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# 50+ Newsletter



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New Brunswick Senior Citizens Federation

www.nbscf.ca 

## Sleep, Sleeping Pills, and Aging - Results from the YAWNS NB Study

The Your Answers When Needing Sleep in New Brunswick (YAWNS NB) study is finished and the results are in. The study evaluated the impact of a mailed package on long-term sleeping pill use and sleep quality among NB seniors. Stakeholders, including **Alphonse and Yolande Dionne** representing NBSCF, gathered to learn about study findings and share their perspectives on the **next steps for advancing insomnia care in NB**, the province with the **highest rate of chronic sleeping pill use in the country** (23% NB vs. 8% Canada).

There were 565 people in the study with an average age of 72 who had taken sleeping pills for over 11 years. The study showed the **effectiveness of Sleepwell as a direct-to-patient mailed intervention** in reducing sleeping pill use and improving sleep outcomes among older adults. An economic evaluation identified Sleepwell as a **cost-effective intervention** — just 5 or 6 educational packages need to be mailed for 1 person to stop taking sleeping pills.



The Sleepwell package also introduced participants to cognitive behavioural therapy for insomnia (CBT-I), a brief 4-to-8-week program that fixes what causes chronic insomnia. Participants in the Sleepwell group had better sleep whether they stopped taking sleeping pills or not and were less tired during the day. Many participants in the study took the booklets to their doctor and pharmacist to come up with a plan for slowly and safely stopping sleeping pills while working on getting a good night's sleep with CBT-I.

Stakeholders at the meeting



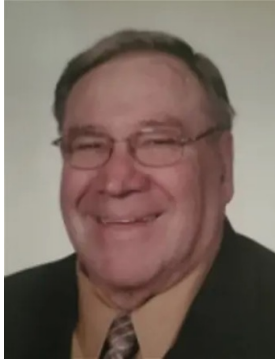
recommended a few next steps for reducing sleeping pill use and increasing the uptake of CBT-I across NB: **1) work with community organizations to spread the word** about sleeping pill concerns and CBT-I as a safer and more effective treatment; **2) distribute educational packages on sleep health directly to older adults across NB** raise awareness about the importance of sleep for your physical and mental well-being; **3) share the information with family doctors and pharmacists** about insomnia care practice guidelines and insomnia's economic impact; and **4) advocate for government support for prioritizing sleep** as an essential pillar of healthy aging.

Visit [mysleepwell.ca](http://mysleepwell.ca) for more details about the study, sleeping pills, and how to get started with CBT-I.



# In Memory of Percy Huntington

It is with profound sadness that we announce the passing of Percy Huntington, current Past President and a devoted and longtime member of the New Brunswick Senior Citizens Federation (NBSCF).



Percy's commitment to enhancing the quality of life for seniors across New Brunswick shone brightly through his decades of dedicated service, where he made a lasting impact on both the organization and the broader community.

Percy, a resident of Upper Salmon Creek, first joined the Minto Senior Citizens' Club in 1993. He quickly became a valued leader, taking on the role of Vice-President in 2003 and President in 2004. His engagement with the NBSCF grew from there; Percy served as Chairperson of the Transportation Committee in 2005 and 2007, and later, as Chairperson of both the Ways and Means and Nominating Committees in 2007. His leadership extended to the 55+ Games, where he served as President from 2008 to 2015 and continued as Past-President on the Committee thereafter.

Percy's role as President of the Capital Zone, which he held from 2007 to 2016

and resumed from 2017 to 2022, reflected his unwavering commitment to seniors. He was also Grand Knight for Council 3502 of the Minto Knights of Columbus for eight years, serving additionally as a 4th Degree Knight in Fredericton, and as a faithful scribe for the Reverend Dr. Everett Grant Council from 2013 to 2015.

Always a passionate advocate, Percy joyfully represented the Federation during countless visits to clubs and zones across the province. As Vice-President of the Federation, he served on several committees, including Perfect Partners in Saint John and the Home Support Group in Fredericton, and represented the NBSCF at nursing home inaugurations across New Brunswick.

Between 2015 and 2022, Percy chaired the Programs and Services Committee, where he spearheaded Leadership Sessions for Seniors' Clubs across the province. These sessions covered essential topics such as club constitutions, by-laws, and the roles and responsibilities of club officers, along with courses like 55 Alive, Winter Driving, Senior Assisted Travel, and Home Safety. His tireless efforts in these areas earned him the NBSCF's Volunteer of the Year

Award and a Lifetime Membership from the Capital Zone and the Federation in 2017.

Percy remained a steadfast presence at NBSCF events and in the lives of members throughout the province. He served as President of the Federation from 2022 until this past May. Despite being a unilingual Anglophone, he ensured bilingual representation during visits or exchanges with zones, clubs, and members, often bringing bilingual companions to assist with translations. His mission was always clear: to work for all seniors and to make a positive difference in their lives.

Percy will be remembered for his passionate service, dedication, leadership, commitment and the positive impact he made on the lives of seniors across the province. His unwavering commitment to improving the quality of life for seniors in New Brunswick was evident in all his endeavors.

He has left an indelible mark on our Federation and the communities he served, and his legacy of dedication will continue to inspire us all.

Our thoughts and sincere condolences are with his wife Janet, his family and friends during this difficult time.

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