

SUSTAINABILITY PLAN



The Canadian Frailty Network is Canada's only entity focused solely on addressing frailty, a condition that affects 1 in 4 Canadians aged 65 and older and which greatly impacts the lives of families, friends and caregivers. CFN has developed a pan-Canadian and international network to meet the unique challenges of this often overlooked, and growing population.



1.0 OVERVIEW

This is an overview of the strategy and major activities that will support the establishment of CFN as a self-sustaining entity. Sustainability will be achieved through funding from academic, corporate and government partnerships. The approach detailed in this plan is designed to capitalize on the past and future achievements of CFN’s research and knowledge translation successes and community outreach. CFN has been successful in establishing a knowledge and evidentiary base in frailty, a community of network members and the reputation necessary to support our evolution to a self-sustaining entity. The transition from an NCE-funded entity to a self-sustaining organization will not be easy but, with support from partners, stakeholders, network members, CFN committees and the Board of Directors, the path forward is not insurmountable.

2.0 WHO WE ARE

Mission: Improve care for older adults living with frailty and support their families and caregivers.

Vision: Canada provides the highest quality of care for its older citizens living with frailty throughout the country.

Network: CFN is Canada’s only network dedicated to older Canadians living with frailty and the people responsible for their well-being. A one-of-a-kind community comprised of:

- 45 universities and teaching hospitals across Canada.
- 400+ researchers from across Canada
- 3,500+ individual stakeholders including adults living with frailty and their caregivers, industry & charity partners
- 840+ students and trainees who will form the next generation of researchers, academics, care professionals and policy makers
- Numerous policy makers, politicians and civil servants at all levels across the country
- 300,000+ strong network of older Canadians and their family/friend caregivers who can be reached through CFN advocacy channels, email newsletters,
- social media channels and our partners (e.g., CARP, CanAge, National Seniors Organizations)
- Numerous international stakeholders from countries such as Australia, Denmark, France, Italy, Spain and United Kingdom.

3.0 WHAT ARE WE DOING

- Increasing the recognition and assessment of frailty within Canadian health and social care systems,
- Generating evidence for decision making,
- Advancing evidence-based changes to care,
- Educating the next generation of care providers,
- Engaging with older adults and caregivers, and
- Advocating for change in health and social care systems to ensure that the needs of this vulnerable population are met.

4.0 WHY IT MATTERS

- **IMPACT - Stats & Stories** – CFN has made tremendous impacts through its funding of clinical research and knowledge translation initiatives. Many of those impacts can be found on [CFN's website](#). As new studies and initiatives near completion, CFN staff works with its network members to showcase new and evolving outcomes and impacts. CFN's initiatives encompass multiple care setting (acute, residential, long-term and community care) and the transitions between care settings. Only in this manner can CFN hope to holistically address the broad care needs of those that are frail.

5.0 FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

To ensure CFN's future, we need to be seen and respected as the recognized experts in frailty and need to leverage the knowledge throughout our national and international network. We need to not only know why frailty matters, but we need to show others how and why it matters. We need to further establish CFN as the go-to leader in all things frailty and clearly articulate how a frailty assessment improves care and positively impacts the health and social care systems. We need to continue to be leaders in funding frailty research, but we need to also be leaders in other areas as well.

We can do this through the implementation of **P A R I S**: Programs, Advocacy, Research, Information & Services in the following way:

Programs - Training courses – Continuing Medical Education, Continuing Education and the AVOID Frailty Public Health campaign.

Advocacy – Create strong, impactful policy change messages that will help older adults living with frailty & their caregivers, conduct government outreach at national level through Edelman, at the provincial level with the Board and Partner connections. We will also work with CANage and CARP to support national and provincial government advocacy messages. Through these efforts we will secure our role as leaders in frailty for our stakeholders.

Research- Continue to build the research evidence to help improve care at all levels - acute, primary, community, LTC, EOL/ACP and prevention.

Information - Establish CFN as the go to leader for frailty information through timely and relevant Op Ed's/Articles, webinars, social media, traditional media and videos.

Services – Continue to improve the CFN website. One that provides citizens with evidence-based information presented under the following headings - AVOID frailty, Living with frailty, End of life & ACP, Caregivers support as well as maintaining our information for researchers and clinicians.

6.0 SUSTAINABILITY FUNDING MODELS

In 2019, CFN began to lay the foundation for alternative (to NCE funding) Federal Government funding. With the news that the NCE would no longer be in existence CFN has ramped up its government relations activities and in parallel have brought our message to everyday citizens that are or will be impacted by frailty.

CFN recognised the need to grow our network beyond traditional stakeholders and engage more seniors, caregivers, and people from the general population. These are the voters that will draw the attention of politicians, and in turn the attention of industry and the clients they serve and represent. To this end we have created the AVOID Frailty public health campaign and have invested considerable resources in a 2019 cross Canada tour. CFN's Cross Canada Collaborative Tour provided an opportunity to grow our 'citizen' network through new partnerships with CARP, CanAge, United Way, Zoomer Media and more.

The AVOID Frailty Campaign has energized those that are interested in taking control of their health by providing key interventions to reduce or prevent frailty. CFN has always been a key resource for academics and the frailty research community, yet now as a result of our recent efforts, CFN has become a key go-to resource on issues of frailty for the general public, community partners, media partners, the clinical community and deliverers of care, government officials and policy makers.

The following lists concrete approaches/activities that will provide CFN an opportunity to become a sustainable network or transition to an entity within Queen's University.

6.1 QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE OF AGING

The foundational core of CFN's transition to a sustainable entity is to leverage the home and host function of Queen's University. The proposed new organizational core of CFN would be an Institute within the University and across Departments, operating in alignment with Queen's University's approach to special centres and entities, with the operational lead being the Scientific Director of CFN.

CFN has had multiple meetings with Queen's to determine if CFN can take advantage of Queen's charitable status. Based on Revenue Canada rules, any funds currently raised by CFN requiring a charitable receipt OR charitable status for giving, would have all funds donated to Queen's under a broad umbrella and Queen's would then control those funds which may flow to CFN, but may not. Thus, although not ideal, if CFN were to remain in its current structure there is a possible avenue for philanthropic giving. However, as an Institute of Queens, CFN would then be able to be a designated charitable entity within Queens and flow through would not be a concern. Opportunities for philanthropic giving include:

6.2 PHILANTHROPY

- Foundations
 - Most require charitable status in order to solicit funds. A list of foundations focused on health, aging, and research has been developed and is being added to regularly. Additionally, some foundations have been approached for funding who do not specify a charitable status requirement, but no gifts have yet been received. At this time, foundations are a lower priority, with government relations being the highest priority.
- Private Industry
 - Many corporations have charitable giving arms, but usually charitable status is required. In order to secure industry dollars CFN began offering paid sponsorship opportunities and was able to secure \$80K in sponsorship dollars in 2019. CFN continues to build relationships with industries and not-for-profits who most closely align with our mission, and who might have the largest impact in our government relations work.
- Individual Donors
 - Major Gift Fundraising – Start with those closest to you and your mission, our Board.
 - Queen's Chair in Frailty. Here is where naming opportunities within Queen's could come, such as "The Russell Williams Institute for Older Canadians & Frailty".

6.3 FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Direct Government Funding

- If CFN is to maintain its current structure, we will need to approach the federal government for sustainable government funding. We have and continue to receive advice and guidance from organizations that have successfully achieved sustainable funding. We have various examples of success in this area from which to draw expertise and whom we've been in contact with in the last few months, including the Stem Cell Network (a former NCE network), The Canadian Institute for Military and Veteran Health Research (CIMVHR, Queen's University) and our key partner The Canadian Foundation for Health Care Improvement for advice and tactics to achieve this goal.
- To support this goal, outreach began in 2019 to MPs and while the government faces have changed, several positive relationships with key Liberal MPs and Deputy Ministers were established. (See List in APPENDIX). In addition, a new Government Relations group has been retained to guide CFN in this goal – Edelman has been retained after a recent RFP process and we are now working with David Rodier et al.
- Additionally, we remain close with CARP and CANage, both of whom have close relationships in the federal and provincial/territorial governments.

Large Multi-Year Grants

Federal and provincial research grants, as outlined below, seniors and vulnerable seniors are now a top priority with the current COVID-19 pandemic.

- New Frontiers in Health Research: \$24M in funding over 6 years for high risk, high reward research opportunities from Science and Innovation Canada. LOI is being submitted shortly. This is a highly competitive grant but is certainly worth pursuing.
- PHAC – Public Health Grants: This is a \$5M grant focused on funding for innovative and impactful Public Health initiatives. CFN is well prepared to reapply with our AVOID Frailty strategy should this currently paused grant re-open.

6.4 SEEK CHARITABLE STATUS WITHOUT QUEEN'S

This option would be a long shot for success. Many small not for profit organizations exist, and CFN is unique in its work, but from a funding standpoint, CFN would need to seek charitable funding dollars at a time when the charitable sector in Canada is already facing challenging times. Organizations with huge brand recognition across the country such as The Heart & Stroke Foundation, Canadian Cancer Society and others, are struggling to maintain their programs, research funding and advocacy work. Many have undergone amalgamations with other organizations (i.e. Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation and Prostate Cancer Canada are now part of the CCS). Others have reduced services and closed offices. This would be a difficult avenue but could be done if we could begin with the support of individual donors, industry and foundations.

6.5 PROVINCIAL FUNDING

Provincial Governments are very unlikely to flow funding to CFN. No province outside Ontario would fund an Ontario based organization. However, there are opportunities to leverage relationships at the Provincial government level to help advocate to the Federal Government for additional funding from the national level. Health care is one of the most important concerns in every province, including long term care, primary & acute care, as well as community care – all of which are areas of focus for CFN. Funds raised through sponsorships (conference, webinars etc.) and other smaller opportunities cannot sustain CFN in its current structure. However, these funding opportunities would best support the larger funding activities of CFN as an institute of Queen's



7.0 STRENGTH THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS, COLLABORATIONS AND INITIATIVES

The items highlighted below are projects that CFN is undertaking to strengthen our work with industry and citizens in an effort to support our federal government funding request to come, and to help position CFN favorably as we continue discussions with Queen's regarding the Institute of Healthy Aging. The projects below could also be key legacy initiatives that through partnerships and collaborations, could go beyond CFN's current mandate of March 2022.

7.1 AVOID FRAILTY CAMPAIGN

AVOID Frailty Campaign: a strong, solid public health campaign that gives CFN a tangible message and impact amid the areas of frailty research that are harder to sell.

- Partnership with United Way, to extend the Cross Canada tour, and share the AVOID messaging. (UW promoting “Interact” strategies. The Healthy Aging Tour – Likely now will be converted to a virtual tour... (extend relationship with Hal & Joanne for PR)
- Partnership with Shopper Drug Mart: an organization that is notoriously hard to get in to see, let alone secure a partnership. They are interested in piloting AVOID frailty and rolling out frailty assessments in ten stores in the Greater Toronto Area, with an objective to spread across Canada to all their pharmacies. (Shows industry, academia, and not for profit collaboration)
- Partnership with YMCA Canada to help promote the A: activity, I: interact elements of AVOID. (may offer 2-3-week free memberships for seniors assessed at SDM stores, may co-create AVOID programming for older adults at specific Y’s)
- Partnership with KFL&A Public Health Unit (Ontario) – they assisted with focus groups, honing messaging and a meeting booked in May to roll out AVOID messaging to all Ontario Public Health Units.
- Partnership with CARP & CANAge to spread the AVOID public health message and help influence politicians. This will require sponsorship dollars - likely \$50K for both (we buy ads, but get significant discounts and as clients, we are invited to participate in various events and communications – builds citizen engagement).

7.2 REGIONAL CENTRES FOR HEALTHY AGING ACROSS CANADA

- CFN will establish Regional Centres for Healthy Aging across Canada that will assess the impacts of AVOID frailty interventions and develop positive behaviour change results in older adults. Kingston ON, Charlottetown PEI, Fraser Valley BC to begin.
- International “Centres for Healthy Aging” – self funded will also measure impacts of behaviours change interventions and share results. Italy, Australia, US, Spain.
- Wellington on the Lake - Phase 2 Community- healthy aging – possible living lab site

7.3 FRAILTY TRAINING & COMMUNICATIONS INITIATIVES

- Continuing Medical Education & Continuing Education training modules
- Red Cross emergency preparedness asset mapping project for older adults - tied to Climate Change preparations
- AMICA – CFN partnered to help them begin frailty screening in their retirement homes across Canada - falls prevention, health monitoring project.
- Strong and impactful advocacy messages - veterans' health, keeping Indigenous elders in their communities, climate emergency preparation for seniors, caregiver benefits improved, importance of public health
- CFN website, strong social media & a strong traditional media presence
 - A better website, more traffic, more people, more political influence
 - Increased CFN Op-eds & articles



Canada's aging population will continue to place a burden on our health care system in years to come. Currently 1 in 4 older adults over the age of 65 are living with frailty, and at age 80 that number increases to 1 in 2. Preventative research and initiatives are needed to improve the overall health of Canadian citizens now and in the future. The current realities of the global COVID19 pandemic highlight that action must be taken now to prevent older Canadians from developing frailty, while strategies must also be implemented to improve the quality of life for older adults currently living with frailty.

The Canadian Frailty Network is an essential organization to ensure the accomplishment of these goals and to help reduce the burden on our already strained health care system. CFN's unique pan-Canadian network is essential to drive innovation and improvements in aging and frailty across Canada, in all health care settings. The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated that frailty, not age alone, is the crucial determinate in an older person's possible recovery from the virus. The need for continued research into how frailty and COVID19 are indelibly linked will ensure that we can best protect our most vulnerable populations, and ensure their overall health.

CFN is also instrumental in helping to train the next generations of care providers, clinicians, and researchers focused on improving care and mitigating frailty in our nations older adults. By ensuring that CFN is able to continue training these future professionals across the country, we ensure that frailty is incorporated into the work of and the most vulnerable seniors are cared for now and afforded the very best quality of life into the future. **Further funding for the unique work of our organization is vital to the health and well-being of the over 1.5 million older adults living with frailty today, and their 3.75 million family and friend caregivers.**