

# THE LOOP

The Foundation's Quarterly Update



Fall 2022



## **RTOERO Foundation grant to the NIA calls for a national strategy to enhance social connection**

The RTOERO Foundation is thrilled to announce that the National Institute on Ageing (NIA) recently published an important report, which was made possible, in part, by our donor-funded grant program.

The report, *Understanding Social Isolation and Loneliness Among Older Canadians and How to Address It*, is a powerful example of the impact our grant program has on the lives of all older Canadians. It synthesizes many important insights and findings, including the fact that older adults are at an increasingly high risk of experiencing both social isolation and loneliness, and are also especially vulnerable to their negative impacts.

The NIA report suggests that there are likely common risk factors, consequences and potentially beneficial interventions that can be used to target and address both social isolation and loneliness. The NIA has developed six policy recommendations to help advance this proposed national strategy.

This actionable report will help researchers and policy-makers fully understand the prevalence and consequences of social isolation and loneliness in Canada. This research will lead to the implementation of effective, evidence-based strategies to reduce the impact of social isolation and loneliness, and better support healthy aging.

This work is at the heart of the RTOERO Foundation – and it’s made possible by the generosity of our members and other corporate community partners who care about the well-being of all of us as we age.

To read the full report, please visit [www.nia-ryerson.ca/reports#socialisolation](http://www.nia-ryerson.ca/reports#socialisolation) or contact the RTOERO Foundation at [foundation@rtoero.ca](mailto:foundation@rtoero.ca) and we will email you a copy.

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## Dr. Rochon leads the future of geriatric medicine: Part 3 of 4

Every year, Dr. Rochon accepts a small number of students into the Women’s College Hospital trainee program. In this four-part series, we introduce you to these innovative minds and give you a sneak peek at not only their research initiatives, but also what inspires them to pursue the field of geriatrics and where their future aspirations lie.



**Hanna Brath**

### **Part 3: Hanna Brath**

Designing nursing homes with older women in mind

Although older women represent more than 70% of nursing home residents, the design of nursing homes often completely neglects older women’s specific needs. We explored how nursing home designs that fail to consider older women can impact these women’s health and well-being. We then researched how nursing homes can be designed with older women in mind, by learning about the design preferences of older women from examples available in other congregate care settings. We need to be building nursing homes that are socially integrated, accessible and located in age-friendly, vibrant communities so residents are not socially isolated by design.

**Read our full interview with Hanna here:**

<https://rtoero.ca/dr-rochon-leads-the-future-of-geriatric-medicine-part-3/>

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## Why Keith Shantz from District 46 was inspired to donate and significantly increase his gift amount



**To become a monthly donor like Keith, please click here:**

I support the RTOERO Foundation because it does good work. The need for research into the areas of care of older adults has become more and more important, especially after the impact of the COVID pandemic. Retired teachers are fortunate to belong to an organization that contributes to the various areas of health research; we all benefit from the information and services.

As a shop teacher and administrator, I spent my working life sharing my knowledge and trying to make the world a better place for my students. Since my retirement, I have exercised and maintained my physical and mental health. In addition, I maintain old and new family and social connections. I also look for opportunities to volunteer in the community – including calling for square dances and sharing my handyman skills.

My wife and I have been blessed with a wonderful retirement and we want to make an impact by improving the lives of older adults. For this reason, I have increased my annual donation to the Foundation because I know that my money will be put to good use for the best causes.

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## October is Social Isolation Awareness Month

Social isolation affects one in five Canadian seniors and another 30% are at risk. Social isolation can contribute to anxiety and depression, poor physical health, higher rates of disease and dementia, and even suicide.

Did you know that Canadians over 65 have a higher suicide rate than any other age group?

RTOERO has the power to make a difference. Through voluntary support from within our network of over 82,000 members, we can help Canadian seniors struggling with loneliness.

Community agencies and geriatric researchers across the country are turning their attention to this growing issue and they need our help. Join the campaign to let isolated seniors know they are not alone.

Over the past four years, the Foundation's Social Isolation Awareness Month campaign has raised \$314,800. This year, we are once again asking you to help us raise an additional \$100,000 for research, education and community action programs to help socially isolated seniors.

Here are some actions you can take to participate in Social Isolation Awareness Month:

**Chime In.** Connect with other RTOERO members for weekly online chats. Please visit [rtoerofoundation.ca/chimein](https://rtoerofoundation.ca/chimein) to register.

**Attend a free webinar.** Tuesday, October 4, 2022. This webinar will feature a panel of leaders and experts in the field of social isolation: Dr. Samir Sinha, Dr. Raza Mirza and Dr. Rachel Savage.

**Watch your email inbox.** Stay tuned for exciting communications from the Foundation in October.

Support the Foundation. Choose to support the campaign by making a donation.  
Please call us at 1-800-361-9888 ext.271 or mail a cheque to:

The RTOERO Foundation  
18 Spadina Rd.,  
Toronto ON M5R 2S7

Inquire. Find out what your district is doing to help the Foundation put an end to social isolation.

**Please support social isolation awareness today.**

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## **District 20 Secretary new chair of the Foundation Board of Directors**



**Ted Whiteland:** Ted follows Joanne Murphy's leadership and takes on the role of chair of the RTOERO Foundation Board of Directors. Ted has been active with RTOERO for several years and is currently District 20 secretary. Ted joined the Foundation board in 2014 because he strongly believes in the organization's vision and mission. Ted looks forward to continuing his work on behalf of all seniors – and is pleased to welcome two other RTOERO members to the board.



**Micki Clemens:** Micki is a dedicated Ontario educator with more than 40 years of experience. Joining the District 15 Halton RTOERO board in 2016, Micki was president from 2018 to 2021. She was the recipient of the 2021 Distinguished Service Award. Micki was appointed to the RTOERO Foundation board in May of 2022.



**Suzanne Poudrette-Gagnon:** Suzanne is currently the president of District 45 and chair of the Goodwill committee. She has served on the RTOERO Member Services Committee for 10 years and was the chair of this committee for the last five years of her term. She is also a volunteer host for the Foundation's weekly online chat program Chime In. She is a passionate supporter of the Foundation, which inspired her to join the Board of Directors in May of 2022. Suzanne is proud to be a member of RTOERO and always promotes this great organization and this trusted Foundation

**For more information about the work of the RTOERO Foundation, please visit us on the [web](#).**

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