

SENIORS HEALTH STRATEGIC CLINICAL NETWORK

January 2017



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What is the Seniors Health Strategic Clinical Network (SH SCN)?

The SH SCN is a large group of health care providers, managers, researchers, policy makers and carers that all focus on seniors care and who have come together with seniors and family members to support Alberta's aging population.

Why was the Seniors Health SCN Created?

The SH SCN was formed to lead improvements to health care that help Alberta's seniors to live healthy independent lives no matter where they live in the province. The SH SCN will be a change agent to improve health care based on research and innovation.

Who's involved in the Seniors Health SCN?

The SH SCN Core Committee currently has over 30 members including health care providers, researchers, educators, a patient and others. In addition over 350 people have joined our Community of Practice and close to 100 people are part of our Network of Researchers from across Alberta.

The Seniors Health Strategic Clinical Network™ featured in [The Globe and Mail](#).



“This project was really about helping the teams feel safe taking people off antipsychotics – and confident that disastrous things were not going to happen,” says Mollie Cole, an advance practice nurse and co-leader of the project in her role as manager of the Seniors Health Strategic Clinical Network for Alberta Health Services.

State-of-the-Art Exercise Lab is Ready for Collaboration



The Clinical & Translational Exercise Physiology (CTEP) Lab, within the Cumming School of Medicine, is up and running! The CTEP lab is a state-of-the-art research facility dedicated to health promotion and wellness by advancing and translating knowledge on the role of exercise in the prevention and management of chronic disease.

If you or your research group are interested in studying the role of exercise on health, contact us at cteplab@ucalgary.ca to discuss opportunities. Click here for [more info](#).



2017 Undergraduate Summer Studentship Competition Launches

Building on the success of the inaugural competition, the Scientific Office of the Seniors Health SCN is pleased to announce the launch of the 2017 Undergraduate Summer Studentship Competition.

This opportunity aims to support undergraduate student participation in research aligned with the priority areas of the Seniors Health SCN. Up to six awards will be available, providing a stipend of \$1,500/month per applicant for up to 4 months during Summer 2017.



Eligible applicants should be enrolled in or accepted to a full-time undergraduate program in a health-related discipline and must be supervised or co-supervised by a researcher with an academic appointment at an academic institution in Alberta. The deadline for submission is 4pm on Friday February 10th, 2017. For more information, please contact Dr. Heather Hanson, Assistant Scientific Director (Heather.Hanson@ahs.ca).

[CLICK HERE to read more](#)

For more Information...

In the coming months we will keep you posted on the work of our Seniors Health SCN.

If you wish to learn more, or become more involved, please contact us at seniorshealth.scn@ahs.ca

Seniors Health SCN Research Prioritization Process Announced

The Scientific Office of the Seniors Health SCN will commence an innovative research prioritization and community engagement in 2017. Following the James Lind Alliance approach, the process will engage a broad range of stakeholders, including researchers, care providers, and recipients of care and their caregivers, and will set the foundation for future strategic planning related to the research supported and led by the Seniors Health SCN.

Stay tuned for more information and the call to participate in the research prioritization process.

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want to know
to more?
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For more Seniors' Health Research updates go to our web page and read about the [Optic Study](#) and [iSupport Caregivers Project](#)

Provost Story-Seniors Integrated Primary Health Care

written by Charlene Knudsen, Practice Lead SH SCN and the Provost Team

The Seniors Health Strategic Clinical Network and the Primary Health Integration Network are excited to be working closely with the Provost Primary Care Network (PCN) leadership team, Dr. Deon Erasmus and Trisha Dambrowsky, RN, alongside four other Central Zone PCN's in a Primary Health Care (PHC) initiative planned for 2017 – 2018 focusing on serving seniors in community affected by dementia.

For the past decade, the Provost PCN has established a cohesive network of healthcare professionals and community partners that provide person-centred service to over 4,700 residents residing in this close knit community located on the Alberta/Saskatchewan border. Through open communication at scheduled patient review meetings and by providing home visits to develop plans of care with patients, the PCN team is able to identify and coordinate an integrated response in a timely fashion, ensuring the right care is received in the right place at the right time.

This integrated, coordinated response is currently supporting Alex and Clem Kohlman who moved to Hillcrest Lodge in 2007. Since their admission to the lodge, both have experienced medical setbacks, but despite this, continue to live together at the lodge. At present, Clem's cognitive impairment has progressed necessitating an increase in care. The key to supporting Alex and Clem's goal to continue to live together at Hillcrest is an integrated, collaborative approach to care focusing on early identification and timely intervention by the PHC team. This is an excellent example of (PHC) at work, and the difference it can make to community dwelling seniors!



Back Row (Left to Right): Dr. Deon Erasmus, Noel Wirachowsky, Barb Hawken, Brenda Olsen, Janie Crawford

Front Row (Left to Right): Annette Gregory, Crystal Heck, Phyllis Slimmons, Charlotte Lydiate.

Using this community approach to care, Provost has been successful in reducing acute care admission rates of senior's over the age of 75 from 172 per year in 2006 to as low as 138 per year. In Provost, long term care length of stay has decreased from an average of 1.09 years in 2006 for the 75 to 84 age group to 0.76 years in 2016. However, the average length of stay has almost doubled from 5-6 years to 9-10 years in that same time period at Hillcrest Lodge, and "is reflective of higher level of care being provided in the community" states Dr. Erasmus. Provost residents like Alex and Clem are directly benefitting from this PHC approach to care, which is comforting to Alex and Clem, as they know that all avenues will be explored to support them to stay in their homes for as long as possible.

Community Innovation Grant for People Affected my Dementia—8 Grants awarded

Albertans have expressed a desire to remain in their homes and communities as they age. In order to support individuals to remain at home, integrated community-based health and social services are required that optimize individuals independence, quality of life and wellbeing, including those Albertans living with dementia.

Funded by Alberta Health and organized by the Seniors Health Strategic Clinical Network, this one time grant opportunity will provide support to 8 community and health service providers to develop and implement innovative projects and/or introduce or build on new and creative approaches to person-centred dementia services in Alberta. Granting amounts ranged from \$25 000.00 up to a maximum of \$75 000.00, with approximately \$410 000.00 in total grant dollars awarded to support 8 initiatives over a 12 month implementation and evaluation period.

For more details regarding the successful community innovation grants – visit the SH SCN website at <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/scns/Page13120.aspx>.

Project Updates

Dementia Advice Caller writes letter to the Registered Nurses

Dear Kathleen, Rose, Nadine and Corinne (Dementia Advice Nurses),

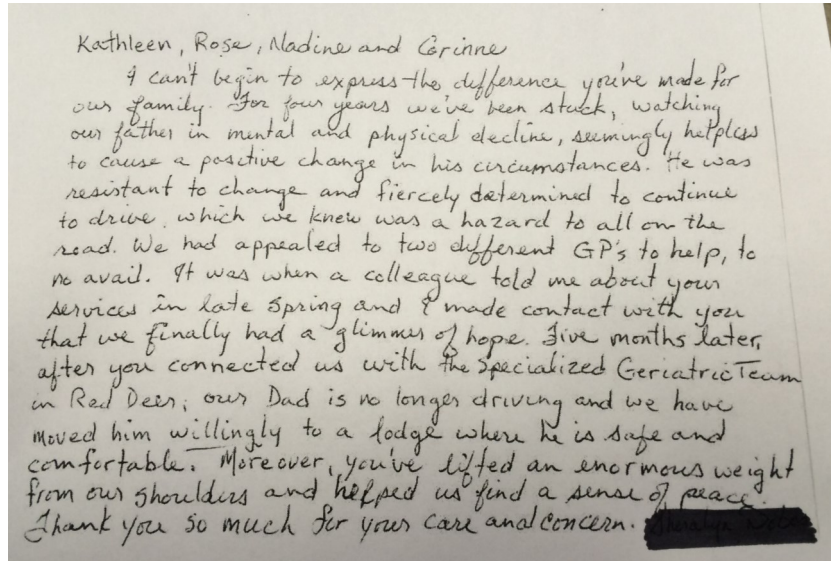
I can't begin to express the difference you've made for our family. For four years we've been stuck, watching our father in mental and physical decline, seemingly helpless to cause a positive change in his circumstances. He was resistant to change and fiercely determined to continue to drive. Which we knew was a hazard to all on the road. We had appealed to two different general practitioners for help, to no avail.

It was when a colleague told me about your services in late spring 2016 and I made contact with you that we finally had a glimmer of hope.

Five months later, after you connected us with the Specialized Geriatric Team in Red Deer, our Dad

is no longer driving and we have moved him willingly to a lodge where he is safe and comfortable. Moreover, you've lifted an enormous weight from our shoulders and helped us find a sense of peace.

Thank you so much for your care and concern.



Dementia Advice Service Pilot Evaluation



What was the Dementia Advice Service Pilot?

Dementia Advice (DA) is a telephone-based clinical support service available through Health Link. The pilot launched on September 28, 2015, and targeted rural Alberta, and was evaluated until March 31, 2016.

How was the DA pilot evaluated?

Quantitative and qualitative analyses of DA administrative data, a Health Link survey with 61 phone staff, 10 client & 4 staff interviews. The evaluation focused on 6 key areas: client demographics; fit with intended population; service usage; referrals to community resources and partners; resources, staffing, and funding; and strengths & challenges.

For more information please click [here](#)



[Frailty: An Emerging Public Health Priority](#), published by the Journal of the American Medical Directors Association,

[Multimorbidity: clinical assessment and management](#), published by National Institute for Health and Care Excellence

[New report decries "patchwork" approach to seniors care in Canada](#), published by the Canadian Medical Association