizing quality of life. This project helps residents make these decisions based on their own values.”

STEP is developing the tools and training needed to ensure that hospital-transfer decisions are resident-centred—based on the resident’s values, goals and preferences. The project is informed by close consultations with residents, care partners, and staff at three LTC homes.

“During the first phase of the project, I conducted interviews and focus groups with residents, staff and care partners at Perley Health,” says Michaela Adams, Centre of Excellence Research Associate and site-lead

at Perley Health. “This work, along with similar work done by researchers at two other homes, helped both to define the challenges involved and to identify the best tools to address them.”

The tools include a decision-aid booklet designed for residents and their care partners explaining three scenarios that often lead to hospital transfers—shortness of breath, falls and general weakness—along with what commonly occurs in each case following a transfer to hospital. Other tools include training for LTC nurses on how to support resident decision-making and a brochure.

For Perley Health, the project essentially adds to an established process of developing and updating care plans. For several years, the Perley has implemented SeeMe®: Understanding *frailty* together, a comprehensive method of developing, implementing and updating goals of care in collaboration with residents, family members and LTC staff.

“For a complex project like STEP, the Perley is an ideal partner,” says Dan Kowbeka. “With 450 LTC residents, a culture of continuous improvement and an on-site research centre, the Perley has all the elements needed to drive innovation in resident-centred care.”

During the next phase of STEP—expected to begin in a few months—Perley Health will pilot-test the tools and training and monitor the results closely.

About SeeMe®

Developed by Perley Health, SeeMe® is a comprehensive communications and decision-making framework backed by research and evaluation at Perley Health, one of Ontario’s largest long-term care communities.

SeeMe® is all about enhancing quality of life through each person’s journey. Instead of a one-size-fits-all approach, SeeMe® prompts essential questions:

- What are the individual’s quality-of-life goals?
- How can we honour individual wishes if there is a health change?
- Which medical intervention is best aligned with the individual’s goals of care?

To learn more, contact us at centreofexcellence@perleyhealth.ca

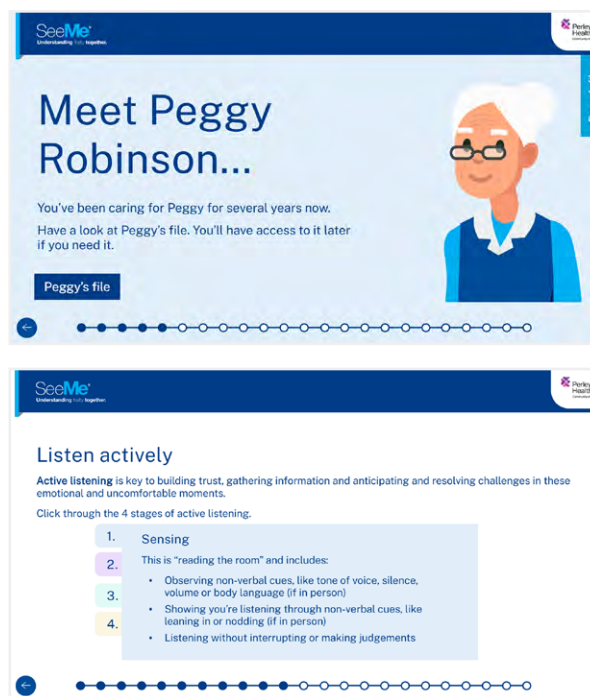
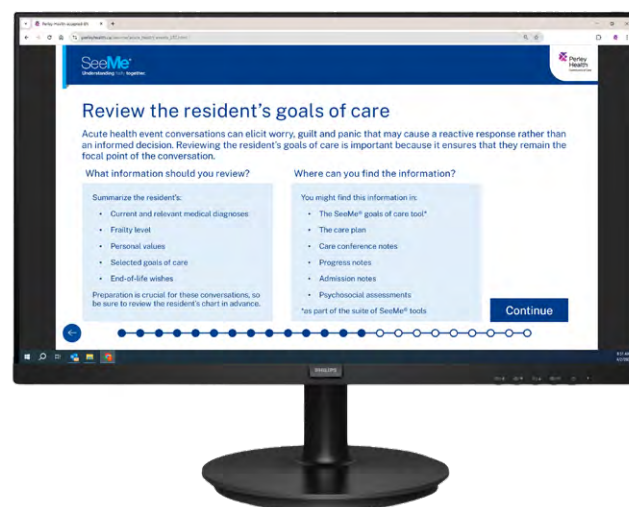
SeeMe®
Understanding frailty together.

Respecting Residents Goals of Care

The Centre of Excellence recently published a series of evidence-informed materials designed to improve the ability of long-term care staff to respect residents' goals of care. The materials provide valuable guidance on how to manage an acute health event while honouring the resident's wishes regarding care interventions and quality of life. The materials include Discuss Goals of Care During Acute Health Events, an e-training module for nurses, along with separate guides—known as care pathways—for nurses and personal support workers (PSWs) who care for residents with hip fractures.

The care pathways address everything from symptom management and diagnostic considerations to care planning, and prioritize interprofessional collaboration, along with open, clear communication among caregivers, residents and families.

This approach aims to build trust and respect, and to support person-centred care. The materials build on the success of SeeMe®: Understanding frailty together, a comprehensive method of developing, implementing and updating goals of care in collaboration with residents, family members and LTC staff. A peer-reviewed study, conducted by the Centre of Excellence and published in the Canadian Geriatrics Journal, documents the benefits of SeeMe®, as well as the impacts of its associated training programs. These benefits include high levels of satisfaction among families and staff, and a shift toward less-invasive intervention as residents and families opt for care that prioritizes quality of life.



This 15-minute interactive e-module focuses on facilitating goals of care conversations during an acute health event. Tailored to long-term care and ready to integrate into other organizations own Learning Management Systems.

More evidenced-informed resources and tools available at
PerleyHealth.ca/knowledge-translation

Putting Theory into Practice

The team of experts from Perley Health, including The Centre of Excellence, shared a series of evidence-based best practices with nurses from across Eastern Ontario during the second edition of Skills Days. The event, held at Perley Health in May 2025, enabled participants to enhance their knowledge and abilities in palliative and end-of-life care. As with the inaugural edition of Skills Days, held in October 2024, the focus was on supporting a meaningful death in long-term care (LTC). The May event attracted 76 LTC nurses, including four from Maxville Manor, home to 122 residents in Maxville, Ontario.

"It's really important to equip caregivers with the skills needed to discuss care plans for residents at the final stages of their lives," says Kayleigh Martin, Maxville Manor's Assistant Director of Care. "I found the skills stations and role-playing exercises particularly beneficial."

A key sponsor of the second edition of Skills Days was the Champlain Hospice Palliative Care Program (CHPCP). Funded by the Province of Ontario, CHPCP educates professional and non-professional caregivers about a range of topics related to end-of-life care, including advance care-planning, grief and self-care. CHPCP offered to pay the Skills Days registration fees of nurses from the Champlain Region who work in LTC.

"The focus on active, practical learning makes Skills Days extremely valuable," says Val Fiset, Director, Champlain Hospice Palliative Care Program (CHPCP). "It's among the most effective ways to inspire practice change."

"Part of what makes Skills Days special is that it's designed and delivered by long-term care for long-term care," says CHPCP Program Manager Tara Cohen, who attended the inaugural edition. "Culture shifts don't happen in one day, of course. But as more and more people improve their skills and knowledge, in a few years we're going to look back and see how much change there's been, and how much better the care is that we can provide to people living and dying with illnesses."

For the Centre of Excellence, Skills Days furthers two key priorities: increasing the knowledge of caregivers and expanding the network of organizations dedicated to improving the care of people living with frailty.

"Education is central to both our mission and vision," says Danielle Sinden, Director, Centre of Excellence. "We're both proud and pleased to see that our first two Skills Days events have been impactful and well-received."

Feature Videos

Perley Health's community of care uses training, innovations, and communications to uphold our commitment to person-centred care, supporting every resident to live a meaningful life.



Improving End of Life Care



Living and Dying in Long-Term Care

Watch these videos on our website: PerleyHealth.ca/centreofexcellence



Perley Health connects generations through innovative programs like child care, playgroups, and music, enriching lives and fostering mutual understanding.

Documenting the Benefits of Intergenerational Companionship

A soon-to-be published Centre of Excellence research paper further documents the benefits of intergenerational companionship. The paper is the latest in a series focused on EntourAGE (REVIVRE in French), a program that has older adults, including those living with dementia, regularly interact one-on-one with high school, college and university student volunteers. Annie Robitaille, PhD, and Commissionaires Ottawa Research Chair Research Chair at the Centre of Excellence in Frailty-Informed Care™, launched EntourAGE 10 years ago.

“The program pairs student volunteers with older adults, and they visit twice a week for at least two hours,” says Robitaille. “Our research is ongoing and focuses on various aspects.”

EntourAGE continues to grow. Today, the program operates in seven long-term care (LTC) homes (including Perley Health), three retirement residences and one adult day program. Partners include The Dementia Society, The Champlain Dementia Network, Brock University and two school boards, and the program has received grants from Health Canada, The Alzheimer’s Society of Canada and The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council.

University of Ottawa student Shalini Gangapersad has participated in EntourAGE at Perley Health for more than two months.

“I enjoy it very much,” says Gangapersad. “It’s been nice

getting to know the resident I’ve been matched with and to spend time with her. Part of my studies include neuroscience and this program helps me to learn more about the practical realities of dementia.”

Former Perley Health resident Christine (Chris) O’Brien, who passed away last year at age 91, participated in the program for the last two years of her life.

“My mom lived with dementia and loved the visits,” says daughter Anne-Marie O’Brien. “She always wanted to be around people but was reluctant to participate in group activities. The regular one-on-one visits were perfect for her. They also benefitted me, because I felt less pressure to visit her on the days that a student visited.”

The demand for programs such as EntourAGE is expected to grow significantly due to several factors. The number of older adults living with dementia continues to rise, for instance, and many do not have family members who live nearby.

To participate, student volunteers must first complete training developed by Champlain Dementia Network. The program’s website, EntourageCanada.ca, features a wealth of resources, including a toolkit and manual.

“Little research exists about the impacts of intergenerational programs such as this one,” says Annie Robitaille. “Our next paper documents impacts on health and well-being benefits for participants of all ages.”

Get to Know Our Co

Perley Health is a unique and innovative community of care that empowers Seniors and Veterans to live life to the fullest. Home to more than 600 Seniors and Veterans living in long-term care and in independent apartments, Perley Health provides some short-stay programs along with a number of clinical, therapeutic and recreational services to residents, tenants and community members.

 **600**

individuals including more than **150+ Veterans** call Perley Health home.

Research at Perley Health

At Perley Health, we leverage our unique environment to lead and facilitate applied research aimed at driving positive outcomes for residents, tenants and clients not just within our walls but for Seniors and Veterans everywhere.

Specialized Care

- Home to the Rideau Veterans Residence, dedicated to the unique care and social needs of Veterans.
- Host to a Specialized Behavioural Support Unit, a 20-bed unit in the Gatineau Residence.
- Secure Units to care for Seniors and Veterans living with dementia.
- Home to a Convalescent Care unit in the Ottawa Residence.
- Onsite, Care Clinic at Perley Health provides audiology, physiotherapy, stuttering/cluttering therapy and massage therapy to the wider community.

- **View the Perley Health ecosystem:**
PerleyHealth.ca/about



A Life Together

Bob and Gail Christy have been married for more than 50 years. Watch their love story and find out how they stay connected living in the Perley Health community of care.

- **View Video:** Vimeo.com/1089328916



Top Choice

Perley Health is the top selection for long-term care in the Champlain region.

Affiliations



Community of Care



20 residents in the
2025 Century Club!

Home to Centenarians

On June 4th, Perley Health hosted the 8th annual Century Club celebration, a birthday party honouring 20 residents, including twelve Veterans, 100 years or older.

- **Read more:** PerleyHealth.ca/century-club-2025
- **Bonus! Learn about the life of Perley Health's oldest resident Norma McKnight (106!):** PerleyHealth.ca/normas-106th-birthday

active

Seniors and Veterans Living Centre

By **Perley Health**

Active Seniors and Veterans Living Centre

The Active Seniors and Veterans Living Centre aims to serve all of the Ottawa and Eastern Ontario region, not just our residents. With support from the Perley Health Foundation, the Government of Ontario, and community partners, we offer a growing selection of affordable, accessible programming for all community members supporting engaged and purposeful aging.

- **Learn more:** PerleyHealth.ca/asvlc

Living Well at Home™

Living Well at Home™ helps Seniors and Veterans stay safe, connected, and supported as they age at home by providing seamless access to person-centred care. Caregivers can take a break knowing their loved ones are in a trusted, dementia-informed environment fostering dignity, connection, and purpose.

Perley Health's Living Well at Home™ offers coordinated Senior and Veteran services supporting those who wish to age in place with flexible respite care, adult day programs, and assisted living, all working together to meet your loved one's specific needs. By bringing a range of services together, Living Well at Home™ increases access to supports and care by reducing barriers and wait times, and simplifies the process—making it easier for clients and caregivers to find the right support solutions for their needs.

- **Learn more:** PerleyHealth.ca/living-well-at-home



Come, research long-term care, the unique care of Veterans and our community of care at Perley Health.

Find our more: PerleyHealth.ca/centreofexcellence





A interior rendering for Intergenerational Child Care, a program of Andrew Fleck Children's Services, designed by CSV Architects.

Construction Underway for Innovative Intergenerational Program

The Perley Health Centre of Excellence in Frailty-Informed Care™ will play a key role in a new, innovative project made possible by the support of donors and a partnership with Andrew Fleck Children's Services. Since July, construction crews have been busy building one of Canada's first environments designed and built to foster daily, meaningful connections between children and older adults. Bridging Generations, an ongoing \$2 million fundraising campaign by the Perley Health Foundation, makes the project possible.

The formal name of the project is Perley Health Intergenerational Child Care, a program of Andrew Fleck Children's Services. Along with establishing 49 licenced child care spaces, the project involves children and seniors interacting daily. Seniors, Veterans and children will share activities, mealtimes and outings in an environment tailored to their specific needs. The space will feature adaptive furniture and enhanced accessibility to ensure that people of all ages and abilities can participate comfortably and fully.

Two years ago, the Perley launched a pilot project in partnership with Andrew Fleck Children's Services, a leader in early childhood education for more than a century. During the pilot, residents and tenants participated in regular playgroup sessions with young

children. Early Childhood Educators from Andrew Fleck and Personal Support Workers from Perley Health oversaw the sessions. The success of the pilot led directly to the current project.

The Centre of Excellence, established and funded through the generosity of donors, has been involved since the outset and will continue to evaluate various aspects of the project. Studies show that intergenerational programming can improve mood and cognitive function, and instill a renewed sense of purpose among seniors, while also building empathy, confidence and social awareness among children. Additional research is needed, however, to better understand intergenerational programming that involves seniors living with frailty. Along with impacts on the health and well-being of participants, the Centre of Excellence will also evaluate facility design, and individual participation and engagement. This research aims to improve the care of older adults and children, and to provide the evidence needed to inspire the establishment of similar initiatives across Canada.

To learn more about Bridging Generations and how you can support this innovative initiative, visit PerleyHealthFoundation.ca/bridging-generations



Daniela Acosta, (left) Manager, Knowledge Translation, reviews notes with Lisa Moylan, Registered Practical Nurse

Evaluating Peer-Mentorship Orientation Program

In November, the Centre of Excellence completes its year-long evaluation of Perley Health's peer-mentorship program for nurses. Along with measuring the success of the program at Perley, the evaluation is expected to produce some of the tools and guidance needed for other homes to implement similar programs.

Perley Health began to implement an orientation peer-mentorship program a few years ago to help newly hired registered nurses and registered practical nurses. The program grew out of another initiative linked to Perley Health's role as a Best Practices Spotlight Organization—an ongoing partnership with the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario. Under the orientation peer-mentorship program, newly hired nurses (mentees) are paired with more experienced colleagues (mentors) for six weeks.

"The practice of nursing in a long-term care home differs in important ways from nursing in hospitals and

other environments," says Rachel de Kemp, Perley Health's Director of Nursing. "The orientation peer-mentorship program helps support new hires to adapt and thrive."

The evaluation is funded by a Nurse Innovator Grant from the Registered Nurses Foundation of Ontario (RNFOO), a nurse philanthropy organization focused on innovation. Central to the evaluation are Centre of Excellence-designed surveys of dozens of nurses who participated in the program during the last year. The Centre of Excellence will analyze the survey results to identify strengths and weaknesses, and guide future improvements. In partnership with Perley Health's nursing staff, the Centre of Excellence plans to create guidelines and tools to help other homes implement similar programs.



The team from Perley Health join with a technology partner to present “How AI and Smart Homes are Changing Dementia Care” at the 2025 AdvantAge Ontario Annual Convention in Toronto.

Perley Health Centre of Excellence: Sharing Expertise on the Global Stage

Perley Health’s Centre of Excellence is enhancing its reputation as a global leader in seniors’ care research and innovation, with its team recently showcasing their pioneering work.

At the Together We Care Convention in Toronto, Ontario, the team addressed two pivotal areas in seniors’ living. Dr. Benoît Robert, Perley Health’s Chief Medical Officer, presented on “Navigating End-of-Life Choices in Senior Living.” His session provided insights into the complex legal, ethical, and moral considerations surrounding palliative care and Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD), underscoring Perley Health’s commitment to ensuring all residents receive compassionate, dignified care. Following this, Danielle Sinden, Director of the Centre of Excellence, co-led a practical workshop titled “Navigating Technology Implementation,” which offered effective strategies for successfully adopting and sustaining new technologies within seniors’ living environments.

The benefits of Artificial Intelligence (AI) were shared by the team at the AdvantAge Ontario Annual Convention in Toronto. Danielle Sinden and Kerry Tubman, Manager, Resident Care, joined forces with a technology partner (Esprit-ai) to present “How AI and Smart Homes are Changing Dementia Care.” The presentation explored case studies, including a significant collaboration between Perley Health and Esprit-ai, supported by the Ontario Bioscience Innovation Organization (OBIO). This project utilized

sensor technology during night shifts on the Gatineau (dementia care) unit to effectively reduce resident falls and responsive behaviours—demonstrating practical strategies for using these tools to enhance resident safety and well-being.

The Centre of Excellence also made a substantial impact at the Canadian Association for Health Services and Policy Research (CAHSPR) conference, contributing to three presentations including Atul Jaiswal, PhD, Research Lead, co-presented with Brenda Thompson (Resident Partner & Advisory Committee Member) on “Meaningful engagement of resident and families in long-term care research: A co-design study.” This work emphasized the critical need to involve residents and families as genuine partners in research, co-authored by Perley Health staff and resident partners.

Two other conference presentations from the Perley team included, “Leveraging Artificial Intelligence for Early Identification of High-Risk Events in Long-Term Care,” and an oral presentation on “Creating a Pan-Canadian Surveillance System for Dementia Dyads.”

Earlier this year, Jaiswal presented at the international workshop, hosted by AGEWELL & University of Edinburgh’s Advanced Care Research Centre, showcasing Perley Health’s dedication to advancing digital health for older adults with a focus on meaningful engagement.

Research Projects

The Perley Health Centre of Excellence in Frailty-Informed Care™ is engaged in a wide range of innovative projects aimed at enhancing the well-being and quality of life for older adults, including Veterans, particularly those in long-term care. Many of these projects seek participants that create opportunities for residents, tenants, caregivers and their families to contribute to valuable and meaningful research.

A number of projects, led by Annie Robitaille, PhD, Commissionaires Ottawa Research Chair of the Perley Health Centre of Excellence in Frailty-Informed Care, focus on improving social and emotional health. Additional projects explore broader healthcare systemic issues, including a study on physician specialization to attract more doctors to long-term care and a project developing a framework for including residents and families in the research process. The commitment of the Centre of Excellence to collaborative, community-driven research is evident in its diverse portfolio of more than 20 projects, all supported by the Perley Health Foundation and various national funding agencies.

Highlights:

Making “nonessential” Family Caregiving Essential in Long-Term Care Homes

Investigators: Dr. Annie Robitaille, Commissionaires Ottawa Research Chair, Centre of Excellence in Frailty-Informed Care™, Perley Health, Interdisciplinary School of Health Sciences, University of Ottawa

This study aims to gain a better understanding of the response to COVID-19 that pertains to family caregiver presence in LTC and increase the evidence about the impact of reduced levels of family caregivers on residents and their family caregivers. This project involves in-person or virtual interviews with staff, family/friend caregivers, formal volunteers, and residents to examine the impact of the restrictions on caregivers and residents. The data gained from this project can help improve the current COVID-19 situation in addition to improving pandemic preparedness for LTC homes during future outbreaks. Recruitment of family/friend caregivers, formal volunteers, staff, and residents is complete.

This project has received financial support from Healthcare Excellence Canada and the Canadian Institute of Health Research (CIHR). Online Peer Support to Improve Meaning in Life for Older Adults

EntourAGE - Social Inclusion of People Living with Dementia and Their Caregivers Using an Intergenerational Program

Co-Principal Investigators: Dr. Annie Robitaille, Commissionaires Ottawa Research Chair, Centre of Excellence in Frailty-Informed Care™, Perley Health, Interdisciplinary School of Health Sciences, University of Ottawa; Dr. Linda Garcia, Faculty of Health Sciences, LIFE Research Institute, University of Ottawa

EntourAGE is a person-centered intergenerational volunteer program where individuals living with dementia can receive friendly one-on-one visits with high school, college and university students, called “Companions”. Participants in the program enjoy engaging in social and recreational activities with their companions. The program is being implemented in four different settings, one of them being long-term care homes.

This project has received financial support from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) and the Alzheimer’s Society of Canada.

For a full list of research projects and details, please visit PerleyHealth.ca/ongoing-research-projects

Publications

In 2025, The Perley Health Centre of Excellence in Frailty-Informed Care™ is involved in 11 publications focusing on improving the lives of older adults and Veterans, particularly those in long-term care. A key theme across many studies is enhancing the quality of care and supporting residents and their families through these transitions.

Here are some of the current publications:

“We didn’t ask to be sick:” Equipping residents and care partners for transitions from long-term care to hospital. Journal of the American Geriatrics Society.

Ménard, A., Singh, Y., Adams, M., Bai, J. Q. A., Kobewka, D., & Kehoe MacLeod, K. 2025.

Variations in Prescribing Rates of End-of-Life Medications Among Long-Term Care Residents in Alberta Compared with Ontario—a Retrospective Cohort Study. Canadian Geriatrics Journal.

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For a full list of publications, please visit: PerleyHealth.ca/publications

Webinar Series



Our monthly webinar series aims to inspire meaningful policy and program change by establishing a forum for news and discussions about frailty-related innovation and research, and by nurturing and engaging a broad network of older adults and their families and caregivers, LTC professionals and researchers, along with members of the community. The webinars are open to the public.

Explore recent webinars, available to view for free online:

PerleyHealth.ca/webinar-series



2025 Webinars

September 22, 2025

- **Topic:** Co-Design in Action: Partnering for Progress in Long-Term Care Research
- **Presented by (Left to Right):** Atul Jaiswal, Gale Ramsden, Linda Hunter, and Heather MacLeod (moderator)



June 25, 2025

- **Topic:** The Potential of Virtual Reality to Enhance Quality of Life – Envisioning the Future
- **Presented by:** Lisa Sheehy, PT, PhD

May 22, 2025

- **Topic:** Resilience-to-Frailty in Older Adults: A Window on Lifelong Health
- **Presented by:** Karen J Bandeen-Roche, PhD

April 29, 2025

- **Topic:** How interactive robotic devices can help us understand human behaviour and neurological disorders
- **Presented by:** Kayne Park, PhD

March 28, 2025

- **Topic:** Shifting needs in Ontario's long-term care homes: Observation of changes in resident characteristics from 2018 to 2023
- **Co-Presenters:** Amy Hsu and Seles Yung

February 18, 2025

- **Topic:** Implementing Patient Navigation Across Hospital and Community Settings
- **Presented by:** Dr. Kristina Kokorelias

January 29, 2025

- **Topic:** Veterans' Well-being: Aging in Place and Health Equity
- **Co-Presenters:** Annie Robitaille, PhD. and Maiura Muralitharan, MPH

If you have suggestions for future webinar topics or are interested in presenting your research in the future, please reach out to centreofexcellence@perleyhealth.ca

Trainee Profiles

The Centre of Excellence is proud to regularly mentor and support the research work of several graduate students and postdoctoral fellows across Canada. Both trainees profiled in this issue received Fellowships from EPIC-AT, a training platform funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research in partnership with AGE-WELL and the University of Toronto.

“Because Perley Health is both a long-term care home and a research centre, it’s the ideal environment for the development of both researchers and care professionals,” says Samantha Sandassie, Manager of the EPIC-AT Health Research Training Platform, and AGE-WELL’s Director of Education and Training. “The Centre of Excellence is helping create a pipeline of researchers equipped with the practical experience needed to make real-world impacts.”

James Hanratty

A doctoral student at Toronto Metropolitan University’s Department of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering, James Hanratty is determined to apply his multidisciplinary background to improving the care of people living with frailty. Along with Master’s degrees in both Business Administration and Engineering, a Bachelor’s degree in Applied Science, and a Paralegal Diploma, Hanratty has earned a series of professional designations (engineering, project management and more). Concurrent with his PhD studies, he is also completing a Bachelor of Laws degree. His mother, a nurse who has worked in long-term care (LTC) for more than 30 years, and his grandmother, who lived in a LTC home for a decade, continue to inspire him. Hanratty’s current research project involves applying engineering tools and approaches to improving nurse workloads in LTC. He and his research team have developed a simulation tool and piloted it in a complex-care unit. The next step involves working with healthcare professionals serving in a variety of roles to gauge how best to adapt nurse-workload simulation tools to regular operations and strategic planning.

Olivia Ryan

Olivia Ryan is investigating how to harness the potential of multi-sensory stimulation (such as looking at a Christmas tree while smelling pine needles) to improve the lives of people living with dementia. A master’s student in Aging Studies at the University of Regina, Ryan plans to develop a protocol for professional and non-professional caregivers, and to investigate the barriers to the use of multi-sensory stimulation in long-term care. During her undergraduate studies, Ryan worked in a long-term care home and recognized the challenge of engaging residents, particularly those living with dementia. Like other staff—as well as members of residents’ families—she longed to improve residents’ quality of life. At the 2024 Canadian Association of Gerontology Conference, Ryan and her research colleague presented some preliminary findings in a poster titled: Comparing Multi-Sensory and Olfactory Stimulation in the Well-Being of Individuals with Advanced Stages of Dementia.

Please contact the Centre of Excellence, centrefexcellence@perleyhealth.ca, for more information on how to get involved.

Read the Fall/Winter 2025 edition of Ontario Long Term Care Today magazine for an article on Perley Health, “*Technology Implementation: Lessons Learned at Perley Health*”.

Visit: [OLTCA.com/newsroom/ltc-today](https://oltca.com/newsroom/ltc-today)

Watch for us!



Read the blog of Atul Jaiswal, PhD, Research Lead, Centre of Excellence on the international workshop hosted by AGEWELL (AW)- the University of Edinburgh Advanced Care Research Centre (ACRC):
PerleyHealth.ca/atul-aw-acrc-workshop



Annie Robitaille, PhD (Right), The Commissionaires Ottawa Research Chair in Frailty-Informed Care & Danielle Sinden (Left), Director, Centre of Excellence, attend events and conferences sharing many of the Centre of Excellence's Knowledge Translation projects throughout the year.

Contact Information

If you are interested in participating or would like to learn more about a particular project, please contact:

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Thank you to Commissionaires Ottawa for their ongoing support of the Centre of Excellence in Frailty-Informed Care™.



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