



News Release

“Senior Friendly 7” to receive \$50k grant from Foundation in honour of RTO/ERO’s 50th anniversary

TORONTO, May 30, 2018 – In recognition of 50 years of the Retired Teachers of Ontario/Les enseignantes et enseignants retraités de l’Ontario (RTO/ERO) serving its education community in retirement, the RTO/ERO Foundation announced today a \$50,000 grant to be awarded to Sunnybrook Health Sciences’ Regional Geriatric Program (RGP) of Toronto. The grant project will focus on developing a “Senior Friendly 7” Practice Toolkit for Personal Support Workers (PSW SF7). These tools will guide personal support workers (PSWs) and care coordinators—both of whom are on the frontline of home and community care for frail seniors—working in community settings.

“Evidence suggests that routine monitoring and intervention in these seven areas are most likely to improve the health and quality of life of frail seniors or those at risk of frailty,” says Dr. Barbara Liu, principal investigator and executive director, RGP of Toronto. “The RGP envisions the creation and deployment of SF7 tools adapted for use across the sectors of care.”

The concept of the Senior Friendly 7 (SF7), a foundational element of RGP’s Senior Friendly Care strategy, promotes excellence in key areas of importance to the care and quality of life of frail seniors:

- Mobility
- Cognition, including Delirium
- Nutrition
- Pain management
- Polypharmacy
- Continence
- Social engagement

“We are thrilled to receive this grant and look forward to working with the RTO/ERO Foundation on developing resources that would be helpful to RTO/ERO members and all seniors,” says Dr. Liu.

“The ‘RTO/ERO 50th Anniversary Award’ is a wonderful way of honouring the tradition of lifelong learning and teaching that the RTO/ERO members embody,” says Jo-Anne Sobie, executive director of the RTO/ERO Foundation. “We are pleased to award this ‘special edition’ grant to the SF7 project, which will lead to better approaches to the training of PSWs and care providers who care for frail seniors in their homes and in the community.”

With more than \$2.8 million invested since 2014 in projects that enhance quality of life for aging adults, the RTO/ERO Foundation targets its funding support toward:

- Research and training that is vital to the knowledge base of Canada’s aging sector
- Innovative community initiatives that promote social engagement among older adults

With each grant, the Foundation's goal is to fund carefully-vetted projects that allow for broader sharing of outcomes to create impact beyond the host project partner, and to deepen knowledge across sectors that affect aging Canadians.

As its flagship initiative, the Foundation established the RTO/ERO Chair in Geriatric Medicine at the University of Toronto in 2014, and continues to raise funds for innovative approaches to addressing specific needs of aging Canadians. Grantees are considered based on specific granting criteria and a rigorous peer-review process. This is the RTO/ERO Foundation's fourth call for proposals for research in aging projects, and the first grant announcement this year.

The RTO/ERO Foundation was established in 2011 with the support of its founding benefactor, the Retired Teachers of Ontario/Les enseignantes et enseignants retraités de l'Ontario (RTO/ERO), and inspired by the philanthropic spirit of retired teachers and other members of the education community. RTO/ERO is a bilingual trusted voice on healthy, active living in the retirement journey for the broader education community – including early years, school boards, post-secondary and private schools. RTO/ERO promotes a wide range of world-class programs, social networks and assistance throughout retirement. Most of RTO/ERO's 76,000 members reside in Ontario, but members live across Canada. The organization has 46 districts in Ontario and two in British Columbia. RTO/ERO has the largest voluntary group insurance plan, owned and directed by members, for the education sector in Canada – with almost 100,000 participants.

For more information on the RTO/ERO Foundation and to make a donation, visit www.embrace-aging.ca, or contact us at 416-962-9463 or 1-800-361-9888.