AGING IN QUEBEC

RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES

WHITE PAPER
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FOREWORD

On behalf of the Office of the Chief Scientist and the Fonds de recherche du Québec (FRQ), we are pleased to write the foreword to this White Paper, produced following the Summit "Aging in Quebec: Research Perspectives", an initiative led with conviction by the Quebec Research Network on Aging (RQRV) in collaboration with a range of Quebec-based centres and research groups on aging.

The FRQ is proud to have been an early partner in this Summit, which marked an important milestone for the development of aging research in Quebec. This event helped articulate a complementary and essential vision to support public policy by identifying the research efforts needed to address the priorities set out in the Government Action Plan 2024–2029 "La fierté de vieillir" ("The Pride of Aging").

The collective work behind the Summit and this resulting White Paper demonstrates the remarkable contribution that research makes to Quebec's ecosystem on aging. It strengthens ties among academic, community, clinical, and governmental settings. It reflects what we must continue to foster: science that is deeply grounded in its community.

Born of this mobilization, this White Paper illustrates the value of such science. It offers clear courses of action to guide research efforts toward questions that align with today's major issues, while being firmly anchored in the most relevant and innovative scientific approaches. In a world of constant change, it is more important than ever to state loudly and clearly the importance of science and research for the inclusive development of our societies. Population aging should not be seen solely as a challenge to overcome, but as a tremendous opportunity for social innovation, intergenerational dialogue, and positive social transformation.

We warmly thank everyone who contributed to this ambitious initiative, and especially the RQRV, the driving force behind this exemplary mobilization. The commitment of the research community and the many stakeholders across society will help bring about a Quebec in which science fully supports an excellent quality of life and the flourishing of all generations.

May this White Paper inspire the boldness, creativity, and cooperation needed to meet, with humanism and enthusiasm, the challenges, and the promises, of aging.

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INTRODUCTION

Aging is a privilege and can be a fulfilling experience, rich in possibilities and opportunities, both individually and collectively. At the same time, being older can bring challenges for both the individual and for the society. As a society where longevity becomes a reality for an increasing number of citizens, we share a responsibility to think and act together to create environments that are even more inclusive, dynamic, and responsive to individual's evolving needs. Quebec's scientific community can play a decisive role by advancing understanding of aging, mobilizing knowledge from a range of disciplines, collaborating with local and international partners, and supporting the implementation and development of innovative solutions across different sectors of society.

On December 18, 2024, the Summit "Aging in Quebec: Research Perspectives", held in Montréal, marked a turning point in this mobilization. At the invitation of the Quebec Research Network on Aging and its partners, more than 170 researchers and students, along with over 50 decision-makers, community partners, and engaged older adults, came together to discuss how research could help shape a future in which aging is no longer seen solely as a challenge, but also as a strength for Quebec society. This unprecedented momentum for collective action, inspired by the vision and leadership embodied in the Government Action Plan 2024–2029 "La fierté de vieillir", invites us to translate research and lived experience into concrete, lasting actions, organized around themes and scientific priorities that can mobilize engagement for the future.

This White Paper is the outcome of this collective effort. It draws on the expertise of the researchers who identified the major themes and scientific approaches that should be prioritized considering the state of knowledge is guided by the lived experience of members of civil society, older adults, and stakeholders from the field. This document aims to identify unresolved questions and major research issues that researchers should address to inform decisions and inspire societal choices that match the aspirations of today's and tomorrow's older adults. It highlights priority recommendations to advance knowledge in the field of aging. By focusing on concrete research topics that reflect current concerns, such as health care, social services and their organization, land-use planning, social participation, older adults' rights, and economic issues, this White Paper places science at the heart of an ambition to positively influence older adults' quality of life.

The Summit takes place within a broader scientific and social mobilization perspective with the ambition of generating meaningful impacts. We aspire to strengthen the alignment of research with societal needs, to encourage dialogue between science and society, and to support decision-makers in making informed choices based on scientific advances.

We invite you to engage with these reflections, draw inspiration from them, and above all, to take part in this essential transformation of research by continuing this dialogue between the scientific community and society, so that research may be informed by it and further enrich decision-making. We hope these efforts will help build societies where aging is synonymous with dignity, well-being, and new possibilities.

Dr Sylvie Belleville

Director, Quebec Network for Research on Aging

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

More than one in four people in Quebec will be 65 or older by 2030. This demographic shift, unprecedented in scale, is rich in opportunity but also raises major challenges, particularly in health, social inclusion, planning, justice, and civic participation. In this context, Quebec must innovate and adopt science-based strategies to navigate this transition effectively.

A number of measures have already been implemented by decision-makers to prepare Quebec for the realities of an aging population. Among them, the *2024–2029 Government Action Plan, La fierté de vieillir*, along with its associated consultation process, helped identify the population's major needs. The plan also calls on "the entire population and all organizations […] to participate, in a concerted and integrated manner, in developing sustainable solutions adapted to the diversity of needs and life trajectories of older adults." This call has resonated particularly strongly within the Quebec scientific community working on aging-related issues.

Building on this momentum, the Quebec Network for Research on Aging (RQRV), with the support of its partners, research groups and centres, as well as the Fonds de recherche du Québec (FRQ), convened the Summit, *Aging in Quebec: Research Perspectives*, to define key directions for scientific advancement in aging. Held in December 2024, the Summit brought together Quebec researchers and key contributors from across civil society to reflect collectively on research priorities, promising innovations, and the indicators needed to build an age-inclusive society. This White Paper, arising from the preparatory work and the discussions held during the Summit, offers an integrated, action-oriented vision.

The proposed roadmap presents seven cross-cutting approaches to guide research over the coming decade:

- **Intersectorality** — foster dialogue across health sciences, natural sciences and engineering, social sciences and humanities, and arts and letters.
- **Research-to-implementation continuum** — support the transition from discovery to practical application.
- **Inclusion** — ensure representation of diverse sexes, genders, origins, abilities, living environments, socioeconomic statuses, and other dimensions.
- **Participatory approach** — involve older adults and field stakeholders in identifying research questions and co-developing solution pathways (e.g., living labs, partnerships).
- **Responsible technologies and artificial intelligence** — maximize social benefits while anticipating and addressing ethical challenges.
- **Data valorization** — encourage data sharing, security, and interoperability.
- **Social mobilization** — engage the public, contribute to debate, and inform evidence-based decision-making.

These approaches should be applied to support 12 research themes identified as priorities:

1. Research on social participation and well-being
2. Research on civic participation
3. Research on representations of aging, ageism, and stigma
4. Research on living environments to promote well-being and autonomy
5. Research on urban and interurban planning
6. Research on prevention
7. Research on innovative care and social service practices
8. Research on the organization of health care and social services
9. Research on support for informal caregivers
10. Research on crises and climate change
11. Research on safety, justice, and law
12. Research on the inclusion of a diversity of older adults

In addition, the White Paper presents principles to guide the definition of success indicators and includes a directory of programs and innovations developed by Quebec researchers. It also provides concrete recommendations organized around four strategic themes:

1. Strengthen aging research and align it with societal priorities
2. Support and rapidly scale promising innovations in the field
3. Increase the inclusion and diversity of older adults
4. Use research findings to inform public policy

In summary, the White Paper, *Aging in Quebec: Research Perspectives*, outlines a roadmap for high-calibre, innovative research grounded in diverse expertise and the experiential knowledge of those most directly affected. More than a review of the state of the field, this White Paper is a call to action, inviting citizens, researchers, decision-makers, and entrepreneurs to join forces so that population aging becomes a source of innovation, justice, and prosperity for Quebec society as a whole.

SUMMIT CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES

Quebec is experiencing strong growth in its population aged 65 and over, who now outnumber those under 20[1]. In 2046, people aged 65 and over will represent nearly one third of the adult population[1]. This increase in life expectancy is a remarkable achievement for humanity. However, this progress also calls for innovation to ensure that individuals and society as a whole can fully benefit. Four major observations emerge from demographic and societal projections for Quebec:

First, major changes are expected in older adults' profiles and life trajectories, including increases in the number of people aged 85 and over, the proportion of older immigrants, and the share of older adults who are members of the LGBTQ+ community or who live outside major urban centres, as well as rising poverty, a widening gap in retirees' incomes, and growing inequities[2,3].

Second, digital technologies and artificial intelligence will play an increasingly prominent role across all spheres of society, and this should be accompanied by greater digital literacy among future cohorts of older adults[3];

Third, the retirement age is expected to rise, and the number of people aged 65 and over in the workforce is projected to increase[2];

Finally, the health and social services system will need to evolve to meet growing needs driven by demographic change, fiscal and workforce pressures, and technological advances.

Driven by the Quebec Network for Research on Aging (RQRV), in collaboration with research centres, groups, and institutes specializing in aging in Quebec, the objectives of the Summit, *Aging in Quebec: Research Perspectives*, were to:

1. Identify priority research questions in the field of aging that align with society's needs;

2. Highlight innovations and initiatives emerging from Quebec researchers that can support Quebec's actions in this field, and

3. Propose science-based indicators of success while considering the diverse realities of the contexts involved. Held on December 18, 2024, the Summit led to the development of this White Paper, which summarizes the discussions and sets out a scientific action plan that is complementary to the measures outlined in the *Action Plan, La fierté de vieillir.*

WHITE PAPER CONTENT AND PROCESS OVERVIEW

This White Paper aims to synthesize the work and discussions conducted during the Summit, while proposing strategic directions to guide future research and initiatives in support of aging in Quebec. The content is based on a rigorous, iterative methodology, drawing on the scientific and experiential knowledge of more than 200 people, including researchers, professionals, decision-makers, practitioners, and older adults.

The findings are presented in five main sections:

- **Section 1** reports the approaches and methods that cut across the different research themes addressed in Section 2.
- **Section 2** identifies the main research themes proposed by Summit participants, framed as unresolved questions that the scientific community must urgently address.
- **Section 3** presents the outcomes of discussions on major research-based indicators.
- **Section 4** presents innovations and programs developed by Quebec researchers that can support older adults, their autonomy, and their well-being.
- **Section 5** offers recommendations aimed at translating the consultation's results into concrete, tangible actions.
- Finally, **Section 6** details the methodology and process used for the consultation, including the steps undertaken and the tools mobilized to gather participants' perspectives and recommendations.

SECTION 1.
CROSS-CUTTING APPROACHES AND METHODS

At the Summit, participants identified cross-cutting approaches and key principles for conducting aging research. These approaches and principles transcend the research themes presented in **Section 2** and were recognized as foundational to work in the field of aging. Both structural and methodological in nature, these approaches offer significant potential to strengthen research and enhance its impact. Integrating diverse perspectives into the scientific process enables new interpretations of collected data, builds connections across disciplines, fosters intersectoral collaboration and collective reflection, and supports a more holistic vision. In doing so, they contribute to renewing existing paradigms and reshaping how science is conducted. Rather than being studied as standalone topics, these approaches were framed as transversal perspectives that should permeate all research activities. Their adoption represents a strategic lever for optimizing the interpretation and use of data, while making research more collaborative, inclusive, applied, and socially engaged.

AN INTERSECTORAL APPROACH

Because aging is complex and affects multiple dimensions of a person's life, it calls for research grounded in a holistic approach to health and well-being—one that integrates biological, physical, cognitive, psychological, social, environmental, spiritual, legal, and financial dimensions at both the individual and collective levels. This requires more intersectoral and multidisciplinary approaches that integrate researchers, methods, and research questions from different sectors and fields of inquiry (e.g., health, society and culture, nature, and technology).

FROM FUNDAMENTAL RESEARCH TO IMPLEMENTATION

Regardless of the subject matter or field of study, it is essential to support the full research continuum, from fundamental research to applied research. Equally important is fostering strong, ongoing connections between these stages. When developing approaches or interventions, research should encompass the entire continuum of research—from understanding fundamental mechanisms to conducting proof-of-concept, efficacy, efficiency, and real-world implementation studies. We must also advance approaches that assess the cost–benefit of technologies, tools, programs, and interventions, as well as analyze long-term effects through follow-up or longitudinal studies. Additionally, research in implementation science should be promoted, both to support the development of technologies and tools and to optimize programs and interventions—for example, through large-scale implementation studies in real-world settings.

FOR INCLUSIVE RESEARCH

It is important to study aging while accounting for the diversity of life trajectories and living conditions, including differences in abilities (physical, intellectual, or sensory), environment (urban, rural, or remote settings), sex and gender, cultural background, social class and status, sexual orientation, and linguistic diversity. Research should also examine social phenomena that shape the experience of aging in Quebec, such as ageism. Additionally, studies should include people of all ages, including the very old. With the number of centenarians and older adults increasing rapidly, their inclusion is essential. Optimizing inclusion criteria and easing certain ethics committee requirements can help support more representative participation of older adults in research.

PARTICIPATORY AND PARTNERSHIP RESEARCH AND LIVING LABS

Research projects and teams should, where appropriate, adopt participatory and partnership-based approaches (e.g., citizen involvement; patient partners; patient associations) throughout all phases of research. This actively engages older adults as well as major sectors of society (e.g., political, administrative, economic). Such approaches foster comprehensive, high-impact solutions by valuing field-based and experiential knowledge alongside academic and scientific knowledge. Living-lab approaches and partnership research, which enable co-construction with local stakeholders, should be promoted and facilitated. Finally, to accurately reflect the diversity of older adults' experiences and those of professionals, participatory approaches must better include marginalized populations.

THE CONTRIBUTION AND CHALLENGES OF TECHNOLOGIES AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Artificial intelligence, digital technologies, and robotics are playing an increasingly important role in aging research. It is essential to evaluate not only their effectiveness and practical applications but also their social and human impacts. Analyses of these technologies' return on investment should consider both economic and human impacts. Their development and implementation also raise major ethical issues, particularly regarding privacy protection, individual autonomy, and equitable access to innovations[3].

MANAGEMENT, ACCESS, AND VALORIZATION OF QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE DATA FOR RESEARCH

Improving the management and accessibility of data and results—while recognizing the distinctions and inherent value of different types of study designs—is essential for advancing research, in compliance with legal obligations for the protection of personal information. Establishing a centralized structure dedicated to quantitative aging data would enable the harmonization of Quebec cohorts, strengthen national and international collaborations, and support more integrated and efficient research. Recognizing the value of qualitative methods—which produce equally important data that may not lend themselves to centralization—can ensure that qualitative research is supported. Acknowledging the equivalent value of diverse study designs promotes a broader and deeper understanding of the multifaceted nature of aging.

SOCIAL MOBILIZATION IN RESEARCH

Social mobilization depends on communication to unite people around key causes and encourage action toward important social goals. In this context, supporting dialogue and knowledge exchange is essential. Researchers should help raise awareness among social, political, and economic stakeholders about the realities of aging, while these groups should interact with one another to inform decision-making and more effectively leverage research findings. This engagement can take various forms, including participatory, partnership-based, and "living lab" research approaches.

SECTION 2.
MAJOR RESEARCH THEMES

A primary objective of the Summit was to identify priority research pathways that align with the needs of an aging population and to determine the key questions that research must address or clarify. To achieve this, participants built on the preliminary work of five working groups that convened before the Summit, drawing on participants' expertise and needs identified in practice settings. This process highlighted unresolved research questions, with particular attention to the most pressing challenges, innovative approaches, and best practices. By the conclusion of the Summit, 12 promising themes related to aging were identified.

1. RESEARCH ON SOCIAL PARTICIPATION AND WELL-BEING

Research on older adults' social participation should be a high priority. Core questions should explore not only the impacts but also the factors that support or hinder engagement in leisure, cultural activities, work, or continuing education. Priority research directions include:

- Study the **impact of life transitions and changes in living environments on social participation** (for example, moving into a residence for older adults or leaving one due to closure).
- Examine the **effects of social, artistic, creative, and leisure activities** in relation to social determinants of aging (socioeconomic status, income, health, mobility, cultural communities, etc.) and **their accessibility**, particularly using non-traditional and arts-based methods. Assess **collective and societal responsibilities** toward older adults.
- Better understand how to promote well-being in relation to **intimacy and sexuality**, by clarifying older adults' **emotional, spiritual, and other needs** in this area.
- Explore factors influencing well-being related to **older adults' work, including the roles of experienced older workers,** mentoring, and various forms of knowledge transfer.
- Assess the **effectiveness of literacy, digital literacy, and health literacy training** in supporting older adults' autonomy and study the effects of social media on their psychological and cognitive well-being.
- Study **factors contributing to loneliness and social isolation**, their impact on well-being and health, and interventions aimed at mitigating these effects.

2. RESEARCH ON CIVIC PARTICIPATION

Considerable emphasis was placed on studying mechanisms of citizenship, the role of older adults' councils within institutions, and the importance of literacy education in supporting autonomy, with a view to:

- Better understand older adults' mechanisms of **civic participation**, including factors that facilitate or hinder engagement in **governance and public policy.**
- Assess the impact of **older adults' councils within municipalities and institutions** and identify strategies to enhance their influence.
- Examine and develop **collaborative governance models** that involve older adults, researchers, decision-makers, and community organizations.

3. RESEARCH ON REPRESENTATIONS OF AGING, AGEISM AND STIGMA

Summit participants emphasized the importance of documenting and understanding how older adults are portrayed in society, including prejudice, stigma, and ageism. They highlighted the need to examine these phenomena in all their complexity and to rigorously evaluate the effectiveness of interventions designed to address them. Key research areas include:

- Analyze **representations of older adults in the media** and their influence on societal attitudes toward aging.
- Study the **different components of ageism**, including biases affecting older adults living with neurocognitive disorders
- Evaluate **interventions aimed at reducing ageism and stereotypes** in all settings, particularly in institutional and community contexts.
- Document **ageism in the labour market**, assess its impacts, and test strategies and interventions that promote the professional inclusion of older workers.

4. RESEARCH ON LIVING ENVIRONMENTS TO PROMOTE WELL-BEING AND AUTONOMY

Older adults overwhelmingly wish to remain in their homes for as long as possible. However, aging in place raises complex challenges that research must help to understand and address. Key questions relate to integrating assistive technologies and exploring innovative housing models. Priority research directions identified at the Summit include:

- Assessing the impact of digital health tools (e.g., **assistive technologies and telehealth, including telemedicine** and remote monitoring tools for chronic diseases) on enabling older adults to remain in their preferred living environment; studying factors that facilitate or hinder their adoption; and examining how these tools can be smoothly integrated with existing practices.
- Analyzing **innovative housing models** (social housing, intergenerational co-housing, and adapted residences), focusing on their effects on access to care, social participation, autonomy, and well-being, and social representations of older adults.
- **Testing home-adaptation solutions, particularly through home automation,** to improve the accessibility and safety of living environments.
- Documenting **territorial disparities in the ability to remain at home**, and proposing solutions tailored to rural and remote areas, vulnerable populations, and those at risk of marginalization.
- Analyzing the **determinants of housing insecurity,** studying emerging forms of **homelessness among older adults**, and identifying intervention strategies that effectively respond to **their needs and realities**.

5. RESEARCH ON URBAN AND INTERURBAN PLANNING

Adapting urban infrastructure is essential to ensure the inclusion, well-being, safety, and mobility of older adults. Research can guide city planning to better meet the needs of aging populations. Priority research areas include:

- Conducting research in **logistics, design, environment, and administration** to develop strategies for cities adapted to older adults' needs and potential (e.g., park design and planning).
- Studying the impacts of **urban densification** on vulnerable populations and those at risk of being marginalized (e.g., risks of exclusion and accessibility of services).
- Developing and testing **safe infrastructure** (e.g., ramps, lighting, and adapted street furniture) to reduce falls and accidents and promoting social participation.
- Evaluating the continuum of **local services, including businesses, community organizations, and public services.**

- Analyzing mobility needs based on lifestyles and the characteristics of low-density territories, and testing designs that promote **active mobility and walkability across** different environments (rural and urban) and **transport solutions** (public transit, shared mobility services, pedestrian infrastructure).
- Evaluating approaches inspired by **Age-Friendly Municipalities (MADA), "dementia-friendly" initiatives or Alzheimer villages.**

6. RESEARCH ON PREVENTION

Summit participants emphasized the need for more research on preventive approaches in gerontology rather than curative ones. In areas such as physical health, cognitive and mental health, and environment, prevention can reduce health care and social service costs, empower individuals to take greater ownership of their health, and foster social responsibility. Key research priorities include:

- Developing **fundamental research in prevention** to understand mechanisms of action and providing explanatory and predictive models, including biological, psychological, and social mechanisms
- Understanding **health trajectories, life trajectories, and quality of life** among older adults in Quebec, incorporating **third- and fourth-age populations and focusing on their specific characteristics.**
- Developing **predictive models of healthy aging for Quebec's population** using longitudinal and epidemiological data collected in Quebec cohorts.
- Evaluating the **effectiveness of non-pharmacological preventive measures**, such as physical exercise, programs promoting healthier eating, psychological and social prevention initiatives, and targeted information or education programs addressing **modifiable risk factors** for more vulnerable individuals.
- Examining **environmental and social conditions** that promote access to health-supporting conditions (e.g., walkability, access to healthy food, access to stimulating leisure activities).

7. RESEARCH ON INNOVATIVE CARE PRACTICES AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Aging presents complex challenges that require innovative, research-based approaches. Research should help clarify how these approaches can be integrated into practice and assess their effects on the life, health and social trajectories of older adults. Priority areas include:

- Studying **approaches and programs for screening and early diagnosis** of neurocognitive disorders and chronic diseases.
- Understanding and implementing strategies for **medication deprescribing.**
- Preventing **deconditioning** in older adults during periods of prolonged inactivity, illness, or hospitalization.
- Analyzing **mental health interventions** and their effectiveness in preventing and treating depression and anxiety among older adults.
- Testing the impact of new **sensory-assistive technologies** (e.g., smart hearing aids, smart glasses).
- Promoting innovative research in **long-term care, both at home and in long-term care facilities.**
- Studying **end-of-life care**, including older adults' end-of-life trajectories, the experiences of their loved ones, and **medical assistance in dying,** as well as the impact on families, care teams, and broader societal implications.

8. RESEARCH ON THE ORGANIZATION OF HEALTH CARE AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Research on the organization of health care and social services can help rethink support for older adults, strengthen equity in health and social services, and identify innovative strategies tailored to the needs of the most vulnerable older populations. Key research areas include:

- Examining the **continuum of health care and social services** and identify strategies to reduce gaps in continuity.
- Studying the **integration of health care, social services, and multidisciplinary teams** and assess their impact on continuity of care.
- Assessing **care trajectories and access to social services**, including for subgroups with increased vulnerability.
- Analyzing **equity in access** to health care and social services, exploring **barriers and facilitators to access**, and how services can be adapted for older adults experiencing poverty or from minority groups.
- Assessing approaches derived from **geriatric and social gerontology** models.
- Studying **coordination and governance** issues related to **policies, programs and services.**

9. RESEARCH ON SUPPORT FOR INFORMAL CAREGIVERS

Informal caregivers play an essential role in the care of older adults with difficulties or special needs. Research should aim to better understand their needs, realities and challenges, and to develop tailored support solutions. Priority research areas include:

- Studying **caregivers' trajectories** through longitudinal studies.
- Identifying **protective factors** that support caregivers' physical, cognitive, and mental health.
- Analyzing caregivers' needs related to **respite and support services.**
- Evaluating the impact of **training and education programs** for caregivers, including the role of **digital platforms**.

10. RESEARCH ON CRISES AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change and public health crises are likely to increase the vulnerability of older adults, particularly those with low incomes. Research should aim to better understand these effects and develop targeted intervention protocols to strengthen the resilience of older adults. Priority areas include:

- Assessing the impact of **climate change** on older adults.
- Assessing the effects of **health crises** on older adults' health and the delivery of care and services.
- Developing **intervention protocols** tailored to the challenges posed by climate change and health crises, and responsive to the needs of a diverse older adult population.

11. SECURITY, JUSTICE, AND THE LAW

Physical and financial security, equitable access to justice, and respect for fundamental rights are essential to preserving the dignity of older adults. Research can contribute to a better understanding of these issues and to mitigating their impact. In particular, analyzing financial support mechanisms and tax policies is key to ensuring sustainable economic security and access to care. The Summit identified the following priority research areas:

- Analyzing **forms of abuse, intimidation, and discrimination** affecting older adults in institutional and community settings and assessing the effectiveness of policies that promote respectful care.
- Studying the **legal remedies available to older adults who experience abuse or discrimination** and identifying strategies to strengthen access to justice.
- Identifying **cybersecurity and fraud** risks and testing effective protective measures.
- Better understanding interventions that promote **decisional autonomy** (e.g., refusal of service), shared decision-making, and functional independence.

- **Analyzing the effectiveness of financial-support policies and retirement models** in ensuring long-term economic security.
- **Analyzing the effects of financial-support policies and tax measures** on aging in place, access to care, and incentives to re-enter the labour market.
- Examining the **links between social isolation and safety,** and identifying strategies to mitigate related risks.
- Studying practices and innovations related to **personal hygiene and living-environment cleanliness** to reduce health risks and promote overall well-being.

12. RESEARCH ON THE INCLUSION OF A DIVERSE RANGE OF OLDER ADULTS

Documenting the life trajectories of diverse and marginalized older adults helps clarify their specific needs and supports the adaptation of protection systems in ways that promote social equity. In this perspective, the following priority research questions were identified:

- Better understanding the needs and realities of diverse and marginalized aging populations, including **LGBTQ+ older adults, older migrants, ethnocultural minorities, Indigenous peoples, and older adults with disabilities**, and develop tailored programs and policies.
- Documenting the **life trajectories, needs, and living conditions of older adults experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity and identifying the drivers of marginalization.**
- Examining **aging within incarcerated populations, as well as those on probation or under house arrest,** focusing on challenges related to social reintegration and post-release follow-up.

SECTION 3.
KEY PRINCIPLES FOR IDENTIFYING SUCCESS INDICATORS

In a context where decisions must be evidence-based, it is essential to define success indicators that reflect the realities and priorities of the relevant stakeholders. Robust indicators facilitate knowledge transfer, support community ownership, and help ensure the sustainability of proposed innovations. Rather than identifying specific measures, Summit participants prioritized the foundational principles that should guide their development. The following principles were identified to inform indicator selection and maximize downstream impact:

1. It is important to consider both **"proximal" indicators** (e.g., participation rates, immediate satisfaction), which enable rapid assessment of an innovation's or program's effectiveness, feasibility and acceptability, and **"distal" indicators** (e.g., social cohesion, societal representations of aging, life expectancy, healthy life expectancy), which capture broader and longer-term effects.
2. Project-specific indicators should be aligned with **public health impact indicators** (e.g., isolation rates, quality of life) to enhance community transferability and foster ownership. This alignment strengthens transferability (the ability to apply results across different settings) and ownership (the engagement of community stakeholders).
3. **Long-term indicators** are required to measure the sustainability of implemented changes and determine whether they are maintained over time. Sustainability plans (recurring budgets, or partnerships embedded in regional policies) serve as strategic markers of initiative robustness.
4. **Indicators that reflect social determinants of health** (e.g., age, sex and gender, living environment, region, socioeconomic status, and service availability) should also be included to generate more nuanced insights, better identify disparities, and inform intervention adjustments.
5. It is important to document the **reach of interventions,** programs, tools, or innovations. **Implementation research frameworks** provide relevant models for examining reach, effectiveness, adoption, fidelity, and maintenance. These approaches encourage collaboration with adopting organizations to evaluate how interventions are implemented, sustained, or scaled.

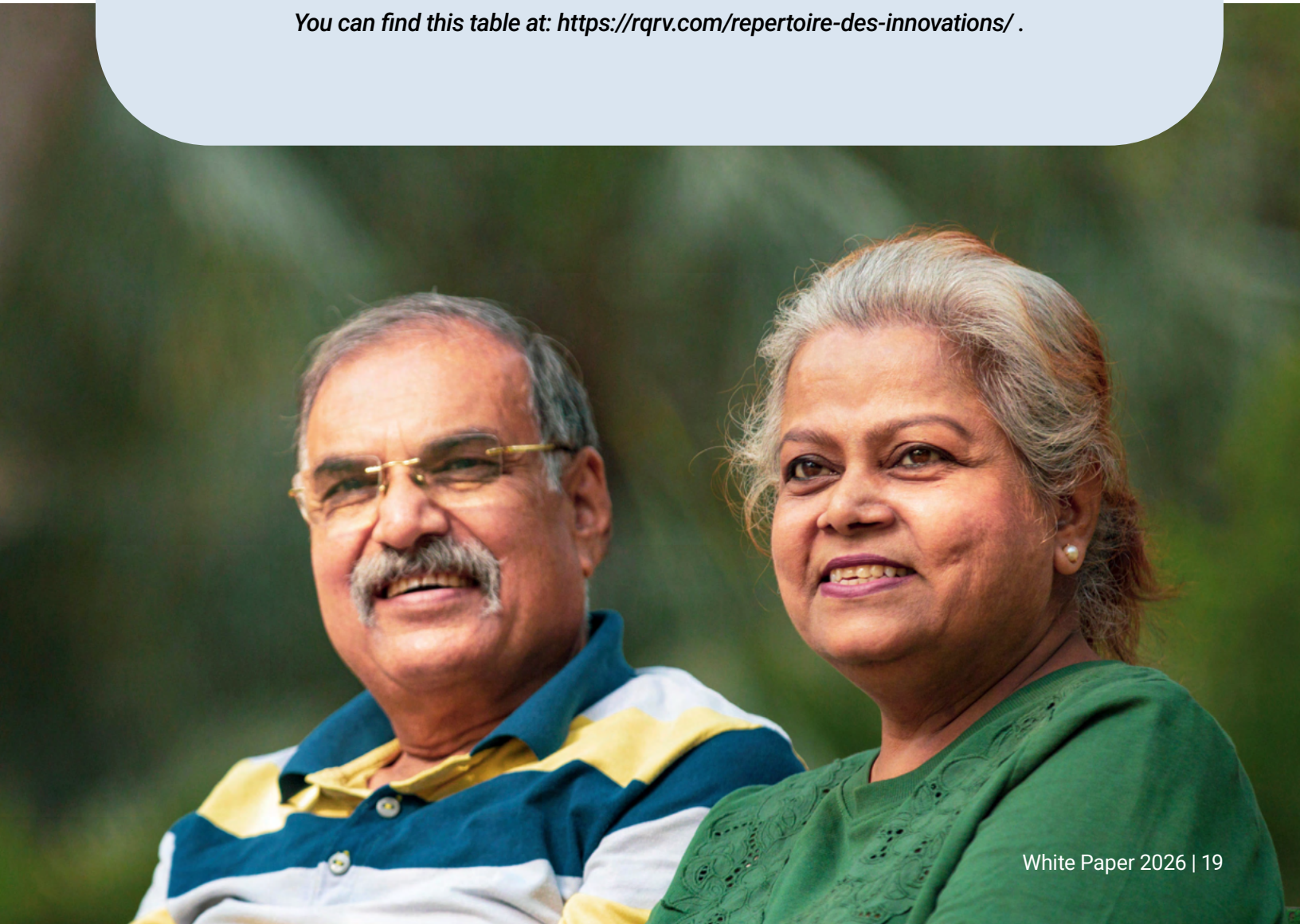
SECTION 4.
INNOVATIONS

The Summit identified a range of innovations and programs developed by Quebec researchers to support older adults, their autonomy, and their well-being.

These innovations are presented in a table that specifies the name of the innovation, its purpose, maturity level, and contact person. The table is maintained on the RQRV website.

While not exhaustive, this compendium includes innovations proposed by RQRV members and researchers affiliated with Quebec's aging centers and institutes. To be included, innovations had to meet three criteria: focus on aging; originate from work conducted by a Quebec-based researcher; and have reached a sufficient stage of maturity to enable adoption and implementation.

You can find this table at: https://rqrv.com/repertoire-des-innovations/ .



SECTION 5.
RECOMMENDATIONS

The *Aging in Quebec Summit: Research Perspectives* underscored the urgency of advancing research in priority areas related to aging. It also highlighted the need to translate these reflections into concrete actions that enhance research quality and align it more closely with societal priorities. The following recommendations, organized around four strategic directions, are intended to operationalize these commitments and generate meaningful, lasting impact. They outline both strategic and practical pathways to ensure effective implementation of the Summit's conclusions, supporting their integration into decision-making processes and research practices. The ultimate goal is to position research as a catalyst for positive change, enabling older adults to live with dignity, autonomy, and fulfillment.

A Strengthen Aging Research and Align It with Societal Priorities

1. Disseminate the Summit's findings to researchers, partners, and decision-makers to provide clear guidance on aging research priorities—for example, through presentations at forums and conferences, publications in various types of journals, and engagement in relevant political and policy arenas.
2. Undertake outreach and advocacy efforts to promote the development of multi-partner research support programs aligned with the proposed themes, targeting stakeholders interested in specific research areas.
3. Promote intersectoral research initiatives, teams, and consortia related to the themes identified in the White Paper, in collaboration with the FRQ intersectoral program where appropriate.
4. Strengthen governance and improve access to research-ready data, including administrative data, by mobilizing researchers around existing, up-to-date repositories; investing in secure and interoperable platforms; and facilitating responsible data access and sharing while ensuring privacy and security. Recognize that certain types of research and data may not be suited to centralized sharing but remain equally valuable and complementary.
5. Integrate aging-related training across a broad range of disciplines and professional programs, at multiple academic levels, to raise awareness and better prepare the next generation to address the diverse challenges associated with aging.

B Support and Rapidly Scale Promising Innovations in the Field

6. Stimulate research on digital health and aging, ensuring that ethical and social considerations are addressed.
7. Encourage and support research funding programs that enable progression from fundamental research to the implementation of solutions, within an innovation continuum.
8. Provide broader and longer-term research funding mechanisms, where appropriate, to support project development, knowledge translation, real-world implementation, impact evaluation, and partnered research initiatives.
9. Expand and support participatory and partnership-based approaches, including living labs and co-creation, and co-validation platforms, while recognizing the value of citizen expertise.
10. Encourage public bodies and institutions to quickly adopt and pilot scientifically validated innovations developed by Quebec researchers, and to support rigorous evaluations of their long-term costs and benefits.

C Increase the Inclusion and Diversity of Older Adults

11. Encourage researchers to systematically include participants who reflect the diversity of older adults and their aging trajectories, and reduce barriers to participation for those in precarious or marginalized situations, as well as their families, friends, care teams, managers, and other stakeholders involved in their support.
12. Support more flexible ethical and regulatory standards, without compromising safety, to facilitate the participation of older adults in precarious or marginalized situations.

D Use Research Findings to Inform Public Policy

13. Strengthen the role of researchers through social mobilization approaches, in collaboration with the Chief Scientist, the Chief Innovator, scientists-in-residence, and scientific advisors embedded within decision-making bodies (e.g., ministries, municipalities, public organizations), as well as within academic and public spheres.
14. Foster relationships with governmental ministries and secretariats (e.g., seniors, health and social services, transportation, culture) to collaborate on and initiate research efforts that address major unmet needs.

TABLE OF RECOMMENDATIONS, PARTNERS AND INDICATORS

Recommendations	Partners	Performance indicators (short and medium term)
A. Strengthen aging-related research and align it with societal priorities		
A1. Share the Summit's findings with researchers, partners, and decision-makers.	Universities, community organizations, professional associations, health and social services sector, interest groups, industry, academic groups, FRQ, Ministries	**Short term:** Number of events held and articles published.
A2. Engage in outreach and advocacy to encourage the creation of multi-partner research support programs.	Funding agencies, philanthropic organizations, foundations, funders	**Short term:** Number of partners met. **Medium term:** Number of programs / amount of funding mobilized.
A3. Encourage research teams and cross-sector consortia to work on the themes identified in the White Paper.	Universities, funding agencies, researchers, FRQ intersectoral committee	**Short term:** Number of partners met. **Medium term:** Number of programs stimulated / projects funded / rate of cross-sector collaboration.
A4. Strengthen governance, access to, and leveraging of research-appropriate data, including administrative data.	Scientifique en chef, FRQ, INSPQ, INESS, Organismes subventionnaires, CIUSSS, Santé Québec, Entreprises technologiques	**Short term:** Number of partners met. **Medium term:** Number of formalized partnerships / operational changes / number of shared data repositories.
A5. Integrate aging into curricula across disciplines.	Universities, CEGEPs, professional associations responsible for program accreditation	**Short term:** Number of partners met. **Medium term:** Number of contents created / students trained.

B. Supporting the development of promising innovations rapidly deployed in the field		
B6. Stimulate research on aging in digital health, taking ethical and social issues into account.	Researchers, funding agencies, funders, industry	**Medium term:** Number of digital-health research projects / number of consultations with stakeholders.
B7. Encourage and support research-action programs that span the continuum from basic research to the implementation of innovations.	Funding agencies, research centres, living labs	**Short term:** Number of partners met. **Medium term:** Number of programs supported / integrated projects / publications.
B8. Where relevant, provide broader and longer-term research funding, which may include phases of project design, knowledge transfer, implementation, and evaluation of real-world impacts, and which facilitate, among other things, partnership-based research.	Funding agencies, philanthropic organizations, funders, foundations	**Short term:** Number of partners met. **Medium term:** Number of programs with longer terms / average funding duration.
B9. Expand participatory and partnership approaches, such as living labs and co-creation and co-validation platforms.	Researchers, funding agencies, funders	**Medium term:** Number of citizen participants involved / number of living labs, partnership platforms, and co-creation platforms created
B10. Encourage various public bodies and institutions to quickly adopt and test innovations that have been scientifically validated.	Ministries, industry, the health and social services sector, INSPQ, INESS, municipalities	**Short term:** Number of partners reached and engaged. **Medium term:** Number of innovations implemented / number of innovations adopted / number of cost-benefit assessments.

C. Increasing inclusion and diversity among older adults		
C11. Encourage researchers to more systematically include participants who reflect the diversity of older adults and their trajectories.	Researchers, students	**Medium term:** Participation rate of under-represented groups / number of measures put in place to facilitate access.
C12. Support more flexible ethical and regulatory standards (without compromising safety) to facilitate participation in research by older adults in precarious or marginalized situations.	Ethics committees	**Short term:** Number of partners met. **Medium term:** Number of regulatory changes.

D. Informing public policy with robust evidence		
D13. Strengthen the role of researchers through a social mobilization approach.	Ministries, industry, the health and social services sector, Chief Scientist, scientific advisers, media, general public, municipalities, living labs	**Short term:** Number of contacts established / dissemination activities / media-outreach activities. **Medium term:** Briefs submitted / opinion letters.
D14. Foster linkages with governmental ministries and secretariats to collaborate and/or establish research work.	Ministries, secretariats, INSPQ INESS, scientific advisers, FRQ	**Short term:** Number of partners met. **Medium term:** Number of formalized partnerships / number of programs / number of projects initiated.

SECTION 6.
METHODS AND PROCESS

The consultation was conducted using an adapted Delphi approach, designed to solicit and synthesize, over several iterations, the perspectives of a broad range of stakeholders (researchers, users, decision-makers, community representatives, etc.). The procedure was developed by the RQRV management team in collaboration with the RQRV Scientific Committee, Steering Committee, and Student Committee, as well as with the scientific leadership of Quebec's research centres, groups and institutes focused on aging, and in consultation with the Fonds de recherche du Québec.

Workstreams: To reflect disciplinary diversity, five workstreams were formed based on the themes addressed in the *Government Action Plan 2024–2029, La fierté de vieillir*: 1) Inclusion, diversity and social participation; 2) Autonomy and support; 3) Safe and adapted environments; 4) Prevention, treatment and intervention; 5) Safety, law, marginality and precarity. Each workstream included six to eight members, comprising researchers, students, users, and partner patients. The multidisciplinary and diverse composition of each group was designed to capture a broad range of perspectives. Members were assigned to workstreams aligned with their expertise. Participants received non-exhaustive lists of themes in advance, drawn from the workstreams' preliminary work, to stimulate discussion. Exchanges were recorded in shared documents.

Committees: A Scientific Committee ensured that the approach remained aligned with the Summit objectives and with the Delphi method. An Organizing Committee coordinated logistics (invitations, discussion planning, and document sharing). Directors of research centres across Quebec (CIUSSS, universities, specialized institutes) also participated in the Scientific and Organizing Committees to ensure overall coherence of the process.

Summit proceedings: Participation in the Summit was open to all aging researchers in Quebec, while ensuring representation across different research settings, as well as to students, users, and community members. In total, 220 people took part in the Summit. Introductory remarks were delivered by Rémi Quirion, Quebec's Chief Scientist, and Sonia Bélanger, Minister Responsible for Seniors and Minister Delegate for Health. Sabrina Marino, Executive Director of the Secretariat for Seniors within the Quebec Ministry of Health and Social Services (MSSS), then presented the *Government Action Plan 2024–2029, La fierté de vieillir*. Workstream co-chairs subsequently presented summaries of their work, and participants met in workstream groups. Two World Café sessions (morning and afternoon) helped clarify, enrich, and prioritize the major research directions. At the conclusion of the day, FRQ's scientific directors—Louise Poissant (Society and Culture sector), Carole Jabet (Health sector), and Janice Bailey (Nature and Technologies sector) —provided feedback on the discussions and offered suggestions.

CONCLUSION

The RQRV and Quebec's aging research centres sought to mobilize researchers to transform the challenges of aging into opportunities by promoting innovation and inclusion. Building on the themes of the *2024–2029 Government Action Plan, La fierté de vieillir,* the *Aging in Quebec Summit: Research Perspectives* identified research priorities and proposed recommendations to guide public decision-making and improve the quality of life of older adults through concrete, sustainable actions.

Through this White Paper, we seek to generate lasting momentum on age-related issues and create tangible impacts. We also aspire to position science and aging at the heart of societal priorities by fostering a constructive, ambitious dialogue to build a Quebec where aging is not only acknowledged but valued as a collective asset.

Together, by combining knowledge and commitment, we can advance innovative, enduring solutions and build a future in which every older adult can thrive with dignity and pride, fully benefiting from research advancements and collective action.

RÉSEAU QUÉBÉCOIS DE RECHERCHE SUR LE VIEILLISSEMENT

Fonds de recherche Québec

Founded in 1995 and funded by the Fonds de recherche du Québec, the Quebec Network for Research on Aging (RQRV) aims to address the challenges and opportunities arising from demographic change. With nearly 600 members, it works to generate innovative solutions to improve the quality of life and health of older adults within a sustainable health perspective. The RQRV's mission is to support all citizens in their desire to age according to their needs, preferences, and aspirations, while promoting their health and quality of life. To this end, the Network seeks to bring together key forces in aging research in Quebec by coordinating sectoral and cross-sectoral initiatives and partnerships. The Network is concerned with all dimensions of aging and the entire aging trajectory. It supports interdisciplinary and intersectoral research on aging, promotes the maintenance of critical masses of researchers, strengthens overall research capacity, and fosters the creation of research partnerships. www.rqrv.com

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CEVQ
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SOINS FORMATION RECHERCHE PROMOTION-PRÉVENTION

Centre de recherche iugm
Institut universitaire de gériatrie de Montréal

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engAGE

Université Concordia University

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