

ARC-NL

Annual Newsletter

July 2025



Message From Our Director

It's been another busy year at ARC-NL! This year we have focused on research planning events and projects that prioritized community engagement and helped us focus on research that is relevant to older adults in Newfoundland and Labrador. In Fall 2024 we held virtual and in-person community priority setting events, where older adults across the province were invited to learn about ARC-NL and to share their thoughts on what research topics were of most interest to them. These events were a tremendous success and will inform many of our activities going forward. Please read on to see some of our highlights!

Mission Statement

To foster collaboration between the Grenfell and St. John's campuses of Memorial University, other academic institutions, and community organizations and to create a provincial network of researchers studying later life issues in Newfoundland and Labrador. ARC-NL prioritizes knowledge mobilization and engagement with older adults.

Dr. Karen Doody,
ARC-NL Director



AGING RESEARCH CENTRE –
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

Highlights of Our Year

Canadian Association on Gerontology 2024 Conference, Edmonton AB, October 2024

Two posters were presented: “*Cultivating Interdisciplinary Research Teams at the Aging Research Centre-Newfoundland and Labrador*” by Dr. Karen Doody (Director, Biology of Aging Pillar Co-Lead) et al.; “*Examining Case Characteristics in an Effort to Understand Why so Few Cases of Elder Abuse are Prosecuted*”, by Dr. Kelly Warren (Lived Experience of Aging Pillar Lead) et al.

Nova Scotia Centre on Aging’s “Our Future is Aging” Conference, Halifax NS, June 2025

Dr. Karen Doody presented a talk “*Listening to Older Adults: Public Engagement and Knowledge Mobilization at the Aging Research Centre-Newfoundland & Labrador*”; Dr. Doody was also invited to be a mentor for a networking breakfast for aging research trainees; ARC-NL hosted an exhibition booth to share information on the Centre with colleagues across Canada.

Intergenerational Learning

Fadeela Yussif (2024 ARC-NL Fellowship recipient and student member) and Dr. Les Cake (ARC-NL Research Member, Professor Emeritus) have been leading a [research project](#) on intergenerational learning in collaboration with Memorial University’s [Community Hubs](#), with support from a Harris Centre Community Hubs Programming Fund grant. Events have taken

place so far in western Newfoundland in Corner Brook, Cape St. George, and St. George’s. Stay tuned to learn about upcoming events!

The Lived Experience of Aging

Dr. Kelly Warren (The Lived Experience of Aging Pillar Lead) and her students have been working to identify gaps in current programs that could help older adults and their families. This has included administering surveys that examine the good and bad experiences of older adults from Newfoundland and Labrador, and Corner Brook residents’ openness towards becoming a dementia friendly community; examining non-criminal approaches to handling elder abuse; looking for ways of offering virtual support for family caregivers; and the development of education modules for groups who work or volunteer with older adults. Dr. Warren and her students have also recently begun working towards developing Men’s sheds in the province that will be directed towards older men who might be lonely and/or experiencing depression. If you would like more information about any of these projects or if you would like to become more involved, please email Dr. Warren at kelly.warren@mun.ca.

Age-Friendly Communities

“Aging in Place” is a priority in Newfoundland and Labrador as reflected in Section 8 of the [2022 Health Accord](#). In 2023-2024 Dawn Pittman (PhD(c), Aging in Place Pillar Co-Lead) led the ARC-NL Age-Friendly Community Project in partnership with the Great Northern-Peninsula Research Collective (GNP-RC), to identify research priorities and develop regional research approaches and survey tools. Building on this work, Ms. Pittman along with Dr. Kelly Vodden (Aging in Place Pillar Co-Lead) and Christie Stilwell (PhD(c), Research Assistant) are working with other communities to better understand and prioritize age-friendly community planning. These community partners include Bird Cove, Port aux Choix, Norris Point, Conche, Benoit First Nation (Port au Port and Bay St. George) and NunatuKavut Inuit (south and central Labrador).



Pictured: ARC-NL researchers meeting with the 50+ club in Cartwright.

Community Research Priority Setting

With the support of a 2023 CIHR Planning and Dissemination Grant (co-applicants Dr. Karen Doody, Director ARC-NL and Dr. Rick Audas, Director NLCAHR), ARC-NL held two community events open to older adults and researchers across the province to determine research priorities and needs, identify common research interests, and form relationships to support project planning.

On September 25, 2024, ARC-NL hosted a virtual event to hear from seniors and older adults to better understand their aging research priorities. With 38 individuals registered, participants shared their ideas about health and aging in the province and priorities for research on aging.

Next, on November 15-16, 2024, ARC-NL hosted a 2-day in-person event to engage

researchers, students and trainees, representatives from the healthcare system, patient and caregiver partners, and older adults. 35 attendees from all over the province gathered in Corner Brook, NL to take part in discussions around aging research priorities in the province, create research partnerships, and start planning research projects together.



Researchers and students at ARC-NL are currently working to organize and analyze the abundant knowledge provided by attendees at both events; research priorities identified thus far include: 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.

Please visit our [website](#) and make sure you are on our email list to stay up to date, and THANK YOU to everyone who participated!

Congratulations 2024-2025 ARC-NL Fellowship Awardees

Shreya Shashikant Hande

“Investigating opioid exposure on bone’s microstructural and biochemical parameters”

Elissa Orbasi

“Disentangling the relationship between functional brain connectivity (FBC), corticospinal tract (CST) integrity, and physical performance: A cross-sectional study of community-dwelling older adults”

Pegah Dehghan

“The auditory benefit of group singing”

Judah Inioluwa Adeniyi

“An examination of the impact of workplace technology changes on the work experiences of older workers”

Emama Deena

“Constructing a customized frailty index for aged population of Newfoundland and Labrador”

Student Member Spotlight



Shreya S. Hande
M.Sc. Medicine

Originally from Windsor, Ontario, Shreya is a graduate student completing her M.Sc. in Medicine (in the Bioscience of Health and Disease program) at MUN, St. John’s. Her thesis work aims to elucidate the molecular mechanisms underlying opioid-induced bone fragility, and sex-associated differences in this effect. To find out more about the research foci of the Andronowski Lab Shreya is a part of, please visit <https://www.andronowskilab.com/>.

She received a graduate fellowship from ARC-NL last year to help fund her work and education, which she says has been helpful for her. She also had the opportunity to attend November’s in-person event in Corner Brook with her supervisor and lab mates:

“We had a great experience sharing our lab team’s work investigating age- and opioid- associated changes in skeletal integrity, and interacting with local community leaders and fellow researchers.”

Community Member Spotlight



Fraser Piccott
St. John's, NL

Fraser is a Retired/Disability Financial Support Programs Consultant living in his home city of St. John's. He does a great deal of community advocacy work in Newfoundland, having presently or previously served as a chairperson in the Provincial Advisory Council for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities, president of the Newfoundland Association for Community Living, vice-president of the Canadian Association for Community Living, president of the Vera Perlin Society, SeniorsNL Special Advisor to SpacesShared, and more. Further, in 2023 he received one of nine Seniors of Distinctions Awards, presented to him by the Premier.

Continuing his advocacy work, Fraser became involved with ARC-NL to improve policy development and to research WrapAround services for aging in place.

Did you know?

ARC-NL supports research on aging in ALL disciplines across the province? Since 2019 we have awarded over \$450,000 in graduate fellowships as well as research and development grants. Make sure you are on our mailing list to learn about upcoming funding calls!

Interested in becoming a member?

Scan:




or visit:

<https://mun.ca/grenfellcampus/research/aging-research-centre-nl/membership/>

Questions or comments? Contact us!

 agingresearchcentre@mun.ca

 <https://mun.ca/grenfellcampus/research/aging-research-centre-nl/>

*Thank you for a successful year
ARC-NL wishes you well!*