

Provincial News Winter 2015



What has changed? What is changing!!

Recently when I read in my community newsletter a call for study participants for 'Are you Resilient? Resilience in dementia' to learn perspectives of those living with dementia - what helps you do okay with the diagnosis? I asked myself *What can I do – what can 'we' do to support?*

So our continued call to action – discussion, knowledge and engagement within our community of practice and the immediate society that is shaping and changing provision of health care within our province.

We are thrilled that AGNA members are involved on the steering and advisory committee, working groups and soon the focus groups for the Alberta Dementia Strategy and Action Plan. Another project members are involved with is the 'Dementia Link' steering committee. Information and updates will be posted on the Advocacy tab of our website.

Advocacy Committee

Dr. Sandi Hirst, chairperson

Social integration of older adults in society is frequently used as an indicator of healthy aging. Yet, the International Federation of Aging's report (IFA, 2012) commissioned by Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) identified the number one emerging issue facing older Canadians is that of social isolation. Social isolation is described as a low quantity and quality of contact with others. In a recent United Kingdom study, University World News (2013), researchers found that socially isolated older adults were at increased risk of early death regardless of their health and demographic background.

Consequently, in late 2013, the National Seniors Council was instructed to seek the input of key stakeholders into social isolation of older adults; the extent of the problem, and strategies to resolve it. Its report is now available on line at

Being part of the action includes thinking globally and acting locally. Seriously, do more than consider attending your chapter activities – engage in planning and promoting member information / education and social networking events. We are a community of practice!

Our 34th annual general meeting and conference event is set for 23 and 24 April 2015 in Red Deer. A dynamic line up for the theme of 'Older Adults at Risk: Strategies for Support and Care' has speakers addressing issues of homelessness, elder abuse, aging with developmental disabilities, hoarding and older nurses at risk in the work place.

Let us keep the conversations going!

Lynne Moulton, president@agna.ca

*Can we differentiate between social isolation and loneliness?

*Are we recognizing and addressing the factors that can promote or prevent social isolation, for e.g. transportation, financial incomes, availability of support systems, housing options?

*What interventions can we initiate to reduce social isolation?

I have started a list of possible interventions but will leave their richer descriptions to you,

- Initiate group activities: e.g., discussion; self-help groups; social activities;
- Target high risk groups: for example, widowed;
- Use more than one method to initiate social participation; and
- Provide decision-making control to older adults.

http://www.seniorscouncil.gc.ca/eng/research_publications/social_isolation/page02.shtml Citing from this document, in a Statistics Canada 2012 Health Report, almost one in four adults over the age of 65 (24%) reported that they would have liked to have participated in more social activities in the past year.

We need to differentiate between social isolation and loneliness. Some older adults choose to live alone because they prefer it. Loneliness is a possible outcome of a small number of social relationships; but socially isolated individuals are not necessarily lonely, and lonely older adults are not necessarily socially isolated.

This leads to some work for us, as AGNA members:

*Are we assessing for social isolation in our work with older adults?

Social isolation is a reality. Let's begin to actively address it.

Want to get involved? advocacy@agna.ca

Follow on the Advocacy tab www.agna.ca

References

International Federation of Aging. (2012). *Current and emerging issues facing older Canadians*. Retrieved from <http://www.ifa-fiv.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/current-and-emerging-issues-facing-older-canadians-final-report-30-march-2012.pdf>

University World News. (2013). *Social isolation causes mortality in the elderly*. Retrieved from <http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20130411165357161>

Alberta Dementia Strategy and Action Plan

Lynne Moulton, Steering Committee member

In July 2002 Alberta Health and Wellness released *'Alzheimer Disease & Other Dementias: Strategic Directions in Healthy Aging and Continuing Care in Alberta'*. The working task group was formed in November 2002 that was an excellent representative of clinicians and community from across the province – including many AGNA members (click here to view).

A steering committee was formed with the initial meeting held 30 October 2014. Time line for a final draft of a strategy and action for submission to government is October / November 2015 with the plan for release of the strategy in December 2015.

Co-chairs are Corinne Schalm (Alberta Health) and Dr. Duncan Robertson (Seniors Health SCN)

The Steering Committee consists of *members* from within the Government of Alberta, Alberta Health Services (AHS), and external stakeholder groups including many members from our AGNA community of practice.

Key messages -

1. The strategy needs to include aspects of living well including prevention and wellness, and support for caregivers.
2. Public input, particularly the experiences of those living with dementia and their caregivers, are the key to an effective strategy.
3. There needs to be a systems approach to addressing dementia – not just in the realm of health care.

5. The strategy will lead to actions that will improve services and supports for people with dementia.

6. We need to engage the public to increase understanding and awareness of dementia; this illness affects everyone, not just the people who are diagnosed with dementia and their families.

7. This strategy will need to focus on supports and services in the community and in facilities so that it can reach all Albertans affected by dementia.

8. There is great research out there about dementia, locally, nationally and internationally, but we need more research.

9. Measuring the incidence and prevalence of dementia in Alberta is not an easy task. Alberta Health and AHS are working to identify the best way to capture these numbers as accurately as possible.

Six Working Groups are forming that will meet between March and May 2015.

- *Research and Innovation Working Group
- *Primary Health Care Working Group
- *Dementia Journey Working Group
- *Acute Care & Crisis Management Working Group
- *Care Partner Support Working Group
- *Public Awareness Working Group

The **Alberta Dementia Strategy Advisory Committee's** first met mid-January 2015. The membership is composed of 20 members – including seven members from the public – family of people with dementia as well as people with dementia / cognitive impairment.

4. A plan to evaluate the strategy must be developed as we begin our development of the strategy. This will not be an evaluation to tell us how we did, rather to tell us what we can improve.

Have you saved the date?! 23 and 24 April 2015

AGNA's 34th Annual General Meeting and Conference Day 'Older Adults at Risk: Strategies for Support and Care'

The *call for nominations* is now open for the role of Provincial Treasurer - ([click here for info](#) – click AGM Documents tab)

'The Provincial Treasurer is elected at the Annual General Meeting for a two-year plus one month term. The candidate should have been an active member within their chapter and it is preferred that they have experience with this role at the chapter level.'

If you would like to learn more about the role please contact treasurer@agna.ca

The call for poster abstracts has been extended until April 10! ([click here for information](#) – click on Call for Abstracts tab)

[For event registration go here](#) and click on the Registration tab

Terri Woytkiw, Conference Planning chairperson
President-elect@agna.ca / conference2015@agna.ca

New venue this year –
Radisson Hotel Red Deer
6500 67 Street 800-395-7046 / 403-342-6567
Conference hotel room rate available www.radisson.com/

Conference events -

Thursday 23 April - Dinner and presentation

No cost for AGNA members

Non-members see registration for details

Dr. Suzette Bremault-Phillips 'Finding Balance: Fostering Happiness in a Technological Age'

Friday 24 April - AGM and Conference

AGNA members \$100

Non-AGNA \$175

Students \$60

See registration for details

Dr. Martin LaBrie 'Homelessness and the Elderly'

Leslie Pisani 'Two-Steppin' Around Elder Abuse: Assessment and Intervention'

COAST Team – Joanne Lagasse and Tanya Wasielewski
"Aging with Developmental Disabilities"

Doneka Simmons 'Hoarding'

Shannon Jacobi 'Older Nurses at Risk in the Work Place'

Chapter Highlights

Red Deer chapter – Karen Horsley

We're very happy with our first attempt to share our Red Deer Chapter AGNA education presentations with other interested AGNA members via TeleHealth. The November 18th presentation "Care Level Options" by Susan Anning RN BN Rural Clinical Educator Central Zone, Seniors' Health was well received. Plans are in

Medicine Hat – Lois Polachic

Member meetings: November 12, 2014 was a tour of the Simulation Lab at Medicine Hat College. It was interactive and fun. January 19, 2015 with a presenter Heather Hart from the provincial AUA team.

Edmonton Chapter – Tammy Damberger



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info@agna.ca
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Mail us at: AGNA
Box 67040 Meadowlark
Edmonton AB T5R 5Y3

place to offer TeleHealth for all future educational presentations including February 11, 2015 “Sexuality and the Older Adult” presented by Helle Tees, MN, Red Deer College Nursing Instructor.

January 2015 the annual joint dinner meeting with the Alberta Association on Gerontology. Representatives from Edmonton Seniors Council presented on ‘Age Friendly Alberta’.

Calgary Chapter – Michele Copeland

Theme for this year is ‘Being your Best—Stay Curious’. In September we viewed the documentary by Stu Maddox ‘Gen Silent’.

AGNA Provincial Study Support Group

studygroups@agna.ca

Members supporting members preparing for the Canadian Nurses Association Gerontological Nursing certification exam (18 April).

This is a second year for the pilot commenced last year. The introductory meeting was held 27 November with 10 participants. Wednesday evenings were selected for 80 minute sessions January to early April. There are four members acting as the core team who have done the behind the scenes organizing along with moderating the sessions.

All the sessions are via teleconference. The ‘getting started’ sessions were an opportunity to link participants with resources, practice tests and discuss strategies. From mid-January to mid-April ‘Content Experts’ are discussing topics ranging from older adult mental health, social challenges, physical assessment, dementia, delirium, continence, transitions, and palliative care. And the all-important session on strategies for managing the exam!

Your AGNA colleague’s thoughts are with you on April 18th!

Promoting AGNA at the CLPNA 2015 ‘Getting Real: Paths to authentic Care’ AGM and Conference!

AGNA is taking the opportunity to participate as an exhibitor during the 29 April to 01 May 2015 event. When attending the conference please stop by our booth!

For information on the CLPNA event visit - <http://www.clpnaconference.com/>

AGNA is noted in -

As a link in **Alberta Health Services** – see the screen shot (right)

<http://insite.albertahealthservices.ca/2321.asp>

College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta –

In the CLPNA professional journal ‘Care’ AGNA contact information has been consistently listed in the ‘Connections’ column.

The screenshot displays the 'Seniors Health' website. It features a navigation menu on the left with links to 'Seniors Health Policies & Procedures', 'Seniors Health Provincial', 'Seniors Health Provincial Orientation', 'Seniors Health Zones', 'Seniors Strategy', 'Contact Information', and 'Back to Our Teams / Departments'. The main content area includes an 'Introduction' section, a 'What's New' section with updates on LTC sites, collaborative practice, CHCA Summit, and Fall Risk Management, and an 'Are You Linked In?' section listing various associations and guidelines. On the right, there are 'Quick Reference Links' and 'Online Learning Resource' sections. A red arrow points to the 'Are You Linked In?' section.



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