



News

Newsletter Issue #2 – November 2021



Susan Davies (right), a tenant in one of Perley Health's independent-living apartments, completes an in-person survey with CoE Research Coordinator Nikita Rayne.

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**Perley
Health**

Centre of Excellence
in Frailty-Informed Care™

Letter from the Director



*Danielle Sinden,
Director, Research and
Operations*

*Centre of Excellence in
Frailty-Informed Care™*

Welcome to the second edition of our newsletter. In this edition, we share our research priorities, developed in consultation with our stakeholders; if you were part of the process, thank you for contributing the guidance we need to focus our activities over the next few years.

This edition also highlights the results of a study about the positive role that simulation-based training can play in helping long-term care (LTC) staff prevent falls among older adults living with frailty. I'm particularly proud of this study because the concept of incorporating simulations into falls-prevention training came from Daniela Acosta, a Registered Nurse at Perley Health. As someone who provides long-term care and who supervises other caregivers, Daniela understands the many challenges associated with both preventing falls and with training caregivers to prevent falls.

As the contents of this edition demonstrate, the Centre of Excellence (CoE) continues

to mature. Our research and knowledge-translation projects aim to advance the care of older adults living with frailty not only here at Perley Health, but also in settings across Canada. As we mature, our contribution will only increase. In addition, we lead and partner on many innovative projects that provide opportunities for Perley Health staff, residents, tenants, volunteers, friends and families — along with caregivers and the community at large — to engage in meaningful social and recreational activities such as learning new skills, sharing experiences and providing input on various topics.

I hope you enjoy our newsletter and I encourage you to share your comments — along with your ideas for future editions — by contacting me directly.

Danielle Sinden,
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Care™

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Who we are.

Established in 2019, Perley Health Centre of Excellence in Frailty-Informed Care™ (CoE) 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 CoE is part of Perley Health, a unique and innovative community of care located on a 25-acre campus adjacent to The Ottawa Hospital. Perley Health is home to approximately 450 residents (many of them Veterans who served overseas) in long-term care, along with approximately 200 seniors in 139 independent-living apartments. Funded by donations to the Perley Health Foundation, the CoE supports Perley Health's mission of excellence in the health, safety, and well-being of Seniors and Veterans.

Nothing short of excellent

Exceptional care and research innovation at Perley Health is thanks in part to the generosity of our community. To donate please visit:
www.PerleyHealthFoundation.ca



Documenting the Effectiveness of Simulation-based Training to Reduce Falls among Older Adults

A CoE-supported study documents the positive role that simulation-based training can play in strengthening the ability of staff to reduce the incidence of falls among adults in long-term care (LTC). The study, published in the *Journal of Nursing Care Quality* in September, 2021, was led by Daniela Acosta, a Perley Health RN and Collaborative Practice Leader.

The idea for the study grew from Daniela's commitment to both ongoing education and to best practices in LTC. Daniela plays a lead role in Perley Health's status as a Registered Nurses of Ontario (RNAO) Best Practice Spotlight Organization (BPSO). As a BPSO, Perley Health implements and evaluates the effectiveness of best practices, such as its Falls Prevention Program. When a staff member witnesses a fall or encounters a resident who has fallen, the Program encourages them to follow the best practice of assessing the resident's physical and mental health, and of holding a staff huddle to identify how best to prevent future falls. A 2019 evaluation of the Program, however, found notable variations in how staff respond to resident falls.



“To remind staff about best practices for falls, we could have posted reminders on bulletin boards or created a video,” says Daniela. “But I saw an opportunity to apply what I’d learned from the Simulation Canada course I completed recently.”

With the help of Registered Practical Nurse (RPN) and BPSO Liaison Amber Rinfret, Daniela developed and delivered a series of 27 in-person workshops over five months to 94 frontline staff (18 RNs, 38 RPNs and 38 Personal Support Workers). The workshops lasted less than 30 minutes and featured a short introduction, a simulated fall, a debriefing and a survey. With the support of the CoE, the results were analyzed and presented in a study. Participants strongly support simulation-based learning: 80% of those surveyed said they would apply what they had learned to resident falls in the future.

“Finding new ways to provide training in LTC is really practical and can be easily adopted by other homes,” says Jennifer Plant, Perley Health’s Director of Clinical Practice. “This is exactly the kind of work the Centre of Excellence should be involved in to improve care.”

The study findings inspired Perley Health to incorporate simulations into training for the program SeeMe™: Understanding Frailty Together and for end-of-life assessments.



www.PerleyHealth.ca/seeme-care-programs



Publications

Using Simulation to Promote Best Practices in Fall Prevention and Post Fall Assessment in Long-Term Care

See the preceding article for more information.

[Read Full Article Here](#)

Virtual Reality for Veteran Relaxation (VR2) — Introducing VR therapy for Veterans with Dementia — Challenges and Rewards of the Therapists Behind the Scenes

This is a complementary study to a clinical trial that investigated the use of Virtual Reality (VR) among Veterans and Seniors living with dementia at Perley Health and who exhibited responsive behaviours. The study, co-authored by Lacey Sheng, Perley Health's Manager of Analytics and Informatics, involved in-depth interviews with Recreational Therapists about their experiences administering VR-therapy (a total of 111 sessions) during the clinical trial. Perley Health's Therapeutic Recreation and Creative Arts team hosted the study and played a key role in the clinical trial. The study is published in [Frontiers in Virtual Reality](#), which publishes peer-reviewed research related to the broad field of Extended Reality.

[Read Full Article Here](#)

Presentations and Speaking Engagements

AdvantAge Ontario - 2021 Virtual Summer Education Series

August 24, 2021

Balancing Safety and Pleasure through Outbreaks: A Risk-Based Approach

Lorie Stuckless, Director of Support Services, and Andrea Heuving, Manager of Food, Nutrition and Housekeeping, described how Perley Health worked with Ottawa Public Health to create and implement risk-based dining practices that successfully balanced resident social interaction with infection-control measures.

Registered Nurses Association of Ontario (RNAO) BPSO Launch

September 22, 2021

RNAO announced UniversalCare Canada Inc. as its inaugural Long-Term Care Best Practice Spotlight Organization (BPSO). Daniela Acosta, RN and Collaborative Practice Leader, described how Perley Health built a strong BPSO culture and engaged care teams.

Canadian Association on Gerontology 50th Annual Scientific and Educational Meeting

October 23, 2021

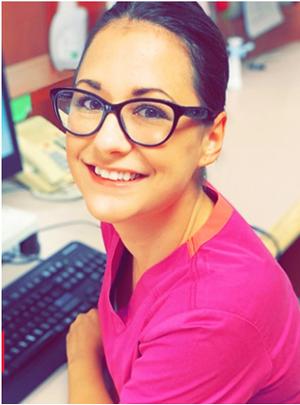
Dr. Annie Robitaille, Commissionaires Ottawa Research Chair in Frailty-Informed Care, described the study she led and the roles that family members and volunteers play in Long-Term Care homes during the pandemic.

Research Priorities

The CoE has announced eight priorities for its research efforts over the next few years. Consultations with stakeholders (Perley Health staff and Board members, along with residents, tenants, caregivers and their families, volunteers and researchers) informed the priorities.

Topic of Interest	Definition
1. Mental Health	Research themes related to mental health of Seniors and Veterans living in long-term care homes, their family and friends, and staff/volunteers.
2. Living Environment	Research themes related to the living environments for older adults and Veterans living in long-term care homes, including the various lifestyle and environmental factors contributing to a positive/negative quality of life.
3. Physical Health	Research themes related to the physical health of older adults and Veterans living in long-term care homes, including specific health conditions and changing physical health needs.
4. Person-Centered Care	Research themes related to the individualized care of older adults and Veterans living in long-term care homes, including the diverse approaches related to caring for those living with frailty.
5. Social and Emotional Health	Research themes related to socializing and the relationships (e.g., family, friends, staff) of older adults and Veterans living in long-term care homes.
6. Staff Professional Development and Training	Research themes related to professional development and training of long-term care home staff, including various ways that staff training could be enhanced or built upon.
7. Recreational Activities	Research themes related to activities that could promote a higher quality of life among older adults and Veterans living in long-term care homes, including intergenerational activities, activities of daily living, and intellectually stimulating activities.
8. Technology	Research themes related to the use of different technologies in long-term care homes, including how different technologies can assist staff and ways that older adults and Veterans can use technologies to improve their quality of life.

A passion for geriatrics



Amber Rinfret,
Registered Practical
Nurse (RPN) and BPSO
Liaison at Perley Health

Amber Rinfret, who collaborated on the falls-prevention simulation-based training, first came to Perley Health five years ago for the final practicum of her RPN program at St. Lawrence College.

“The practicum — the College refers to it as a clinical consolidation — enabled me to apply what I’d learned in the classroom,” she recalls. “I was assigned to work with older adults living with dementia, some of whom exhibit responsive behaviours. The staff helped me learn how to provide appropriate care.”

The opportunity to acquire new skills and immediately apply them convinced Amber to pursue a career at Perley Health upon graduation.

“I’ve discovered a passion for geriatrics,” says Amber. “These men and women built our country and I want them to have the best possible care.”

For many years, Amber cared for her late mother, who lived with a chronic illness. That experience inspired her to pursue a career in nursing.

“I love working at Perley Health,” she says. “Collaborating on the simulation-based training was a great opportunity for me to not only improve my skills, but also to contribute to better care. Other homes can benefit from projects like our simulation-based training thanks to the Centre of Excellence. That makes me want to do even more.”



The Registered Practical Nurses of Association of Ontario (RPNAO) selected Amber Rinfret, RPN and BPSO Liaison at Perley Health for its Excellence in the Care of Older Ontarians Award. L to R: Annette Weeres, Director of Professional Practice, RPNAO; Amber Rinfret; Kris Birchard, past Chair, Perley Health Board of Directors

Rising to the challenge



*Daniela Acosta, RN,
Collaborative Practice
Leader and BPSO Liaison
at Perley Health*

Daniela Acosta wears many hats exceptionally well. An award-winning RN and educator, she's also an enthusiastic, dedicated teacher and caregiver, a YouTuber and a mother of two young children.

"I thrive on new challenges and feel blessed in my life," Daniela says. "I love working at Perley Health because they give me room to be creative and to grow; to not only learn, but also to apply what I learn."

Originally from Belleville, Daniela moved with her family to Ottawa when she was in high school. After earning a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Ottawa and a Bachelor of Nursing degree from the University of Toronto, she accepted a job at Perley Health, where her career quickly took off.

"When I came here, long-term care (LTC) and working in teams were both new to me," she says. "At Perley Health, each RN is responsible for the care of about 80 residents, in collaboration with four or five Personal Support Workers and one or two Registered Practical Nurses. I fell in love with caring for residents daily and with leading teams of caregivers."

In 2016, the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario (RNAO) selected Perley Health as a Best Practice Spotlight Organization (BPSO) and Daniela jumped at the opportunity to lead the initiative. BPSOs identify, implement and evaluate the effectiveness of evidence-based care interventions. By putting the latest research into practice, reducing variation in care and eliminating interventions

that have little effect, the initiative improves the quality of care delivered to residents of Perley Health and of other LTC facilities.

The simulation-based training initiative featured elsewhere in this edition reflects Daniela's passion for learning and education. While completing Simulation Canada's Keystone Apex training, Daniela recognized an opportunity to apply what she had learned to strengthen Perley Health's Falls Prevention program, which is based on best practice. She developed and delivered in-situ simulation-based training to Perley Health staff. With the support of the CoE, the training led to a research study published in the *Journal of Nursing Care Quality*.

"I particularly appreciate the opportunity to contribute to the Centre of Excellence in Frailty-Informed Care," says Daniela. "Through the CoE, other homes can also implement improvements in care that we develop here. This fires my passion as a learner, an educator and a caregiver."

In June 2021, the RNAO recognized Daniela's exceptional mix of passion and dedication by presenting her with its Award of Merit. Given her busy schedule, Daniela's had to temporarily pause *Vibrant Nurse*, the YouTube channel she launched a few years ago. On the channel, she posted videos that dispelled the myths and stigma associated with LTC nursing.

"I expect to get back to it eventually," Daniela says. "For now, though, I feel fulfilled by my family, my work and my studies."

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, LTC professionals, researchers and caregivers, along with members of the public.

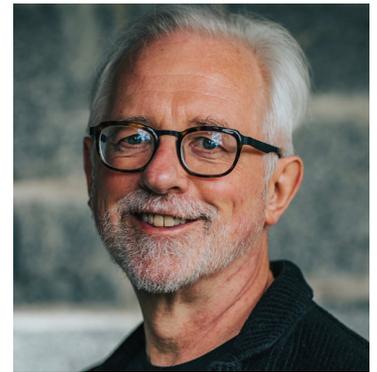
UPCOMING: Webinar with John P. Hirdes, PhD, FCAHS *November, 2021*

On November 24th, our upcoming webinar will feature John P. Hirdes, PhD, FCAHS. Professor at the University of Waterloo's School of Public Health and Health Systems, Dr. Hirdes is the Senior Canadian Fellow and Board Member of interRAI, the international consortium of researchers from more than 35 countries. Widely published in peer-review journals and chapters of academic books, Dr. Hirdes is also a Fellow of the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences.

Understanding the Degree of Frailty and its Implications for Clinical Translational Research *October 2021*

Kenneth Rockwood, MD, FRCPC, FRCP, Professor of Medicine (Geriatric Medicine & Neurology) and the Kathryn Allen Weldon Professor of Alzheimer Research at Dalhousie University, described frailty as the expression of systemic-level deficiencies caused by age-related damage and the decline in the body's ability to repair itself.

A recognized authority on frailty and a Canadian Institutes of Health Research investigator, Dr. Rockwood is the author of more than 400 peer-reviewed publications and nine books, and a member of the executive committee of the Canadian Collaboration on Neurodegeneration in Aging. The event attracted 56 registrants.



*Dr. Kenneth Rockwood,
MD, FRCPC, FRCP*

The Role of Meaning in Life and Social Interactions in Promoting Psychological Well-Being Among Older Adults *September 2021*

Dr. Marnin Heisel, Associate Professor, Division of Geriatric Psychiatry, University of Western Ontario, presented the latest research into how best to promote psychological well-being and reduce psychological distress among older adults in the context of life transitions and pandemic-related social restrictions. The webinar featured moderator Dr. Sharon Levine, attracted 50 participants and elicited several comments, including:

“This webinar was interesting, helpful and thought provoking. The suggested book readings were most welcomed.”

“Good topic, thanks for this webinar.”

“Lots of information provided. Thank you for showing the statistical charts and providing recommendations for additional reading.”

You can view any of the archived webinars by visiting this page on the CoE website:
www.PerleyHealth.ca/free-webinar-series

Centre of Excellence – November 2021

Current Research Projects

For a more current list of projects, please consult the CoE website:

<https://www.perleyhealth.ca/ongoing-research-projects>

Psychosocial Impacts of Reducing Non-Essential Visitors in Long-Term Care in the Context of the COVID-19 Pandemic (Modified Version)

Principal Investigator: Dr. Annie Robitaille, Interdisciplinary School of Health Sciences, University of Ottawa, Commissionaires Ottawa Research Chair

This study will improve understanding of the emotional well-being (e.g. psychological distress, loneliness) of family/friend caregivers, volunteers and older adults in LTC. During an interview of 45–60 minutes conducted online or by telephone, participants are asked about how measures related to COVID-19 — such as reductions in staffing and volunteers — has impacted LTC. Participants will also be asked to share success stories, along with solutions for dealing with future pandemics and outbreaks.

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

Co-Principal Investigators: Dr. Annie Robitaille, Interdisciplinary School of Health Sciences, University of Ottawa, Commissionaires Ottawa Research Chair; Dr. Linda Garcia, Faculty of Health Sciences, LIFE Research Institute, University of Ottawa

Older adults (long-term care residents and tenants) living with dementia can receive friendly one-on-one virtual visits from university student volunteers, providing them with an opportunity to engage in social and recreational activities, and meaningful conversations. The caregiver of the person living with dementia will be asked to complete a 20-minute questionnaire on 4 occasions.

Health Information Technology and Senior Care: Seniors and Nurses' Perspective of Technology Adoption

Principal Investigator: Hamidreza Kavandi; Supervisor: Dr. Mirou Jaana, Telfer School of Management, University of Ottawa

Health-information technology (HIT) presents opportunities for healthcare providers to better meet seniors' healthcare needs. This study investigates key factors that affect nurses' adoption of HIT in LTC. By answering a series of questions online (each requiring up to 15 minutes to complete), participating nurses will contribute to the development of an authoritative list of adoption factors and share their perspectives on HIT adoption.

Long-Term Care Residents Quality of Life and Well-Being: A Pre- and Post- Pandemic

Principal Investigator: Danielle Cruise; Supervisor: Dr. Mirou Jaana, Telfer School of Management, University of Ottawa

While research on the quality of life (QoL) of older adults prior to the COVID-19 pandemic is relatively abundant, little research has focused on the QoL of residents in long-term care (LTC) during the pandemic. To evaluate the impacts of the pandemic on resident QoL and well-being, this study will compare data from the QoL surveys

collected during 2019 and 2020. The data will be analyzed at the aggregate level and the results used to provide recommendations that will improve the care and services provided to seniors.

COVID-19 Immunity Study

Co-Principal Investigators: Dr. Amy Hsu, Bruyère Research Institute; Dr. Marc-Andrè Langlois, University of Ottawa

This study involves residents, staff and volunteers in long-term care homes across Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia. The aim of this project is to gain a better understanding of COVID-19 prevalence in LTC homes across Canada and to examine the level and duration of protection COVID-19 vaccines. Participants will be asked to complete an online baseline survey (15 minutes) and provide blood spot samples collected at several time points over the next 12 months. Participants can access their antibody results through a secure web-based portal. Also, participating LTC homes will be given the aggregate data, enabling them to better understand overall levels of immunity and risk.

Program to Accelerate Technologies of Home (PATH)

Co-Principal Investigators, Ottawa site: Dr. Jeffrey Jutai, Interdisciplinary School of Health Sciences, University of Ottawa; Dr. Jason Millar, School of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, University of Ottawa

PATH is a large multi-partner initiative to increase understanding of the potential role that home-based technologies can play in the care and well-being of older adults. Groups of older adults will be provided various devices and technologies (e.g. blood-pressure monitors, pressure-sensitive mats that track sleep patterns, wearable devices that can detect falls, etc.) and their experiences monitored. Researchers will share the data with industry to test, validate and potentially commercialize products. The CoE will soon recruit LTC residents and Seniors' Village tenants to participate.

Linking Lives Through Care

Principal Investigator: Christine Novy; Supervisor: Dr. Roanne Thomas, School of Rehabilitation Science, University of Ottawa

This project gives caregivers of persons with dementia opportunities to reflect and share their stories about care. During two 60-minute online interviews, they will be asked to describe their experiences and encouraged to reference sentimental objects that can aid their recall of important events.

Health Surveillance of Community-Dwelling, Person-with-Dementia and Caregiver Dyads

Principal Investigator: Dr. Annie Robitaille, Interdisciplinary School of Health Sciences, University of Ottawa, Commissionaires Ottawa Research Chair

The project aims to increase understanding of the trajectories of individuals living with dementia and their caregivers (dyads) from diagnosis to move into LTC. Information will be collected from dyads over extended periods of time and the results used to inform policies, programs and areas of future research in Canada.

Comparaison des performances au Montréal Cognitive Assessment (MoCA) en anglais et en français chez les personnes bilingues ayant le français comme langue maternelle

**Please note this project is available only to French-speaking individuals*

Co-chercheurs principaux: Dominique Yelle, Amira Meyers, Zachary Carrière et Emily Pidgeon;
Superviseur: Dr. Jacinthe Savard, École des sciences de la réadaptation, Université d'Ottawa

Nous recherchons des volontaires de 40 ans et plus, ayant le français comme langue maternelle et une connaissance de l'anglais allant de minimale à très bonne, pour participer à une étude comparant les performances à un test cognitif en anglais et en français chez les personnes bilingues. En tant que participant à cette étude, il vous serait demandé de : Répondre à un questionnaire en ligne, puis de passer un test de bilinguisme et un test cognitif en français et en anglais par vidéoconférence. Votre participation est entièrement volontaire et prendrait environ 50 minutes de votre temps. En participant à cette étude, vous nous aiderez à aider les personnes bilingues à mieux saisir dans quelles langues elles doivent demander des services. Afin de vous remercier pour votre contribution à ce projet de recherche, vous pourrez entrer votre nom dans un tirage pour gagner une carte-cadeau d'une valeur de 50\$.

COVID-19, Precarity and the Counternarratives of PSWs: Photovoice and Change

Principal Investigator: Veen Wong, Public Health Sciences, University of Waterloo; Supervisor: Dr. Patricia Van Katwyk, School of Social Work, Renison University College, University of Waterloo

The project will shed light on the work perspectives of Personal Support Workers (PSWs) during the pandemic. During group and individual virtual interviews, PSWs will be encouraged to describe their experiences, particularly whether they consider their work as essential, precarious and/or unseen, and how various policies and systems shape their work experiences. Each participant will then be encouraged to create images based on these discussions—a technique known as photovoice. The identity of the image-takers images will remain anonymous and the images will be analyzed and shared. Each participant will receive a \$50 honorarium.

Negotiating Person-Centred Care in Eastern Ontario Long-Term Care Homes During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Principal Investigator: Dr. Megan Graham, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Carleton University

The study aims to learn about experiences of resident care during the COVID-19 pandemic with a specific focus on the absence and presence of the arts in residents' lives. During 30-minute interviews, staff, residents, and family who have lived through the pandemic and engaged with the arts will describe what participation in the arts means to them, what the arts uniquely provide as a form of care, and how pandemic restrictions impacted both their participation in the arts and their day-to-day lives.

COVID-19 Pandemic Experiences of People with Mobility Disability: A Grounded Theory Study

Principal Investigator: Michelle Yang; Supervisors: Dr. Sarah Fraser and Dr. Tracey O'Sullivan;
Interdisciplinary School of Health Sciences, University of Ottawa

This study explores the unique perspectives and experiences of individuals who self-identify as having a mobility disability (relating to dexterity, balance, walking, maneuvering, or other). Participants will complete one-on-one interviews of up to 80 minutes via telephone or Zoom.

Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Family and Friend Caregivers of Seniors Living at Home and on the Caregiver-Care Receiver Relationship

Principal Investigators: Dr. Jacinthe Savard, School of Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Ottawa; Dr. Sébastien Savard, School of Social Services, University of Ottawa; Co-Investigators: Dr. Annie Robitaille, Interdisciplinary School of Health Sciences, University of Ottawa, Commissionaires Ottawa Research Chair; Dr. Suzanne Dupuis-Blanchard, School of Nursing, Université de Moncton; Dr. Danielle de Moissac, Experimental Sciences, Université de St-Boniface; Senior Research Associate: Dr. Josée Benoît, Groupe de recherche sur la formation et les pratiques en santé et service social en contexte francophone minoritaire (GReFoPS), University of Ottawa

Groupe de recherche sur la formation et les pratiques en santé et service social en contexte francophone minoritaire (GReFoPS) is conducting a study of the impact of COVID-19 on caregivers of older adults living at home. The purpose of the study is to identify the changes caregivers experience as a result of COVID-19. Participants will complete questionnaires of 30 to 45 minutes online or by phone at a time convenient to them and can enter their names in a draw for 3 \$50 gift cards.

For more information and to access the questionnaire in English, please visit:

https://www.surveymonkey.ca/r/caregivers_COV1

To access the questionnaire in French, please visit: https://fr.surveymonkey.ca/r/proches_aidants_COV1

Contact Information

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

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