

# SENIORS HEALTH STRATEGIC CLINICAL NETWORK



Volume 2, Issue 3

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## Current Seniors Health SCN Research Initiatives

As you may be aware, the Seniors Health SCN conducts its work around three major platforms: 1) Healthy Aging and Seniors Care, 2) Aging Brain Care, and 3) Anticipating an Aging Alberta. Below is a review of the current research initiatives, organized by the SCN's platforms.

### Healthy Aging and Seniors Care

- Elder-friendly Approaches to the Surgical Environment (EASE) Study in collaboration with the Surgery SCN and funded by AIHS
- Elder Friendly Care Learning Collaborative focused on acute care and funded by the Calgary Zone QI Fund
- Mobilization of Vulnerable Elderly in Alberta (MOVE AB) Study, a knowledge to action grant funded by CIHR
- In collaboration with Covenant Health and the World Health Organization, SH SCN led a two-day planning meeting focused on Supporting Family Caregivers of Older Adults, partially funded by CIHR
- Network Meta-analysis on Falls Prevention, a cross-provincial knowledge synthesis collaboration funded by CIHR

### Aging Brain Care

- Systematic Review of Dementia Practice Guidelines, published ahead of print in *Age and Aging*
- Systematic Review of Depression Case finding in Dementia – submitted for publication
- A cross-SCN collaboration, led by the Cancer SCN, on Advanced Care Planning and supported by an AIHS Team CRIO grant

### Anticipating an Aging Alberta

- Cross-provincial collaboration on Enhancing uptake of Systematic Reviews by Knowledge-users, funded by CIHR
- Led by Covenant Health NESHW, collaboration on a Caregiver Policy Scan
- Patient Engagement research project to hear the voice of Patients and Families on the work of the Seniors Health SCN



### SCN Connects

Dr. Jayna Holroyd-Leduc (left) and Dr. Rachel Khadaroo (right) pose with the Deputy Minister of Health, Janet M. Davidson, in front of their poster on Elder-Friendly Approaches to Surgical Environment, which was presented at "SCN Connects" in September. More on this event on pages 4 and 5.

## Issue Highlights:

- SH SCN Research Update **2**  
A diagram of the Seniors Health SCN research community's collaborations.
- Presentations by the SH SCN **3**  
Brief overview of conferences attended by and presented at by members of the Seniors Health SCN.
- SCN Connects **4**  
Summary of the networking event in Banff, AB.
- Time to Stop Driving? **6**  
Article retrieved from:  
[www.johnshopkinshealthalerts.com/alerts/memory](http://www.johnshopkinshealthalerts.com/alerts/memory).
- Public Forum for Seniors **7**  
Highlights from an event organized by the Calgary Seniors Housing Forum Society/
- AB Dementia Strategy **8**  
An overview of the development of an Alberta Dementia Strategy and Action Plan.



# SH SCN Research Update

## Seniors Health SCN Research Community Collaborations



Figure. Seniors Health SCN Research Community Collaborations.

N.B. Many inter-departmental and cross-institution affiliations exist. The lines noting such connections have been left off the figure to enhance clarity.

Researchers interested in joining the Seniors Health SCN Research Community, please contact:

Dr. Jayna Holroyd-Leduc, Scientific Director, SH SCN: [Jayna.Holroyd-Leduc@albertahealthservices.ca](mailto:Jayna.Holroyd-Leduc@albertahealthservices.ca)  
 Dr. Heather Hanson, Assistant Scientific Director, SH SCN: [Heather.Hanson@albertahealthservices.ca](mailto:Heather.Hanson@albertahealthservices.ca)



# Grey Matters Conference

October 2—3, 2014  
Red Deer, AB

The Grey Matters Conference is a two-day event that offers provincial service providers opportunities to network, gain knowledge and increase awareness of issues, supports and services for seniors. This year, two of our own SCN members; Dr. Duncan Robertson (Senior Medical Director), and Dennis Cleaver (Executive Director) were honored to represent the Seniors Health SCN and their priorities. Their presentation, entitled “Anticipating an Aging Alberta—Where Should We Focus?”, provided an overview of the Network’s three platforms and the projects that are being used to help pursue improvements to health care services and practices that enable Alberta’s seniors to optimize their health, well-being and independence. A copy of the presentation is available at <http://greymatters2014.ca/index.php?id=23>.



Dr. Duncan Robertson, above, presents at the 2014 Grey Matters Conference in Red Deer, Alberta.



## Overview

In this presentation we will:

- Begin with an overview of aging and the principles of good medical and social care for older people,
- Introduce the Seniors Health Strategic Clinical Network (SH SCN),
- Outline the three priority areas for the SH SCN, while spending time outlining the considerations associated with dementia,
- Conclude with an overview of factors Alberta needs to consider when “Anticipating an Older Alberta”,
- Leave time for questions.

## CARNA Conference: RN Solutions in Older Adult Care

November 2, 2014  
Calgary, AB

On November 3, 2014 Dennis Cleaver, Executive Director—SH SCN, and Mollie Cole, Manager—SH SCN, gave a presentation on the Appropriate Use of Antipsychotics (AUA) in Long Term Care at the College & Association of Registered Nurses of Alberta (CARNA) Conference.



## Keynote presentation

### LONG-TERM CARE, ANTIPSYCHOTICS AND DEMENTIA CARE

Alberta's Seniors Health Strategic Clinical Network is pursuing improvements to health-care services and practices that enable Alberta's older adults to optimize their health, well-being and independence. The Network is engaging in collaborative processes with stakeholders to identify and implement evidence-based, leading practices in seniors' health care across Alberta. The presentation will provide an overview of the Network, its priority to advance dementia care in the province, and its aim at improving the appropriate use of antipsychotics in long-term care.



# SCN Connects 2014

## September 11—13, 2014

### Banff, AB

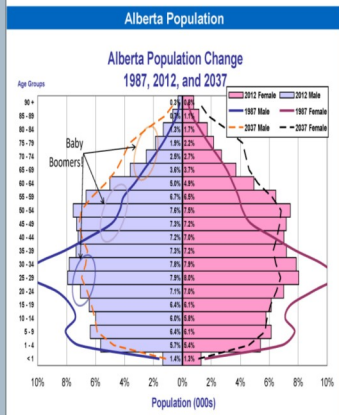
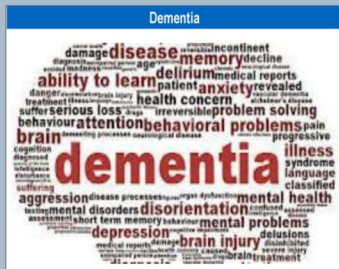
In September, representatives working on and supporting Alberta's Strategic Clinical Networks met in Banff for a two day conference hosted by Alberta Innovates—Health Solutions (AIHS) and Alberta Health Services (AHS). The title of the conference was “Becoming the Best: Alberta's Strategic Clinical Networks—*Embedding Patient Research and Innovation*” and provided an opportunity for the SCNs to celebrate their work to date, to share successes (and challenges) across the SCNs, and to discuss new opportunities. In addition to a range of SCN members, the meeting included representatives from organizations which have a stake in ensuring the success of the SCNs, including AIHS, AHS and Alberta Health. Here are two of the SH SCN's posters that were on display at the conference.

Dr. Brent James, Executive Director of the Institute for Health Care Delivery Research at Intermountain Healthcare, gave a keynote on Friday, September 12<sup>th</sup>. He challenged the audience to think about how the SCNs can serve as key enabling structures for successful improvement efforts across the organization.

## Seniors Health Strategic Clinical Network

### Aging Brain Care

Focus on Dementia from Prevention to End of Life



#### SH SCN Platforms and Projects

**Mission:** To make improvements to health care services and practices that enable Alberta's seniors to optimize their health, well-being, and independence.

**Healthy Aging and Seniors Care**

**Platforms:** Aging Brain Care

Anticipating an Aging Alberta

Pillars: Research and Innovation

Engagement

Communication

Quality Improvement and Measurement

#### Alzheimer vs. Dementia

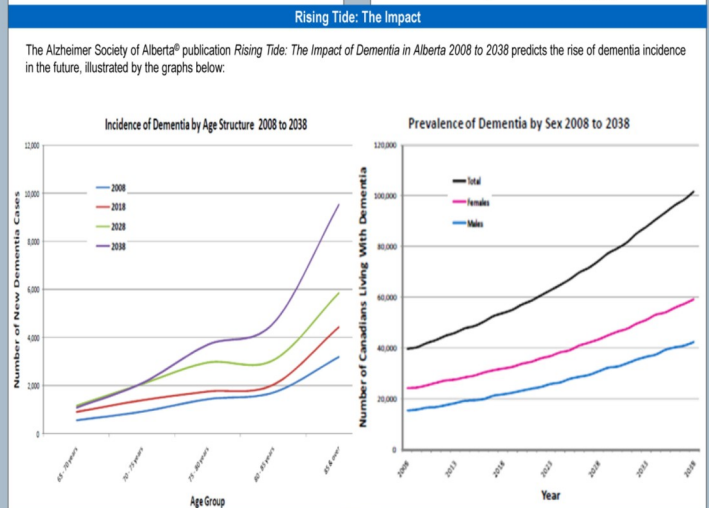
### What's the difference between ALZHEIMER'S and DEMENTIA?

**ALZHEIMER'S** the most common form

- Vascular Dementia
- Mixed Dementia
- Frontotemporal Dementia
- Normal pressure hydrocephalus
- Huntington's Disease
- Wernicke-Korsakoff Syndrome
- Parkinson's
- Creatinifib- Jakob disease

Dementia is an umbrella term that describes a wide range of symptoms including memory loss and mental decline. Alzheimer's is the most common form of dementia, but there are many others.

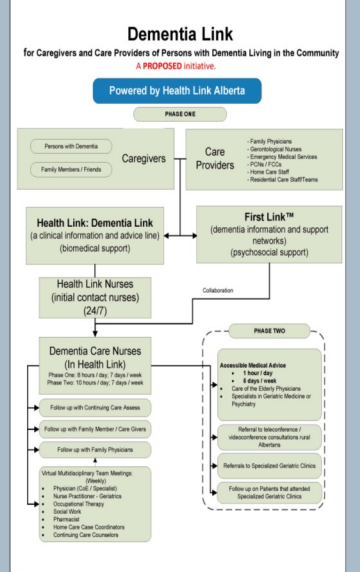
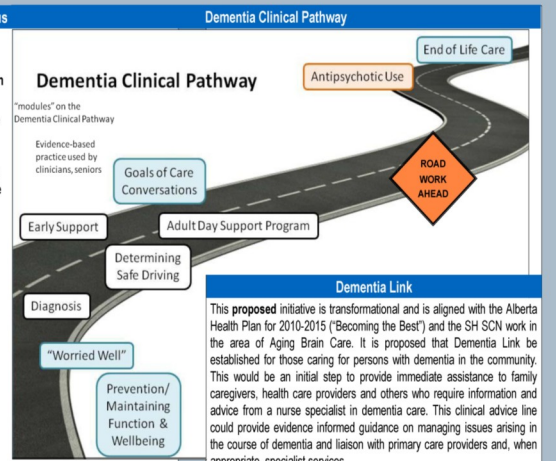
Learn more at [alz.org/relateddementias](http://alz.org/relateddementias)



#### 2014 Blackfriars Consensus

**Blackfriars Consensus on promoting brain health: Reducing risks for dementia in the population**

Dementia is a common syndrome closely associated with ageing, with some known underlying causes and others which are less well understood. Recent evidence suggests that risk in the population might be reduced so that fewer people at particular ages develop dementia. The scientific evidence is evolving rapidly and sufficient to justify considered action and further research on dementia risk reduction, both by reducing the modifiable risk factors and improving the recognized protective factors.



# SCN Connects 2014

September 11—13, 2014  
Banff, AB



# EASE Study

## Elder-Friendly Approaches to the Surgical Environment

### Seniors Health SCN PRIHS Grant

Dr. Rachel Khadaroo, Dr. Adrian Wagg, Dr. Raj Padwal,  
Dr. Jayna Holroyd-Leduc, Dr. Fiona Clement

Coordinators: Lindsey Warkentin, Ashley Wanamaker

### Acute Care Surgery in Older Adults—Challenges:



Adverse outcomes in this group involves a complex interrelationship

Baseline vulnerability & precipitating insults during hospitalization place elders at high risk for adverse events and functional decline

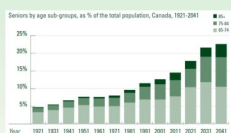
### Current Outcomes:

>35% of older patients developed at least 1 in-hospital complication or died in hospital

Development of a complication is an independent predictor of mortality

Khadaroo et al. World Journal of Emerg. Surgery 2014

### Background:

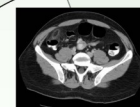


As the population ages, there is a greater demand for emergency surgical services



**Vascular Changes with Age in a Septic Model**  
Collaborators: Dr. Saad Salim, Dr. Ferrante Gragasini, Dr. Stephane Bourque

Using experimental surgical rodent models of sepsis to examine the vascular response in old vs. young



**Sarcopenia as a Predictor of Outcome in the Elderly**

Collaborators: Dr. Vickie Baracos, Dr. Puneeta Tandon

Using ultrasound, CT scan and muscle biopsies to assess sarcopenia, and to explore associations between sarcopenia and risk for complications, mortality and discharge status



**Facilitators and Barriers to Change**

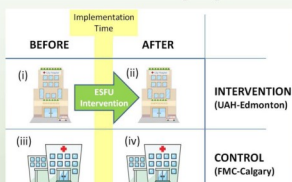
Collaborators: Dr. Susan Slaughter, Dr. Heather Hanson

Gain insight from Surgeons, RNs, LPNs, and HCAs on the potential facilitators and barriers, and readiness for implementing an Elder Friendly Surgical Unit

**Hypothesis:** A dedicated interdisciplinary Elder Friendly Surgical Unit within a major surgical center in Alberta will realign current resources, implement evidence-informed practices and improve health outcomes in a cost-effective manner

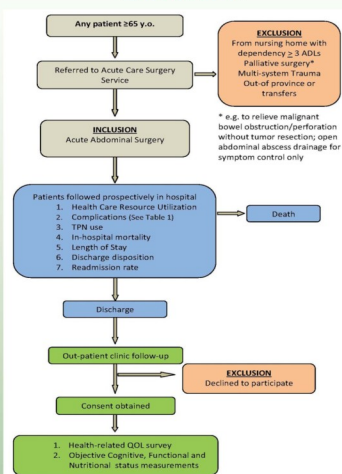
### Study Design:

Prospective, before-after study with concurrent control groups



**Primary Outcome:**  
Post-operative major complication or death

### Timeline:



### EASE Study Interventions:

1. **Co-locating elderly surgical patients:**  
Patients will be co-located on one unit
2. **Interdisciplinary team-based care:**  
Team includes consultation with Geriatrician
3. **Implementation of evidence-informed practices:**  
Early mobilization, comfort rounds, nutritional best practices, reduced restraint and catheter use
4. **Early discharge planning:**  
Support safe, quality discharge transitions to maximize functional recovery



### Economic Assessment of EASE Study

All costs (direct/indirect) of the Elder Friendly Surgical Unit will be tracked, with cost per quality-adjusted-life-year gained and projected cost savings calculated.

**4 Pillars**  
Basic/Biomedical  
Applied clinical science  
Health services and systems  
Social, cultural and environmental factors

Activity	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Project Preparation	█		
"Before" EFSU	█	█	
Implementation		█	█
"After" EFSU			█
Translation			█



# 15 Warning Signs That It's Time to Stop Driving



JOHNS HOPKINS  
MEDICINE

Convincing an elderly driver to hand over the car keys is a delicate and often difficult task. But it's one that many adult children and caregivers will have to face sooner or later, especially when the driver has dementia.

Even if a person with mild or very mild dementia is deemed competent to drive, driving skills can deteriorate rapidly. Therefore, cognition and road test skills should be frequently re-evaluated, possibly as often as every six months.

**Signs of trouble.** Perhaps the simplest way to determine if a person with mild dementia is fit to drive is to let common sense be your guide. Many warning signs, from subtle to strong, indicate that an individual shouldn't be driving. These include:

1. Driving too slowly or too fast
2. Receiving traffic tickets
3. Being honked at or yelled at by other drivers
4. Becoming upset or angry while driving
5. Dents, dings or scraped paint on the car, mailbox or garage
6. Misunderstanding or not noticing signs on the road
7. Getting lost in familiar places
8. Stopping at a green light
9. Changing lanes without looking
10. Drifting into another lane
11. Having difficulty making left turns
12. Misjudging distances
13. Mistaking the gas pedal for the brake
14. Causing any crash or near crash
15. You can also follow the "grandchild test": If you would not feel safe having this person drive his or her grandchild, it's time to have a talk about handing over the keys.



*MyHealth.Alberta.ca* suggests that the family doctor may also be able to offer some guidance on whether the person is able to drive safely and warns that some people may become angry or depressed when they are told they can no longer drive. They may not give up the keys willingly, and may try to get access to the car anyway. If you are the caregiver, you may need to hide the car keys or park the car in a different location. They also recommend that you be sure to arrange other options for transportation so that the person does not feel cut off from activities that take place outside the home.



For More Information: <https://myhealth.alberta.ca/health/Pages/conditions.aspx?hwid=te6229&#te6229-sec>



# Living and Aging Well Housing Fair and Information Session

## Confederation Park Seniors Centre, Calgary

Organized by the Calgary Seniors Housing Forum Society



The "golden" years

Mollie Cole, RN, MN, GNC (C)  
Manager of the Seniors Health Strategic Clinical Network  
Alberta Health Services

Mollie Cole (left), SCN Manager, contributed to the Forum held on October 18th, 2014 with a presentation on Aging Well to more than 100 seniors and their families. The topic complemented other presentations on unique housing models in the Calgary area. The Seniors Health SCN also sponsored a display table, with help from Sylvia Teare, SCN Core Committee member and Patient Engagement Researcher.



### Calgary Seniors Housing Forum Society

The Seniors' Housing Forum Society is made up of a small group of people who want to help Calgary seniors and their families find the best place to live in their later years. The goal of the Society is to create a one-stop website that will make it easy for you to find the support and services you need to remain in your own home, if that's the best option, or to find a home where you can live as healthily and comfortably as possible.

Information retrieved from:  
<http://www.calgaryherald.com/life/seniors/about-us.html>



### Seniors Health SCN Community of Practice

The Seniors Health SCN maintains a membership list, the community of practice, for those who have a healthcare background and would like to be provided with the opportunity to be involved in planning activities, provide input on current initiatives, or even participate in working groups. This group of 300 stays informed of our work by receiving bulletins, newsletters, and other periodic updates.

If you would like to join the Community of Practice, please send your expression of interest with your name and preferred contact e-mail address to [vanessa.bulmer@albertahealthservices.ca](mailto:vanessa.bulmer@albertahealthservices.ca).



# Alberta Provincial Dementia Strategy and Action Plan



Alberta Health is leading the development of a dementia strategy and action plan for Alberta. The Seniors Health SCN is pleased to be working closely with Alberta Health on this. The initiative is being guided by a provincial steering committee, which is co-chaired by Corinne Schalm (left), Executive Director of the Continuing Care Branch, Health Services Division, Alberta Health and Dr. Duncan Robertson (right), Senior Medical Director, Seniors Health SCN. The steering committee has met twice and has agreed that the experiences of those living with dementia and their caregivers are the key to an effective strategy and that the strategy must lead to actions that will improve services and supports for people with dementia.

## Merry Christmas!



The Seniors Health Strategic Clinical Network sends its wishes for a joyous holiday season and health, joy, and peace throughout the New Year.

Duncan Robertson, Jayna Holroyd-Leduc, Heather Hanson, Lynne Mansell, Dennis Cleaver, and Mollie Cole [clockwise]