

Our Turn to Care: Translating Research in Elder Care (TREC)

Based at the University of Alberta and founded in 2007, TREC is improving care of Canada's frail elderly and sharing best practices.

Create Tools that Improve Care

It was 2 a.m. in a long-term care home in a small British Columbia town. Gail's call bell was ringing. Again. It routinely rang more than 50 times a night. The weary worker on duty turned her attention to the bell and hurried down the hall to the elderly woman's room. Again.

As usual, Gail (not her real name) was tired and fretful but otherwise fine, so the care worker soothed her with some quiet words. The situation was frustrating and exhausting for the staff and Gail. Fortunately, this facility was participating in a research program led by the University of Alberta called Translating Research in Elder Care or TREC.

TREC is an evidence-based approach to improving care for elderly patients that involves direct-care staff and managers, long-term care leaders and policy decision-makers. TREC acknowledges the difficulties in caring for the frail elderly and gives staff in care facilities the tools they need to measure and improve care and share best practices, enriching their work life and ensuring their patients' well-being.

Principal investigator and program lead Carole Estabrooks, RN, PhD, Canada Research Chair in Knowledge Translation,

has been overseeing the program since 2007. "When we have these meaningful partnerships," Estabrooks says, "we can create sustained and systemic change."

At the B.C. facility, Gail's care team set out to reduce her bell-ringing by 50 per cent. The care team observed her, noted when she rang for help and interviewed her. In the evenings, when the lights went out and the door closed, Gail was anxious, spending every moment worried that staff would forget her. So the team created a solution that included a series of scheduled visits to her room every 15 minutes, then 30, then 45, over several weeks until she was resting comfortably all night. Gail's dignity was restored and her sleep improved, and the staff was better able to care for the needs of all the facility's residents.

BY THE YEAR 2038:

- The number of Canadians over 65 will have doubled to 10.4 million.
- The fastest-growing group will be over age 75.
- More than one million Canadians will have dementia.



“Through meaningful partnerships, we can create sustained change that improves the quality of life of seniors in long-term care facilities.”

— **CAROLE ESTABROOKS, RN, PhD, Canada Research Chair in Knowledge Translation and TREC's principal investigator**

Sustain the Momentum

Before TREC, there was very little research in long-term care. Your support engages direct-care staff to solve problems and share best practices, improving the care of the frail elderly in Canada. With the projected doubling of the senior population in the next two decades, the time to invest in excellence in care is now. In long-term care facilities, TREC is:

- Identifying and testing methods to reduce symptoms such as shortness of breath, bed sores, depression and delusions
- Engaging and empowering health-care aides in planning and decision-making to improve care
- Identifying networks of long-term care centres and opinion leaders who can implement innovations, saving money, time and resources
- Maintaining and building on a valuable existing database that lets researchers access data to fuel future studies
- Increasing the number of researchers and students focused on elder care

With your gift, TREC can make a difference in care for the elderly. Donate today.

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For other giving opportunities, please contact the Office of Advancement:

780-492-7400 | giving.ualberta.ca

Make a Difference for Elderly Adults in Long-term Care

Play a vital role, influencing positive change. Improve the lives of elderly long-term care residents and their caregivers. Your donation will help TREC improve care for these vulnerable Canadians. We look forward to discussing the following options for giving with you.

\$1.5 million supports a high-calibre research chair for a five-year term to lead innovative research focused on health outcomes and quality of care for the frail elderly, building capacity and enhancing partnerships with long-term care and assisted living homes.

\$250,000 – 500,000 supports TREC's research to find effective ways to reduce pain and depression, improve oral health and provide better support for elders with no family or social support.

\$50,000 – 100,000 sustains the TREC database that lets researchers access data for use in future studies.

\$15,000 empowers a group of health-care aides from a care centre in Western Canada to develop and test practice methods to make immediate improvements in care.

\$5,000 develops effective tools and methods to share research results and best practices, and allows teams to participate in workshops or opportunities to disseminate the results widely.

\$2,500 supports training and mentorship so a student can experience research and contribute to the field.