The Network for Aging Research Engagement in Innovation Spring Symposium Summary

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Purpose of the symposium

To explore the importance of engaging older adults in innovation and to invite stakeholder participation in setting the Network's research priorities.

Who came: Quick facts

There was representation from a number of different stakeholder groups at the symposium.

What we did & results

Presentations were given centering on engagement in innovation, followed by a priority setting activity. Participants voted on 29 existing and identified 9 new research priorities.

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Purpose of the Symposium

It is increasingly realized that engaging stakeholders in the research and development of products and services is important. [1,2] Today, there is a disconnect between the literature for health interventions and the groups who would benefit from these interventions. [3]

The purpose of the Network for Aging Research (NAR) is to advance aging research at the University of Waterloo. Engaging stakeholders in aging research is key to generating relevant innovations in the field of aging. The goal of the NAR Spring 2017 Symposium was to raise awareness of the importance of engagement of stakeholders in innovation and to start conversations on how to do this effectively. An additional goal of the symposium was to engage our stakeholders, including older adults, community members, researchers, and those who work or volunteer with older adults in our research activities by working collaboratively to identify the NAR's future research priorities

1. Elliott, J., McNeil, H., Ashbourne, J., Huson, K., Boscart, V., Stolee, P. (2016). doi:10.1007/s40271–016–0168–x
2. McNeil, H., Elliott, J., Huson, K., Ashbourne, J., Heckman, G., Walker, J., Stolee, P. (2016). doi:10.1186/s40900–016–0022–2
3. Tallon, D., Chard, J., Dieppe, P. (2000). doi: 10.1016/S0140– 6736(00)02351–5

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Who Came

Participants included:

- Researchers
- Students
- Community members
- Older adults
- Decision-makers

1029 total votes on priorities; 29 priorities voted on; 9 new priorities identified.

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What we did:

Keynote Address: Olive Bryanton

PhD candidate Olive Bryanton discussed her work exploring the lived realities of women age 85 and older living in rural communities in Prince Edward Island through photovoice.
Olive guided the audience through her design and process, followed by the strengths, challenges, and cautions for using photovoice in future research.
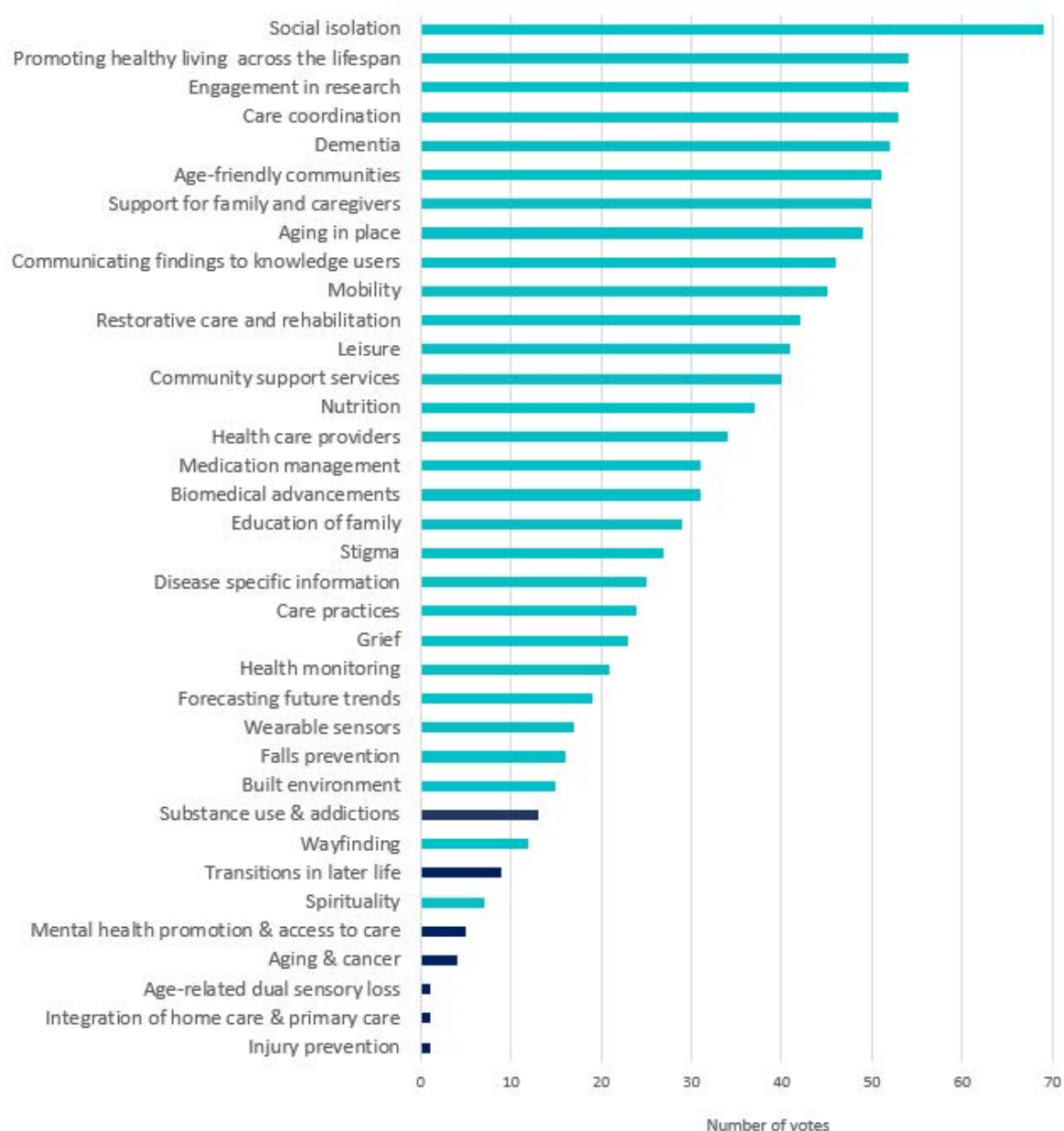
Engagement in Innovation: The SHARP Group

Dr. Heather McNeil and Seniors Helping as Research Partners (SHARP) member Judith Carson presented on how SHARP was created and the importance of engaging stakeholders such as community members in research and innovation.

Research Priority Setting Partnership

The day closed by discussing the Network for Aging Research's intention to involve stakeholders in identifying research priorities for the network.

Participants were presented with themes that were derived from data collected in phase one of the Network's priority setting partnerships initiative. They were then given the opportunity to vote on the priority areas they felt were most important for researchers, and to suggest other priority areas not represented in phase one.

Overall, 29 previously identified and 7 newly identified priority areas received votes during the priority setting activity. Two other new priority areas were suggested without votes. Additional comments left beside posters were sorted into existing areas if relevant. Novel comments were identified as new priority areas.

On the graph, the light blue lines refer to previously identified priority areas whereas the dark blue lines refer to newly identified priority areas.

Newly identified priority areas include: substance use and addictions, transitions in later life, mental health promotion and access to care, aging and cancer, age-related dual sensory loss, integration of home care and primary care, injury prevention, palliative care, preserving dignity in caregiving with tracking technologies.

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Thank you to all who attended.

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