



## **Frequently asked questions (FAQS)**

### **What is an AGE-WELL National Innovation Hub?**

It is a place where a broad range of stakeholders in the area of technology and aging can work together on technological innovations that will support seniors and their caregivers. The aim is to foster more efficient development, testing and delivery to market of products and services that will support healthy aging across Canada.

### **What is the focus of the new AGE-WELL National Innovation Hub in Fredericton?**

The hub is called *Advancing Policies and Practices in Technology and Aging (Faire avancer les politiques et les pratiques dans le domaine des technologies et du vieillissement)*. It will design innovative solutions to specific policy, program and service challenges, and will develop best practices for rapid adoption of technologies across Canada.

### **What makes this hub unique?**

This is the first hub of its kind in Canada, if not internationally, which brings together all stakeholders in the field of technology and aging to focus on advancing policies, practices and services. It is also a milestone for AGE-WELL, Canada's Technology and Aging Network. This is AGE-WELL's first National Innovation Hub. There will be AGE-WELL hubs announced in other Canadian cities in coming months.

### **Why is the hub focused on policies, practices and services?**

As new and emerging technologies become more available, it's vital to get them to market as rapidly as possible so that people can benefit. Many high-tech solutions now in the pipeline, such as smart home systems, use new approaches that may not fit into the current policy and regulatory landscape. The hub will identify ways to advance policies, practices and services to support new technology-based approaches. It will focus on the regulatory landscape with respect to adoption of technology into the healthcare system and consumer markets.

### **What kind of stakeholders will be involved?**

Industry, community, government, researchers, older people and caregivers are among the stakeholders who will interact and generate new ideas together. “Co-creation” is a collaborative process that helps to ensure that innovations actually meet the needs of older people and that the policy and regulatory environment is supportive of newly-developed technologies and services.

### **Who will benefit from the new hub?**

The hub will help ensure that Canadians benefit from new and emerging technologies that can support independent living and improve quality of life of older adults and caregivers. The hub will bring together innovators and entrepreneurs with end users, policymakers and service providers to help transform their ideas into market successes, producing social and economic benefits. It will give stakeholders ready access to the latest research findings and information on emerging health technologies.

### **Will there be opportunities for young researchers?**

In New Brunswick, the hub will 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. The trainees will be part of AGE-WELL’s EPIC training program—*Early Professionals, Inspired Careers*. EPIC equips bright young researchers with the skills they need to be the next generation of innovators in the fast-evolving field of technology and aging.

### **How will the hub have a national impact?**

Using dedicated infrastructure and expertise at the local level, the hub will design innovation solutions to specific policy, program and service challenges, and will develop best practices for rapid adoption of new technologies. The notion of ‘co-creation’ with all stakeholders, including consumers, will be core. As a platform for knowledge mobilization, the hub will share innovative approaches and solutions nationally.

### **Who is leading the hub?**

The hub is a joint initiative of AGE-WELL and the New Brunswick Health Research Foundation (NBHRF). Partners include AGE-WELL, NBHRF, the Government of New Brunswick, and the York Care Centre. The hub’s offices are located at the York Care

Centre in Fredericton. The goal is to catalyze new relationships and partnerships that will ultimately enable the hub to be self-sustaining.

### **Why was New Brunswick chosen for this hub?**

Seniors now make up 20 per cent of New Brunswick's population, which means the province is tied with Nova Scotia as the oldest in Canada. In recent years, the Government of New Brunswick has been very active in supporting the province's aging population and using innovative approaches to do this. This makes New Brunswick a natural home for an innovation hub.

### **Why is the hub needed now?**

With baby boomers over 65 years old set to reach 23 per cent of the Canadian population by 2028, demand for assistive technologies for Canada's aging population has never been higher. Approximately one-quarter of Canadian seniors report having some kind of physical, cognitive or sensory impairment that affects their ability to perform common activities of daily living. More than 8 million Canadians provide care for a family member or friend. There are new sophisticated technologies that can provide personalized solutions to older adults and caregivers. These include smart-home systems, personal robotics and information communication technologies (ICTs).

### **What is AGE-WELL?**

AGE-WELL is a federally-funded Network of Centres of Excellence (NCE). We have over 140 industry, non-profit organizations, government, care providers, end users, and academic partners. Our network also brings together about 150 funded and affiliated researchers from 36 universities and research centres across Canada. We work closely with older adults and caregivers to help current and future generations of Canadians enjoy the best quality of life possible. We do this by developing technologies and services that increase their safety and security, support their independent living, and enhance their social participation.

AGE-WELL has more than 40 research projects that are creating technologies and services to benefit older people and caregivers. Our teams are developing cutting-edge technologies such as "smart" wheelchairs, social robots that can help with everyday tasks, and sensor systems that monitor health and give early warning signs of decline. Other projects include apps to help older adults stay connected with loved ones, and advanced systems to reduce injuries from falls and to detect pain in people with dementia. For more information, see <http://agewell-nce.ca/>

### **How will the hub advance AGE-WELL's mission?**

AGE-WELL's mission is to accelerate innovation in the field of technology and aging that will improve quality of life and produce economic and social benefits for Canadians and the global community. This hub and others being announced in coming months are part of that mission. AGE-WELL National Innovation Hubs build on our national network by incorporating local resources, expertise and partnerships focused on a specific area. They are examples of 'co-creation' in action.

### **What is the New Brunswick Health Research Foundation?**

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. For more information, see <https://www.nbhrf.com/>

### **When will the hub be up and running?**

As of today, the hub is officially launched. The office space is ready. Personnel decisions will be made in coming days, and the hub will be open for business shortly thereafter. A joint AGE-WELL—NBHRF stakeholder committee will be responsible for advancing the hub agenda.

### **How can I get involved?**

We welcome everyone with an interest in technology and aging. For more information on how to get involved, please contact [info@agewell-nce.ca](mailto:info@agewell-nce.ca) or 416-597-3422, ext. 7778.