



# ANNUAL REPORT

2020-2021

# CORPORATE PROFILE

Launched in 2017 with a single goal in mind, the AGE-WELL National Innovation Hub Advancing Policies and Practices in Technology and Aging (APPTA) is putting innovative aging and technology research into the hands of the people who can use it. It takes on average 17 years for research to be translated into action. By bringing together a dynamic team of young professionals to support an integrated network in research, policy, and innovation, APPTA aims to bridge that gap and mobilize aging and technology research in ways that can improve the lives of older Canadians.



## VISION

To drive policy innovation that improves the future of aging in Canada.

## MISSION

APPTA aims to advance evidence-informed decision-making that positively impacts the lives of older Canadians by mobilizing the power of research & technology, collaboration, and innovation.

## VALUES

**There is always a way to do it better.**

APPTA translates quality aging and technology research into actionable policy options for the federal, provincial, and territorial governments of Canada. Our efforts are aimed at ensuring the best and latest evidence is informing policy decision-making that impacts the lives of older Canadians.

**We go further when we work together.**

APPTA takes a connectivity approach to complex challenges in aging, bringing people together from east to west, north to south, to share their best ideas and work collectively on potential solutions that will benefit older Canadians.

**Everyone has the potential to innovate.**

APPTA offers a suite of education programs and learning opportunities that are designed to build the knowledge translation skills needed to bring great ideas to fruition.



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# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



AGE-WELL NCE Inc. is a federally-funded Network of Centres of Excellence established in 2015 to support Canadian research and innovation in the area of technology and aging. AGE-WELL is dedicated to the development and delivery of technologies, services and policies/practices that benefit older adults and caregivers. Its aim is to help older Canadians maintain their independence, health and quality of life through technology-based solutions that increase their safety and security, support their independent living, and enhance their social participation.



The New Brunswick Health Research Foundation (NBHRF) was created in July 2008 with a mandate to co-ordinate, support and promote health research in New Brunswick. The long-term vision of NBHRF is to provide leadership and support to enhance New Brunswick's health research capacity and competitiveness. This will ultimately lead to a healthier population through economic development opportunities and improvements in health policy and the health services delivery system.



## A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD

It has been a year of adaptation and change for all. When one sits down to create their plans for the year, it is hard to imagine a time with more challenges and change than the one we all faced in 2020. Gone is the opportunity to meet in person to discuss the challenges we are all facing. We live in a virtual world these days, and, while we continue to maintain our connections, they are done electronically. How we do business has changed from last year, but what we do and who we serve has not. Throughout 2020, APPTA has continued to provide strong leadership in policy analysis and development for our stakeholders.

This year, we have seen our stakeholders change from a focus on the challenges of the future to those of today as so many of us have in our daily lives. While most of the world has shifted their focus, APPTA continues to look at the future of aging in Canada and the policy changes that will be needed to meet the critical challenges ahead. We are prepared to support our stakeholders as they shift to a post-pandemic world and are looking forward to a time when we can sit down across the table from each other once again and discuss the needs of older adults and how best to meet them.

**KEVIN HARTER,**  
CHAIR OF THE BOARD



## A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

If you asked me to describe 2020-2021 at APPTA in just a few words, the first ones that come to mind are “virtual” and “pivot.” Like every organization, everything about our work, from the topics we highlight to the way we deliver services, has been impacted by COVID-19.

Thanks to the resilience of our team, we have been able to pivot to this new “virtual” reality. We shifted our programming, created new initiatives and tailored our tried-and-tested services to an online format. We focused our efforts on preparing for future disruption, examined and synthesized the evidence on virtual health solutions so that our policy stakeholders could be better prepared for decisions relating to the digital transformation of healthcare.

And we worked toward new partnerships, always with the objective of enhancing the knowledge translation capacity of the broader aging and technology network in Canada.

None of this would have been possible in such a unique year if it were not for the hard work of our operational team and the critical support of our funders at AGE-WELL NCE and the New Brunswick Health Research Foundation. We look forward to continuing our collective efforts to drive policy innovation that improves the future of aging in Canada in the years to come.

**CANDICE POLLACK,**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



## A MESSAGE FROM OUR SCIENTIFIC DIRECTOR

This was my first year as Scientific Director at APPTA. The pandemic played havoc with the well-laid plans we drew up before I started my position. Within weeks, it was clear that for research to remain relevant it would have to address immediate concerns in a rapidly evolving policy landscape. Social facing programs, like Canada's Emergency Response Benefit, changed the way we think about delivering resources to those in need. Healthcare delivery mechanisms, like policies dictating how long-term care centres operate or how physicians bill for virtual services, were criticized, overhauled, and updated in short periods of time. From a research perspective, that is incredibly exciting.

While the work-from-home orders definitely affected our small team, I'm quite pleased with the output from the team members, despite the many external challenges. Our work on physician remuneration for virtual care, long-term care policy comparisons, and caregiver enabling programs in other jurisdictions (to name a few, all forthcoming) highlight the challenges faced by older adults in Canada and how policy can mitigate and potentially correct long-standing health inequities when there is a political will to get it done. Our new external review process ensured our work was vetted by experts in the field before we put it out. While it was a taxing year, I am proud of the team and their accomplishments, and honoured to have helped facilitate it.

**DR. DANIEL DUTTON,**  
SCIENTIFIC DIRECTOR





## STAFF

**Dr. Daniel Dutton**, Scientific Director

**Candice Pollack**, Executive Director

**Jenna Roddick**,  
Manager of Research & Knowledge Translation

**Heather Higgins**,  
Coordinator of Policy & Knowledge Exchange

**Emily Kerry**, Research Assistant

**Samuel Hunter**, Research Assistant

**Karolina Jalowska**,  
Digital Media Coordinator

**Lynn Ouellet**, Policy Lab Coordinator

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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Medicine New Brunswick

**Dr. Rosalie Wang**,  
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**Dr. Michael Wilson**,  
McMaster University

**Dr. Josephine McMurray**,  
Wilfrid Laurier University

**Dr. Tom McIntosh**,  
University of Regina

**Pamela Fancey**,  
Nova Scotia Centre on Aging

**Dr. Jeff Jutai**, University of Ottawa



# 2020-2021

## A YEAR IN REVIEW

### OUR OUTPUTS:



Briefs: 13



Workshops: 5



Webinars & Presentations: 22



Jurisdictional Scans: 5



Podcast episodes: 2



KT Corner Posts: 7



Info sheets: 2



Meetings with community partners: 35+



Meetings with policy stakeholders: 70+

### OUR TRAINING PROGRAM OUTPUTS:



Briefs: 3



Presentations: 4



Reports: 1

### SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWING:



TWITTER  
30% INCREASE



FACEBOOK  
75% INCREASE



LINKEDIN:  
177% INCREASE



## OUR CAREGIVERS POLICY PRIORITY

Over the past year, APPTA continued to explore one of our policy priorities around the unmet needs of Canadian caregivers. Following the collaborative workshop we hosted in February 2020, international best practices were selected by government stakeholders to accompany each of the four domains of need; mental health, financial, consumer directed care and health literacy. These best practices were the central driver behind the focus of this year's work; we prepared evidence syntheses to highlight the international best practices across each domain so as to inform the development of innovative policy solutions to address the needs of caregivers. We also hosted a virtual engagement session on the topic of consumer directed care with our policy stakeholders. Information from this session was used in the development of tailored policy recommendations toward the advancement of person-centered approaches to existing home care programming in Canada.





## GOING VIRTUAL

2020 was all about finding ways to stay connected while staying home. As our Policy Stakeholder Meetings were no longer possible, APPTA decided to launch online workshops to continue to provide our policy stakeholders with opportunities to exchange knowledge, discuss challenges, and co-create solutions. Our team hosted several Virtual Workshops over the course of 2020-2021.

Here are a few highlights:

## CONSUMER DIRECTED CARE

In September 2020, APPTA hosted its first of many virtual engagement sessions with government stakeholders from 8 jurisdictions. Participants were presented with an example of a leading home care model out of Australia, *Consumer Directed Care*, and encouraged to consider how their jurisdiction's standard and self-directed home care/support programs could be informed by this promising practice. Through roundtable discussions and the use of the virtual collaboration platform, *Mural*, participants were guided through an activity designed to draw out elements of these programs that were working well, elements that could be strengthened, unanswered questions about the programs, and new ideas that may serve to enhance them overall. Based on the information obtained throughout the course of the session, policy briefs tailored to the specifics of each participating jurisdiction's home care program were created and distributed to participants.







## SOCIAL ISOLATION & LONG-TERM CARE

APPTA's first virtual session in 2021 explored the challenges faced in long-term care settings when trying to implement technologies that enhance social connection. The session included a thoughtful and engaging panel from staff at LochLomond Villa who shared their experiences of using technology with their residents. This was followed by a brief presentation by two AGE-WELL innovators about the latest technologies they have been working on. Participants were engaged to explore the barriers these technologies faced in order to implement them in the long-term care setting. The COVID-19 pandemic placed a significant strain on the social connections of long-term care residents and technology played a critical role in an attempt to alleviate it. By identifying the barriers that prevent technology adoption, we can ideally mitigate them to create better opportunities for the use of technology to support long-term care residents.

## POLICY ROUNDS

In collaboration with our partners at AGE-WELL NCE, APPTA launched the Policy Rounds webinar series in September 2020. Webinars in this series aim to enhance knowledge translation of aging and technology research through policy-oriented briefing presentations. Occurring on a bi-weekly basis, presentations for Policy Rounds explore some of the key challenges facing older Canadians, what the research available to date can tell us about these issues, and what all of this means for future policy decision-making in Canada.

Policy Rounds hosted 13 sessions in 2020-2021 with researchers, trainees, policy-makers, community stakeholders and more sharing presentations on aging-related initiatives.



# VIRTUAL HEALTH EVIDENCE SERIES

In contrast to APPTA's usual policy prioritization process, and in response to the pandemic, we sought to understand the foreseeable shift in healthcare delivery through exploring the literature around virtual care. This series identifies the challenges experienced in using virtual care services, explores effectiveness of virtual consultations as opposed to in-person visits, and highlights current models of physician remuneration. The aim of this series is to provide timely evidence for those seeking a better understanding of options for virtual healthcare, as well as an understanding of the shifts required for successful adoption of a more virtual healthcare system.

## Take a look at the available products from this series:

- **Infosheet:** Virtual Healthcare Solutions in Canada
- **Evidence Synthesis:** A Review of Policies and Barriers that Influence the Use of Virtual Health in Primary Care
- **Evidence Synthesis:** A Review of the Clinical and Cost-Effectiveness of Virtual Consultations
- **Evidence Synthesis:** The Benefits and Challenges of Virtual Geriatric Care in New Brunswick
- **Jurisdictional Scan:** Payment Models and Remuneration of Virtual Health Services



# NEW VIRTUAL POLICY INNOVATION LAB

Through a grant from the New Brunswick Innovation Foundation's (NBIF) Social Innovation Research Fund, APPTA launched the beginning of a year-long Policy Innovation Lab process to explore the question "How might we enhance the adoption and scale of technologies that support healthy aging in New Brunswick?" Breaking the process down into three workshops, we successfully ran the first workshop virtually, which grounded participants in a deeper understanding of what researchers and innovators in New Brunswick experience in the innovation cycle and the roadblocks they may encounter along the way. The aim of this workshop was to map the system as it is experienced by New Brunswick-based innovators in order to pinpoint areas of leverage for change. The Lab will continue in 2021-2022, with a focus on brainstorming solutions and prototyping promising practices in New Brunswick.





# REBOOTS

## PEP TALKS

APPTA's second iteration of the policy education program series, PEP talks, for AGE-WELL trainees occurred this past summer. This round included a fresh curriculum tailoring knowledge translation for policy, sharing real experiences and advice from policy makers, and tackling skill-building of translating research evidence into a policy brief. Participants in this program shared with us their positive experiences on learning how to translate research findings in a policy context. We strive to continuously improve this series to meet the needs of AGE-WELL researchers who aim to influence change through their work.

*" Writing the policy brief and receiving feedback was one of the most valuable learning experiences I have participated in. Thank you for this opportunity! "*

**-HQP MEMBER**



## POLICY CHALLENGE

Winner of this year's Policy Challenge, Jonathan Lai (MSc candidate, University of Alberta), had the exclusive opportunity to work closely with policy experts and learn firsthand how to align his research findings with a Canadian policy priority. For his area of focus, Lai examined the policy question: What actions can be taken to ensure the financial well-being of older Canadians and support the future labour force contributions of older workers beyond the COVID-19 pandemic? Lai presented his final report and findings to a group of APPTA'S government stakeholders.

# COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE UPDATE — FEATURES:

APPTA relaunched its Community of Practice, which allows government stakeholders with a vested interest in the aging population to come together on a recurring basis. This virtual community aims to stimulate knowledge exchange between government stakeholders across jurisdictions by sharing expertise in a safe and collaborative environment. Each session includes shared learnings from a guest speaker and is followed by a roundtable discussion to foster exchange and inform evidence-based policy change.

**Dr. Janet Fast:** Implications of life course trajectories of family care for public policy.



**Dr. Suzanne Dupuis Blanchard:** Evidenced-informed solution for aging in place: Nursing homes without walls.

**Dr. Samir Sinha:** Navigating a rapidly evolving long term care policy landscape in light of COVID-19.



# PARTNERSHIPS

One of our core values at APPTA is that we go further when we work together. We know that the best approach to solving complex challenges is to work collaboratively toward new solutions. Over the past year, our team has formed important new partnerships in knowledge translation to ensure that research in aging and technology is accessible to larger audiences.



**NB-IRDT**

New Brunswick Institute for  
Research, Data and Training

## PARTNER SPOTLIGHT:

### New Brunswick Institute for Research, Data, and Training (NB-IRDT)

With the COVID-19 pandemic shifting healthcare service delivery to an increasingly virtual format, provincial and territorial governments needed access to succinct research evidence relating to digital health and older adults. Working with NB-IRDT, our two organizations synthesized available evidence on the benefits and challenges of virtual healthcare in the New Brunswick context and identified policy considerations.





## PARTNER SPOTLIGHT:

# New Brunswick COVID-19 Research Fund

In the summer of 2020, the **New Brunswick Innovation Foundation** (NBIF), the New Brunswick Health Research Foundation (NBHRF), and the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) announced \$846,707 in funding for 27 research projects across New Brunswick that would explore new ways to detect and treat COVID-19 and to assess its effects on people, communities and the economy.

As the knowledge translation partner for this initiative, APPTA is working toward maximizing the impact of New Brunswick-based research on COVID-19. We have been working directly with the co-funders to establish and implement knowledge translation strategies and goals, sharing our expertise with grant recipients through webinars and consultation sessions, and supporting the dissemination of research findings to broader provincial and national audiences. With a plethora of information on COVID-19 available, now more than ever, the need for knowledge translation is evident to ensure that quality research can inform our collective public health response to the pandemic in Canada.



## PARTNER SPOTLIGHT:

# Healthy Seniors Pilot Project

The Healthy Seniors Pilot Project (HSPP) is a \$75 million agreement between the Public Health Agency of Canada and the Government of New Brunswick to fund a range of applied research initiatives that examine how to support older adults to age well at home, in their communities, and in care facilities.

In collaboration with NB-IRDT's Monitoring, Evaluation, and Knowledge Transfer Unit, APPTA is assisting with the development of a knowledge translation plan, the delivery of capacity-building initiatives for grant recipients, and the dissemination of research findings. Our team will play a key role in ensuring that the critical work on aging in place that is being piloted in New Brunswick can be translated and scaled to other provinces and territories in Canada.

# UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

MARCH 31, 2021

	2021	2020
<b>ASSETS</b>		
CURRENT		
Cash	\$ 167,339	\$ 55,454
Accounts receivable	75,213	108,900
	<u>\$ 242,552</u>	<u>\$ 164,354</u>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>		
CURRENT		
Accounts payable	\$ 7,255	\$ 6,916
Deferred income (Note 4)	211,497	157,438
	<u>218,752</u>	<u>164,354</u>
NET ASSETS	<u>23,800</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>\$ 242,552</u>	<u>\$ 164,354</u>

### ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD



Director



Director

# UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

## STATEMENT OF REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES

YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2021

	2021	2020
<b>REVENUE</b>		
AGE-WELL NCE Inc.	\$ 174,819	\$ 282,547
Miscellaneous	23,800	-
NSERC COVID-19 Supplement	67,162	-
New Brunswick Health Research Foundation	199,373	287,069
	<u>465,154</u>	<u>569,616</u>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Facilities and equipment	25,527	16,575
Operations	18,101	31,251
Professional development	3,044	20,053
Professional fees	11,310	30,210
Salaries and wages	371,691	304,293
Technology	9,837	18,896
Travel and meetings	1,844	148,338
	<u>441,354</u>	<u>569,616</u>
<b>EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES</b>	<u>\$ 23,800</u>	<u>\$ -</u>



# UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

## AGE-WELL NCE INC. (SCHEDULE 1)

YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2021

	2021	2020
<b>REVENUE</b>		
AGE-WELL NCE Inc.	\$ 174,819	\$ 282,547
NSERC COVID-19 Supplement	67,162	-
	<u>241,981</u>	<u>282,547</u>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Salaries and wages	241,981	201,685
Technology	-	5,707
Operations	-	13,135
Travel and meetings	-	62,020
	<u>241,981</u>	<u>282,547</u>
<b>EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES</b>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>

# UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

## NEW BRUNSWICK HEALTH RESEARCH FOUNDATION (SCHEDULE 2)

YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2021

	2021	2020
<b>REVENUE</b>	<b>\$ 199,373</b>	<b>\$ 287,069</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Salaries and wages	129,711	102,608
Professional fees	11,310	30,210
Facilities and equipment	25,527	16,575
Technology	9,837	13,189
Operations	18,100	18,115
Travel and meetings	1,844	86,319
Professional development	3,044	20,052
	<b>199,373</b>	<b>287,068</b>
<b>EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 1</b>

THE APPTA TEAM

# THANKS YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

