



New Brunswick
Health Research
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Fondation de la
recherche en santé
du Nouveau-Brunswick

New national innovation hub launched to support healthy aging

APPTA will help deliver new and emerging technologies to seniors and caregivers

May 16, 2017, Fredericton – The AGE-WELL Network of Centres of Excellence (NCE) and the New Brunswick Health Research Foundation (NBHRF) are pleased to announce the launch of a national innovation hub to advance policies, practices and services in the fast-evolving field of technology and aging.

With Canada’s aging population, the new AGE-WELL National Innovation Hub will help ensure Canadians benefit from new and emerging technologies that can support independent living and improve quality of life of older adults and caregivers. This hub is the first of its kind.

The Advancing Policies and Practices in Technology and Aging (APPTA) hub will design innovative solutions to specific policy, program and service challenges, and will develop best practices for rapid adoption of new technologies.

The hub was officially opened today in Fredericton by the Honourable Lisa Harris, New Brunswick Minister of Seniors and Long-Term Care. Seniors now make up 19.92 per cent of New Brunswick’s population, making it the province with the oldest population in Canada. Nova Scotia is a close second at 19.90 per cent. It’s projected that within a generation, the number of New Brunswickers aged 65 and over may climb to 29 or even 31 per cent.

“The new hub is an important initiative that will support the development of policies, practices and services across Canada that harness the power of technology to promote healthy aging,” said Minister Harris. “Through the New Brunswick Aging Strategy and other important initiatives such as the long-term care assessment tool, age-friendly communities and Home First, New Brunswick has taken significant steps to address the challenges of an aging population.

“We are delighted to be the host province for a hub that will be a national resource for policymakers, researchers, clinicians and others working to implement novel technologies that will improve the health and wellbeing of older Canadians and their caregivers.”

The hub will help innovators and entrepreneurs transform their ideas into market successes by connecting them with end users, policymakers and service providers, and nurturing the transfer and early adoption of new technologies. It will give stakeholders ready access to the latest research findings and information on emerging tools and health technologies.

“As smart homes, assistive and digital technologies become more available, we want to maximize their impact on people’s lives, and produce economic benefits for Canadians. This hub—a first for AGE-WELL—will be a platform for knowledge mobilization and policy innovation that will ensure new technologies

get to the people who need them as quickly as possible,” said Dr. Alex Mihailidis, Scientific Director of AGE-WELL, Canada’s Technology and Aging Network.

“Health research and social innovation is crucial to finding practical solutions to the challenges we are facing (in New Brunswick). Existing and novel technologies, applied to the right people, at the right place and at the right time, hold the key to making sure our Canadian seniors age well, and are assisted by programs and services adapted to their needs,” said Dr. Bruno Battistini, President, CEO & Scientific Director of NBHRF and a co-sponsor of the hub on behalf of the Government of New Brunswick. “This hub will promote knowledge-sharing and effective transfer of needed technologies right across Canada.”

In New Brunswick, the hub will also bring new training opportunities for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows in the field of technology and aging. AGE-WELL and NBHRF will jointly fund the salaries of four outstanding individuals annually, nurturing future innovators.

Kevin Harter, CEO of the York Care Centre (YCC), said his centre is a natural place for the hub’s offices to be located. “We are a community of professionals who respect the desire of seniors to maintain dignity and be as independent as possible,” said Mr. Harter. “This hub will define the best policies, practices and services in technology and aging. We are excited to play a role in bringing together people from different sectors. This is how breakthrough approaches and ideas are born.”

About AGE-WELL:

AGE-WELL NCE Inc. (<http://www.agewell-nce.ca/>, [@AGEWELL_NCE](#)) is a pan-Canadian network of industry, non-profit organizations, government, care providers, end users, and academic partners working to drive innovation and create technologies and services that benefit older adults and caregivers. Its vision is to harness and build upon the potential of emerging and advanced technologies in areas such as artificial intelligence (AI), e-health, information communication technologies (ICTs), and mobile technologies to stimulate technological, social, and policy innovation. AGE-WELL was launched in 2015 through the federally funded Networks of Centres of Excellence program.

About New Brunswick Health Research Foundation:

NBHRF (www.nbhrf.com / [@NBHRF](#)) is an independent organization governed by a board of directors comprised of key stakeholders from the health research community in New Brunswick. Provincial funding is provided by the Regional Development Corporation – Total Development Fund, the Department of Health - Medical Research Fund (MRF) and the Department of Social Development - Wellness Research Fund (WRF) for NBHRF health research programs (HRP). The foundation’s mission is to provide leadership and support building health research capacity, improve the health of New Brunswickers and advance the knowledge economy.

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Caption:

The new AGE-WELL National Innovation Hub will engage a range of stakeholders and help ensure Canadians benefit from new and emerging technologies that support healthy aging.