

# The Power of Hope



A key lesson I've learned during my nine years at Perley Health Foundation is the enduring power of hope. Most of us hope for a better future for ourselves and for our families. And we are willing to support initiatives that promise to improve the future in specific, measurable ways. This is evident both in the day-to-day operations of Perley Health and in our Answering the Call Campaign.

For more than 25 years, Perley Health has helped improve the lives of Seniors and Veterans, along with their families. Nearly every day, I'm treated to some version of the following story: since moving in, a resident is doing and feeling much better. And their family members are also doing better, because they know that their loved one is getting the best of care.

Throughout its history, Perley Health has continually improved the quality of care it delivers thanks to several advantages, such as a staff of dedicated and hardworking professionals, generous donors, selfless volunteers, and effective partnerships with schools and community groups. These advantages help drive the development of much-needed care models and best practices, improving quality of life for all Seniors and Veterans.

While those who work in the sector have long recognized the inadequacy of long-term care systems across the country, the COVID-19 pandemic has made it abundantly clear to everyone else. With Canada's population of older adults set to triple in the coming years, there are growing calls for effective solutions.

Our Answering the Call Campaign proposes to meet the challenge by investing in the practical research needed to develop and implement new models of care. The Campaign funds the work of the Centre of Excellence in Frailty-Informed Care, established by Perley Health in 2019. The Centre of Excellence researches and evaluates

the effectiveness of care models and practices, and shares them with other homes across Canada. Many of these models and practices were developed and piloted at Perley Health.

The Centre of Excellence research is increasingly featured in peer-reviewed journals. Recent examples include studies about falls prevention, virtual-reality therapy and SeeMe: Understanding Frailty Together—a comprehensive framework for developing care plans that prioritize a person's values, preferences and desired lifestyle. With many studies underway, the Centre of Excellence continues to attract a growing number of research partners across the country. The innovations and knowledge developed will benefit the healthcare system, train professional caregivers, educate students, shape public policy and ultimately improve quality of care for Seniors and Veterans.

The Campaign is off to a strong start because its message of hope for a better future is backed by a sound, multi-faceted plan. Transforming the care for Seniors and Veterans requires much more than research. It also requires knowledge translation and mobilization, and the establishment of research partnerships and education networks. The Campaign encompasses all of these and more. While much work remains to achieve Campaign goals, we continue to make great progress.

The system Canada uses to care for Seniors and Veterans is broken. By providing people with the opportunity to contribute to a viable solution, the Campaign inspires hope. Together, we can transform care for Seniors and Veterans.

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