



SASKATCHEWAN POPULATION HEALTH AND EVALUATION RESEARCH UNIT



ANNUAL REVIEW



2019 - 2022



For over 20 years, the Saskatchewan Population Health and Evaluation Research Unit (SPHERU) has been a leader in population health research—the study of social and structural factors that affect the wellbeing of groups within our province. SPHERU is a bi-university health research unit based at the University of Regina and University of Saskatchewan.

As learners, clinicians, educators, and researchers in Canada, we recognize that we are on traditional Indigenous territories that include treaty lands, unceded lands, and Métis homelands. We pay our respects to the First Nation, Métis, and Inuit ancestors and affirm our commitment to respectful relationships with one another and this land. The Universities of Saskatchewan and Regina with which we are affiliated are located on Treaty 6 and Treaty 4 territory respectively, and on Métis Homelands. We endeavour to live these values in our professional and personal interactions: relationships grounded in safety and humility, respect for all peoples and their world views, reciprocity in all relationships, relevance to wholistic wellness, and responsibility for informed pedagogy and practice.



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MESSAGE FROM THE CO-DIRECTORS



When the COVID-19 pandemic broke in Saskatchewan in March 2020, we were well into planning a celebration of SPHERU's 20th year anniversary. Like most other planned activities, we pivoted to an online celebration in the Fall of 2020 with a commemorative website (www.spheru20.ca). This bespoke website told the story of SPHERU's research and its impact using the device of 'embodied' language—connecting heart, hands, feet, voice and eyes to tell our research story. We have continued this story-telling device in this report. We invite you to take a look.

The pandemic has demanded the best of us, as trained health researchers, public health specialists, epidemiologists, and teachers. All of us rose to the occasion and delivered the best we could: rapid reviews of scientific literature and syntheses, mounting studies and delivering timely results to those who need to know as well as to the public, directing public health response, serving on pandemic related committees, and engaging with media and advocacy. We engaged in an unprecedented level of advocacy and communication of science-based information. This is the context and the backstory to this report—although not immediately clear as you read the report, it is imbued in every page.

As the pages within this report detail, our reach and impact are varied as it is timely and meaningful. Our research reaches all corners of Saskatchewan, and to all provinces in Canada, and overseas—25 projects and more as reported here and supported by tens of millions of dollars. The impact is on individuals as well as on communities, in Saskatchewan, in Canada, as well as in far-off Mozambique. The projects concern mothers who are pregnant, newborns, youth and young adults, as well as older adults living in rural and remote areas as well as in densely populated cities. We tackle tough issues (food insecurity, mental health and well-being, successful aging in place, healthy cities, fairness in the justice system, and COVID research), and we do research with communities and people with lived experiences. You can read more about these projects in these pages.

What is next for SPHERU? In the third decade, we are in a process of renewal. Renewal of leadership, adding new faculty researchers, and continuing to mentor student researchers and trainees. We are also renewing and formalizing our unit policies and procedures. Most importantly, as the most disruptive public health event in generations fades, we are resolving to learn lessons from the Covid-19 pandemic and to bring these lessons to the attention of politicians and policy makers. We are very well positioned to do this work.

As said in these pages, if research is a form of optimism about the human condition and possibility of progress, we are optimistic and committed to a better future here in Saskatchewan, Canada and globally.

WHO WE ARE

SPHERU is an interdisciplinary, bi-university research unit at the Universities of Saskatchewan and Regina. Founded in 1999, SPHERU promotes health equity through innovative, timely, policy-relevant research. Our researchers come from a variety of academic backgrounds including geography, political science, anthropology, epidemiology, social work, kinesiology, and nutrition. Researchers are appointed at two SPHERU sites: the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Regina.

With a vision to create a healthy society and a better world through research, evaluation, and action for everyone, SPHERU has built a national profile and is one of a handful of research units in Canada well-known for advancing population health research.

SPHERU conducts intervention research to address issues of health inequity among vulnerable populations with a focus on children, rural older adults, and northern and Indigenous populations.

This work involves evaluations of existing policies and programs, research on population interventions, research projects, and uses iterative and innovative knowledge translation strategies to ensure that findings from our research make their way to practitioners and to policy makers at multiple levels of governance.

MISSION

The mission of SPHERU researchers is to undertake interdisciplinary population health intervention research in collaboration with community partners, policy makers and stakeholders to address issues of health inequity among vulnerable populations.

PARTNERS



Health research is a major focus for the University of Regina, with world-class researchers conducting leading-edge studies in aging, long-term care, pain assessment and management, cancer research, population health, rehabilitation and risk reduction, rural health, and northern health. SPHERU's work at the University of Regina includes a multidisciplinary study of the impact of health determinants on various populations, as well as research on policy and program interventions designed to improve these determinants and provide equitable access to health services. Through the provision of funding and office space, the University of Regina continues to support SPHERU in its work to produce high-quality, policy-relevant research.



The University of Saskatchewan, through its involvement with SPHERU, is helping to redefine the way people think about health determinants and to chart new territory by actively engaging communities, non-governmental organizations, and policy makers in the research enterprise. With a wide range of health science colleges and programs, the University of Saskatchewan is committed to expanding health research. The university is home to SPHERU's Saskatoon-based researchers and staff. This relationship, along with an association with the College of Medicine, affords SPHERU opportunities to expand its research and achieve its goals.

FUNDERS

SPHERU receives funding from a variety of sources. While its two university partners primarily provide in-kind support, the majority of SPHERU's funding comes in the form of project-specific grants from provincial and federal health research funding agencies. Key among these are the Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation (SHRF) and operating grants from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) held by one or more researchers affiliated with the unit. As well, SPHERU has been awarded smaller grants from several sources that support conferences, knowledge translation, training, project development, and other activities. SPHERU undertakes contract research on behalf of governments and non-governmental agencies that align with the unit's overall mission and conducts program evaluations in population health. All these sources of funding combine to support the work of the unit.

MANAGEMENT ADVISORY GROUP

As a bi-university research group, SPHERU is guided by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by the University of Regina and the University of Saskatchewan. The MOU outlines the cooperative agreement of the partner institutions to support the work of SPHERU and is operationalized through a Management Advisory Group (MAG). MAG members are senior university administrators who are appointed by the Vice-Presidents Research at both universities. SPHERU's co-directors meet regularly with the MAG to provide updates on the unit's research and financial activities and to seek advice and support for the unit.

MAG members for 2019-2022:



Adam Baxter-Jones, PhD

Dr. Baxter-Jones is currently the University of Saskatchewan's interim Associate Provost Health, and a professor of kinesiology. Previously he was the Acting Dean of the College of Kinesiology, and the Interim Dean of the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. He holds a PhD in Medical Sciences from the University of Aberdeen (UK). Dr. Baxter-Jones's program of research concerns the physical growth and maturation of children related to physical activity. He is a recipient the 2012 Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation Achievement Award and the 2015 University of Saskatchewan's Distinguished Researcher Award. His research has been cited over 15,000 times across hundreds of papers.



Shannon Dea, PhD

Dr. Dea is the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and a Professor in the Department of Philosophy and Classics at the University of Regina. She researches and teaches about social and feminist philosophy, and issues in higher education. She is the author of *Beyond the Binary: Thinking About Sex and Gender*, and of numerous articles and book chapters. Dr. Dea is also the principal investigator on a SSHRC-funded project that seeks to develop better academic freedom protections for precarious and minoritized scholars. She is a recipient of the Ontario Women's Directorate's Leading Women Building Communities Award and of University of Waterloo's Distinguished Teacher Award.



Dr. Marek Radomski, MD, PhD, DSc, MPAL, FCAHS

Dr. Radomski MD, PhD, DSc, MPAL, FCAHS was appointed as Vice-Dean Research in 2016 to lead the Office of Vice Dean Research (OVDR) and is currently serving the second term of office. Dr. Radomski is a highly-cited pharmacologist (>29,350 citations by Google Scholar to date) who worked both in academia and the pharmaceutical industry in Poland, UK, Spain, Canada, USA, and Ireland. He mentored many MSc, PhD, and postdoctoral students. He is interested in platelet regulation, cancer, nitric oxide, and MMP biology and pharmacology, as well as in nanomedicine, nanopharmacology, nanotoxicology, and more recently, in SARS-CoV-2 research. In 2020 Dr. Radomski was inducted to the fellowship of Canadian Academy of Health Sciences.



Andrea Sterzuk, PhD

Dr. Sterzuk (PhD, McGill University) joined the Faculty of Education at the University of Regina in 2007. She has served in a number of leadership roles including Acting Associate Dean, Graduate Programs & Research in Education, Acting Dean of the Faculty of Education, and Director of the Centre for Educational Research, Collaboration and Development which is the Faculty of Education's faculty-based research centre. In September of 2023, she was appointed Acting Associate Vice President Research. Dr. Sterzuk's research focuses on language issues related to settler colonialism and has been published in numerous publications and journals.

Our team is an interdisciplinary network of thought leaders.



**Sylvia
Abonyi, PhD**

Researcher

Dr. Abonyi joined SPHERU in 2000. She is an Associate Professor in the Department of Community Health and Epidemiology at the University of Saskatchewan. She holds a Master of Arts in Archaeology and a Ph.D. in Anthropology. Sylvia conducts community engaged research primarily with First Nation and Métis communities and peoples in northern Saskatchewan. As a non-Indigenous researcher in this context, her program of work is grounded in humility, truth, and reconciliation. Her recent studies focus on healthy aging in place, sleep health, heart and lung health, truth telling through archival analysis of 19th century residential school and hospital records, as well as impacts and experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic.



**Juanita Bacsu,
PhD**

Research Associate

Dr. Bacsu is a Canada Research Chair (Tier II) in Nursing and Population Health and an Assistant Professor in the School of Nursing at Thompson Rivers University. Dr. Bacsu has been a Research Associate with SPHERU since 2009 and a board member with the Canadian Rural Health Research Society since 2011. Prior to this, she was a senior communications manager for the provincial government, a television segment host, and co-owned a family medicine clinic. Her research interests include rural aging, stigma, dementia, cognitive health promotion, social media/infodemiology, and health policy.



**Cheryl Camillo,
PhD**

Researcher

Dr. Camillo is an interdisciplinary scholar-practitioner in the Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy, University of Regina. The overarching purpose of her research is to enhance global population health by improving health and well-being, particularly for vulnerable populations. In pursuing this objective, she focuses on three areas of research: 1) improving access to health insurance and services by understanding and addressing barriers and facilitators experienced by patients and sub-groups of the population; 2) formulating and implementing health system reforms, especially at the sub-national level of government using a comparative lens; and 3) identifying intersectoral, interagency, and intergovernmental strategies for adopting an upstream approach to health and well-being.



**Elizabeth Cooper,
PhD**

Researcher

Dr. Cooper is committed to conducting research with communities that leads to meaningful change. Together they unpack problems and find solutions to things that community members and study participants decide are important. Ongoing themes include improving mental and physical well-being of children/youth and working with Indigenous communities to preserve cultural knowledge and address racism. She currently holds both CIHR and Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation funding. She is a previous Michael Smith Research Fellow and CIHR Fellow. She holds a PhD in Community Health Sciences and a Master's of Arts in Native Studies, both from the University of Manitoba, Canada. She is a faculty member of Kinesiology and Health Studies, University of Regina.



**Jim Daschuk,
PhD**

Research Associate

Dr. Daschuk joined SPHERU in 2008. His book, *Clearing the Plains: Disease, Politics of Starvation and the Loss of Aboriginal Life* has won numerous awards including the Governor General's Medal for Scholarly Research in History and in 2014 and in 2016 was part of the literary review of Canada's twenty-five most influential Canadian books of the last twenty five years. He is a Professor in the Faculty of Kinesiology and Health Studies at the University of Regina.



Rachel Engler-Stringer, PhD

Researcher

Dr. Engler-Stringer is a Professor in Community Health and Epidemiology at the University of Saskatchewan. Her research interests include food systems and food security; nutritional health inequities; health promotion; and participatory research. Currently, she is Principal Investigator of three projects: 1) Good Food For Learning, a universal, curriculum-integrated school food program population health intervention study (funded by CIHR), 2) The School Food Development Project, conducting community co-design of school food programs in Indigenous community schools (funded by PHAC), and 3) Promising Practices in School Food Programs, which involves case studies in every province and territory, historical analysis and international reviews (funded by CIHR, Mitacs and Agriculture and Agrifood Canada).



**Daniel Fuller, MSc,
PhD**

Researcher

Dr. Fuller is an Associate Professor in the Department of Community Health and Epidemiology, at the University of Saskatchewan. He is a Principal Investigator on the INTERventions, Research, and Action in Cities (INTERACT) team and co-principal investigator of the CapaCITY/É Healthy Cities Implementation Science Team. Dan is also involved in Artificial Intelligence for Public Health training initiatives. His interdisciplinary research is focused on using wearable technologies to study physical activity, transportation interventions, and equity in urban spaces. Dr. Fuller has a PhD in Public Health from Université de Montréal. He spends free time chasing his kids around and is a middle of the pack recreational cyclist and triathlete.



**Paul Hackett,
PhD**

Researcher

Dr. Hackett's research focuses on the impact of cultural change driven by colonialism on the health of Indigenous communities, through archival research and collaboration with those communities. He seeks to understand how the actions of the past have set the stage for the health challenges of the present. His research projects include examining the factors that helped set the stage for the current epidemic of Type 2 diabetes that affect some First Nations communities in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, and investigating the history of tuberculosis among the western First Nations. Central to these projects is documenting the devastating impacts of residential schools on community health. He is also currently working on the SPHERU project, History of Public Health and Health Care in Saskatchewan: The origins and import of health inequities in Saskatchewan 1905-1985. He is a Professor in the Department of Geography and Planning at the University of Saskatchewan.



**Bonnie Jeffery,
PhD**

**Researcher & Interim Co-Director
(2022-2023)**

Dr. Jeffery began working with SPHERU in 2000 as a research faculty member, and served as Director from 2006-2012. A Professor in the Faculty of Social Work, she has maintained a long-standing commitment to access to post-secondary education for rural and northern residents. In her research, this commitment extends more broadly to influence policies that impact access to a variety of services for rural and northern residents, particularly for older adults. For the past decade she has explored the policy and program responses that can address supports needed for successful aging in place for rural older adults. More recently she has been leading a community-engaged project to implement and assess interventions to support social inclusion of people with dementia and their care partners in rural Saskatchewan. She holds a Master of Social Work degree from the University of Toronto and an interdisciplinary PhD in Health Services Research and Social Work from the University of British Columbia.



**Shanthi Johnson,
PhD, RD, FDC,
FACS, FGSA**

Research Associate

Dr. Johnson is currently Professor and V.P. Research and Innovation at the University of Windsor. Her community-engaged research program focuses on falls/injury prevention, aging in place in rural communities, and social isolation among immigrant and refugee seniors. Dr. Johnson has appeared before the Canadian Senate as an expert witness, and served on many grant adjudicating panels. As a global champion of research engagement and partnerships, she has participated in the US Fulbright Fellowship, Australian Endeavour Executive Fellowship and others. Beyond the context of higher education, she has had considerable national and international leadership experiences through her participation on various councils and boards including the National Seniors Council, Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute, and the CIHR Governing Council. She has been a recipient of several awards and recognition including the Award of Innovation by the Regina Chamber of Commerce and RBC's Top 25 Canadian Immigrants.



**Tom McIntosh,
PhD**

Researcher

Dr. McIntosh joined SPHERU in 2002 and brings expertise in public policy, public health and health care as well as federalism, intergovernmental politics and knowledge transfer and exchange. He served as Co-Director of the unit from 2013 until 2022 and is also a Professor of Politics and International Studies at the University of Regina. He has worked for local, provincial and the Canadian federal governments, including as Research Coordinator for [Romanow] Commission on the Future of Health Care in Canada from 2001 to 2002. In addition to publishing nine books, his work has appeared in the Canadian Public Administration, the Canadian Political Science Review, Critical Public Health, The Lancet, the Journal of Health Policy, Politics and the Law, Healthcare Papers, the Canadian Journal of Public Health and the Canadian Journal of Aging. He is currently part of the Dementia Supports in Rural Saskatchewan, The Current State of Rural Health Care in Saskatchewan, and Addressing the Wider Health Impacts of COVID-19 research teams at SPHERU.



**Nazeem
Muhajarine, PhD**

Researcher & Co-Director

Dr. Nazeem Muhajarine is a Professor in the Department of Community Health and Epidemiology (CH&E) at the University of Saskatchewan. He brings over 15 years of experience in academic administration, having held positions ranging from interim Executive Director (School of Public Health, USask) to Graduate Program Chair in CH&E. Trained in Social Epidemiology, Epidemiology and Biostatistics, and Psychobiology, his work in early childhood development, how societal factors determines health of children and populations, to name a few, have culminated in over 200 peer-reviewed publications. He was a founding member of Community-University Institutes of Social Research (CUISR) at University of Saskatchewan and has been a research faculty in SPHERU since its inception in January 2000. He is the recipient of several awards of distinction, including his province's Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Award, 2019 University of Saskatchewan Distinguished Research Award, 2015 University of Massachusetts Alumni Achievement Award, 2009 Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation's Achievement Award, and 2006 CIHR Knowledge Translation Award.



**Cordell Neudorf,
PhD**

Research Associate

Dr. Neudorf is a Professor in the Department of Community Health and Epidemiology at the University of Saskatchewan and joined SPHERU in 2013. His work focuses on public health systems and services research and on improving health equity through program and policy change in the health system and through intersectoral action. He is the interim Senior Medical Health Officer for the Saskatchewan Health Authority and President of the Urban Public Health Network of Canada.



**Nuelle Novik,
PhD**

Researcher

Dr. Novik is an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Social Work at the University of Regina. She has practiced as a social worker in the areas of healthcare, mental healthcare and community development in Saskatchewan; and spent six years as Coordinator of the Social Work Program at Aurora College in the Northwest Territories. During that time, she was involved in leadership positions with the Association of Social Workers in Northern Canada, and the Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW). She continues to practice part-time as a therapist with a community-based counselling agency. Her research interests include rural and remote health and mental health, older adults, dementia and dementia care, and end-of-life care.



**Gabriela Novotna,
PhD**

Researcher

Dr. Novotna is an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Social Work at the University of Regina. She joined SPHERU in 2015. She is interested in advancing scholarship in reducing health and social harms associated with substance use and other behaviors through improved policies, programs and practices. Her research focuses on informing clinical, organizational, community and policy interventions for equity-seeking populations. Her research on the uptake of research findings into health and social services has been funded by Tri-Council as well as provincial funding bodies.



**Sarah Oosman,
PhD**

Researcher

Dr. Oosman is an Assistant Professor at the University of Saskatchewan and physiotherapist. She works in the area of health promotion with a specific interest in community-based health intervention research in partnership with Aboriginal communities. She is interested in working with communities to develop and implement culture-based health promotion programs in order to positively influence health across the lifespan. She is currently collaborating on the Healthy Aging in Place project with northern Métis and First Nations communities.



**Michelle Stewart,
PhD**

Researcher

Dr. Stewart is an Associate Professor in Women's and Gender Studies at the University of Regina. An interdisciplinary scholar, Michelle works with research and evaluation teams at the regional, national and international level. As an applied anthropologist trained in Science and Technology Studies as well as visual and political anthropology, she focuses on research, interventions, evaluation and community collaboration in the area of cognitive disabilities, mental health and racialized inequalities as they present in the criminal justice and child welfare systems. Michelle recently completed two terms as the Academic Director of the Community Research Unit. Michelle is currently the co-Director of the Regina Improvisation Studies Centre and part of multiple teams using improvisation as a method in projects focused on social justice and social determinants of health.

SPHERU is diverse in its capacity.

In addition to our researchers and staff, spheru boasts interactions and employment of more than 150 trainees inclusive of research assistants, research coordinators and managers, postdoctoral fellows and student interns.

SPHERU STAFF



**Nancy Akwen,
PhD**

Evaluation Coordinator (University of Regina)

Dr. Akwen joined SPHERU in 2022 as the Evaluation Coordinator of Dementia Supports in Rural Saskatchewan Project. Her previous research has focused on the intersection of environmental and social issues in urban, rural, and Indigenous communities. As Evaluation coordinator, she works with Dr. Bonnie Jeffery, Dr. Tom McIntosh, and Dr. Nuelle Novik in providing overall development, coordination and analysis for the evaluation components of the project.



**Stefanie Foster,
BA, B.Ed**

Research Manager (University of Saskatchewan)

Stefanie Foster is a settler-Canadian, born and raised in Saskatoon, SK on Treaty 6 Territory and the Homelands of the Métis. A former teacher and principal, Stef has a background in secondary education and a passion for community-level food security work. She is pleased to be working for SPHERU as a project manager on Dr. Engler-Stringer's School Food Development Project. Her favourite things include sunny days, creamy coffee, romance novels and her big white dog.



**Michelle Harazny,
MA**

Project Coordinator (University of Regina)

Michelle Harazny joined SPHERU in 2019 as Project Coordinator of Dementia Supports in Rural Saskatchewan. She works with Dr. Bonnie Jeffery, Dr. Tom McIntosh, and Dr. Nuelle Novik, and coordinates initiatives with organizations in Yorkton and surrounding communities.



**Yolanda Palmer-
Clarke, PhD**

Research Officer (University of Saskatchewan)

Yolanda is the Research Officer at SPHERU. She works with Dr. Nazeem Muhajarine and other SPHERU faculty.

In her role as a research officer, Yolanda coordinates several research projects and manages the SPHERU office and activities. She has a Ph.D. in Interdisciplinary Studies from the University of Saskatchewan.

Doctors, researchers, scholars, clinicians, project managers, administrators, and knowledge translation experts make up our diverse and committed SPHERU team.

SPHERU: A Research Story Embodied

Henry Rosovsky, a noted American Economist, argued that research is an expression of faith in the possibility of progress. The drive that leads scholars to study a topic must include the belief that new things can be discovered, that newer can be better, and that greater depth of understanding is achievable. Research, especially academic research, is a form of optimism about the human condition. In tandem, we, at SPHERU, bring ourselves to our relationships with research participants and communities. We work with communities and for communities. Respectful, meaningful engagement starts with the relationships we have with our partners and with our goal of improving the health of the people of Saskatchewan. With a heart for community, SPHERU researchers embody respect and reciprocity through our hands and feet that enable us to voice their stories and open perspectives and dialogue that inspire change. Thus, through our awarded and ongoing research, we embody the spirit of SPHERU with our heart, hands, feet, voice, and eyes.

Heart...

Heart is at the center of our embodied approach to research—and people are at the heart of our research.



PATHWAYS TO HEALTH EQUITY FOR ABORIGINAL PEOPLE - IMPLEMENTATION RESEARCH TEAM GRANTS-COMPONENT 3

SPHERU RESEARCHERS: PAUL HACKETT (PI), SYLVIA ABONYI (CO-PI)

SHRF (150,000 CAD), 2017-2022

These funds match a team grant awarded by the CIHR (Dr. Richard Long PI). The focus of the broader (and ongoing) project has been on improving the control of tuberculosis in collaboration with Indigenous communities. These SHRF funds have supported two sub-projects located in Saskatchewan that further that overall goal. The first explored the historical interplay of tuberculosis and the Indian Residential School system and is ongoing. The second supported graduate work investigating the potential implications of cross-boundary movement on TB case finding and treatment in Indigenous communities. Additionally, the project funded a nursing practicum around TB in northern Saskatchewan. **Research partners: Dr. Richard Long, University of Alberta**

BUILD BACK BETTER IN SASKATCHEWAN. ADDRESSING WIDER SOCIAL AND HEALTH IMPACTS OF COVID-19.

SPHERU RESEARCHERS: NAZEEM MUHAJARINE (NPI), RACHEL ENGLER-STRINGER, NUELLE NOVIK, GABRIELA NOVOTNA, TOM MCINTOSH, MICHELLE STEWART

Canadian Institutes of Health Research (418,565 CAD), 2022-2024

This project aims to document and understand the broader impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in Saskatchewan on poor mental health, substance use, housing precarity, and food insecurity. We're using a multi-method study, including a province-wide survey, drawing from repeated cross-sectional data with national partners, the Mental Health Commission of Canada, and Mental Health Research Canada, and engaging with equity-seeking groups and frontline workers to understand the effects on marginalized communities. The surveys are complemented by qualitative interviews with community-based service providers and clients of these organizations. **Research partners, visit: <https://rememberrebuild.ca/>**

INTEGRATED JUSTICE PROGRAM

SPHERU RESEARCHERS: MICHELLE STEWART (PI), TOM MCINTOSH (EVALUATION/CONSULTANT)

Public Safety Canada (978,272 CAD), 2019- 2022

The Integrated Justice Program (IJP) is a consortium between the FASD Network of Saskatchewan, File Hills Qu'Appelle Tribal Council and the SPHERU (University of Regina) providing services to justice-involved Indigenous individuals with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. This evidence-based project offers low-barrier and trauma-informed services to Indigenous youth and adults. This program includes a one-of-kind Gladue Writing Team that generates court reports meant to address the over-representation of Indigenous peoples in the justice system. This project is responsive to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's call and Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls reports calling for justice reform to address the ongoing impacts of settler colonialism.

PROMOTING WELLNESS THROUGH ORAL AND NUTRITIONAL HEALTH OF OLDER MÉTIS ADULTS IN A NORTHERN SASKATCHEWAN MÉTIS COMMUNITY

SPHERU RESEARCHERS: SYLVIA ABONYI (CO-PI), SARAH OOSMAN (CO-I)

SHRF: Collaborative Innovation Development Grant (50,000 CAD), 2020-2023

The proposed project draws data from and builds on the Wuskiwiy-tan! (Let's Move!) project focused on revealing experiences and aspirations for aging well in a remote Saskatchewan Métis community. As part of this existing study, Métis seniors completed oral health surveys and 24-hour dietary recalls. From these surveys and discussions/interviews, the need for a substantive consideration of associations between oral health and food security has emerged as an important area for further enquiry. We seek to identify connections between nutritional status and oral health of Métis seniors living in a remote community. This preliminary study, along with results from our in-depth study, will inform future directions to support Métis community-driven solutions to influence health, healthy aging, and health across generations. **Research Partners: Sakitawak Elders' Group, Inc.; Sakitawak/Northern Village of Île-à-la-Crosse**





ENHANCING INFORMATION ACCESS FOR RURAL AND URBAN SENIORS

SPHERU RESEARCHERS: BONNIE JEFFERY (PI), TOM
MCINTOSH (CO-PI), NUELLE NOVIK (CO-PI)

Employment and Social Development Canada, New Horizons for Seniors Program (62,675 CAD), 2019

This project represented the final stages of a 3-year evaluation on a collective impact project titled Reducing Isolation of Seniors – Saskatchewan Impact Plan. Completed activities included outcome (technical) reports for the partner agencies, collection, and analysis of survey data for the Saskatchewan Seniors Impact Survey and Community Perspectives Survey, collection and analysis of data for community case studies and preparation of the final evaluation report. **Research Partners: Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism, Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan, Red Cross (Saskatchewan), Lifelong Learning Centre (U of R)**

STRONG BODIES, SPIRITS, MINDS, AND VOICES ~ PRIVILEGING INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE TO GUIDE PEDIATRIC TYPE 2 DIABETES PREVENTION WITH FIRST NATIONS AND MÉTIS COMMUNITIES IN SASKATCHEWAN

SPHERU RESEARCHERS: SARAH OOSMAN (CO-I), SYLVIA ABONYI
(CO-I), ELIZABETH COOPER (CO-A)

CIHR Team Grant: Diabetes Prevention and Treatment in Indigenous Communities: Resilience and Wellness (35,000 CAD), 2021-2022

This project aimed to co-create, implement, evaluate, and scale-up a health promotion *mitos miyoyawin* (tree of wellness) toolkit focused on prevention of pediatric T2D grounded in FN-M model(s) of resilience and wellness. The findings will be foundational to understanding effectiveness of health promotion interventions with diverse FN-M communities, decolonizing implementation health research, and contributing to Indigenous-driven approaches to reversing the upward trajectory of pediatric T2D diabetes among diverse FN-M youth, families, and communities in SK and beyond. **Research partnerships: Northern Village of Île-à-la-Crosse; James Smith Cree Nation; Community of La Loche; Clearwater River Dene Nation; Indigenous Services Canada (Dr. Ibrahim Khan); NITHA (Dr. Nnamdi Ndubuka); Saskatchewan Prevention Institute (Megan Clark)**

Hands...



Through our hands, we ensure our research leads to action that improves the health of Saskatchewan people and communities. We begin our research by identifying potential knowledge users and involve them throughout the process. The multidisciplinary, collaborative spirit of SPHERU research leads to cross-sectoral partnerships that bridge the gaps between disciplines, communities, and organizations and catalyze community transformation.

IMPROVING SCHOOL FOOD: UNIVERSAL INTEGRATED HEALTHY LUNCH INTERVENTION RESEARCH

SPHERU RESEARCHERS: RACHEL ENGLER-STRINGER R (PI),
NAZEEM MUHAJARINE (Co-Applicant)

CIHR, College of Medicine CIHR Bridge Funding (543,578 CAD), 2018-Current

This unprecedented research studies the impacts of a two-year universal, curriculum-integrated healthy school lunch program in elementary schools in Saskatoon on food consumption, dietary quality and food and nutrition-related knowledge, attitudes, and practices. This study will take place in two intervention elementary schools matched with two control schools. We will compare pre, during and post intervention parameters in intervention and control schools in partnership with a local school board, a school food community-based organization and national school food collaborators. Findings from this research can inform ongoing government planning and consultation for school food programs across Canada. **Research Partners: Coalition for Healthy School Food, Saskatoon Public Schools Division, Meadow Lake Tribal Council – Education (this includes all nine of their schools), CHEP Good Food Inc., SHA – Population and Public Health, Canadian Feed the Children**

BUILDING CAPACITY/É FOR SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

SPHERU RESEARCHERS: DANIEL FULLER (PI), NAZEEM
MUHAJARINE (Co-Applicant)

CIHR, Australian National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC). Team Grant: Healthy Cities Implementation Science (HCIS) Team Grants (3,000,000 CAD), 2022-Current

Guided by a team of researchers lead by Dr. Meghan Winters (Simon Fraser University), Dr. Marie-Soleil Cloutier (Institut National de la Recherche Scientifique), Dr. Daniel Fuller (University of Saskatchewan), city planners and community groups, this research seeks to catalyze the implementation of sustainable transportation interventions to support health, mobility, and equity outcomes in cities across Canada. We primarily focus on two pillars of sustainable transportation interventions – All Ages and Abilities (AAA) bicycle networks and speed reduction interventions – which serve as implementation science case studies.

CORONAVIRUS VARIANTS RAPID RESPONSE NETWORK (COVARR-NET)– PILLAR 8: PUBLIC HEALTH, HEALTH SYSTEMS AND SOCIAL POLICY IMPACTS

SPHERU RESEARCHERS: NAZEEM MUHAJARINE AND CORY NEUDORF (Pillar Co-Leads), CHERYL CAMILLO (Pillar Deputy-Lead)

Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), Overall Funding 18,000,000 CAD; Allocation to USask/UofR 1,250,000 CAD, 2021-2024

COVARR-NET is a network of interdisciplinary researchers from institutions across the country, created to assist the Government of Canada in its overall strategy to address the potential threat of emerging SARS-CoV-2 variants. CoVaRR-Net is structured with ten themes or 'Pillars,' Pillar 8 Public Health, Health Systems and Social Policy Impacts has been studying the impacts of COVID-19 variants of concern on public health, our healthcare system, and on social policy and reporting these findings to decision-makers and government officials. As part of this work, the Social Policy team has been performing case studies and comparative analysis of provincial/territorial COVID-19 vaccination campaigns. **Research Partners: North American Observatory on Health Systems and Policies at the University of Toronto**

Knowledge translation and exchange is an integral part of SPHERU's collaborative research strategy.

TAH-NIGAHNIWHAK! (THEY WILL BE LEADERS!) GROWING UP WELL IN A NORTHERN SASKATCHEWAN MÉTIS COMMUNITY

SPHERU RESEARCHERS: SARAH OOSMAN (PI), SYLVIA ABONYI (CO-I), BONNIE JEFFERY (CO-I)

SHRF: Establishment Grant (119,415 CAD), 2015-2019

In Canada, the Indigenous population is younger than the overall population but experience more chronic conditions at an earlier age. This trajectory is set early in life and is influenced by circumstances in which people are born, grow up, live, and age. Little is known about what Indigenous youth perceive is important to set them on a healthier life trajectory with a dearth of knowledge specific to Métis youth. In partnership with the Métis community of Île-à-la-Crosse, SK, and guided by Aboriginal ecological epistemology, this population health intervention research project addresses those knowledge gaps. **Research partnerships: Sakitawak Youth Leadership Council & Sakitawak Elders Group Inc. Sakitawak/Northern Village of Île-à-la-Crosse**



Feet...



Where you stand matters. SPHERU has a research focus on the unique geography of rural, northern, and Indigenous communities. For research to be meaningful, understanding the social and environmental context of partner research communities is crucial. That means getting your feet on the ground and out in communities.

THE SASKATCHEWAN FIRST NATIONS AND MÉTIS HEALTH AND WELLNESS RESEARCH, TRAINING, AND KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION NETWORK (CIHR SK-NEIHR CENTRE)

SPHERU RESEARCHERS: SARAH OOSMAN (CO-PI), SYLVIA ABONYI (CO-I), PAUL HACKETT (CO-I)

CIHR Operating Grant: Network Environments for Indigenous Health Research (3,573,010 CAD), 2019-2024

The CIHR-funded SK-NEIHR is a network of researchers, community organizations, community members, and students working in the areas of Indigenous health and wellness in Saskatchewan. The nātawihowin and mamawiiikayaahk networks that make up the SK-NEIHR are a consortium of Métis, First Nations, and allied individuals, organizations, communities, and institutions with long-established leadership and working relationships in Indigenous health research, training, and knowledge mobilization. The networks are meant to create a dual stream of distinctions based and relational research. This network of centres is intended to be funded from 2020 to 2035 (15 years), to create and sustain supportive research environments driven by and grounded in Indigenous communities in Canada. It will facilitate a focused, community-driven approach, so health research dollars flow more effectively into communities, with the Saskatchewan Network operating as a matchmaker between communities, researchers, and funding opportunities.

BRIDGING THE GENERATIONS: CULTURAL MENTORSHIP TO PROMOTE AGING INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S HEALTH

SPHERU RESEARCHERS: SARAH OOSMAN (PI), SYLVIA ABONYI (COLLABORATOR)

SHRF: Collaborative Innovation Development Grant (50,000 CAD), 2019-2023

Older Indigenous women, also known as Kokums/Grandmothers in their communities, experience disproportionately greater health disparities, including cognitive and dementia related conditions, than Canadian women their age. Aging women often outlive their partners which can also be a risk for loneliness. Two northern communities (one Cree, one Métis) will finalize the objectives of this project to address holistic health for women throughout the lifespan. Indigenous community priorities centre Kokums/Grandmothers as key mentors for young women during pregnancy and motherhood as a possible intervention to promote wholistic health and wellness throughout the lives of young women that will also influence health and wellness of their children. **Research Partners: Sakitawak Elders' Group, Inc. Sakitawak/Northern Village of Île-à-la-Crosse**



WUSKIWIY-TAN! (LET'S MOVE!) AGING WELL IN A NORTHERN SASKATCHEWAN MÉTIS COMMUNITY

SPHERU RESEARCHERS: SYLVIA ABONYI (NPI), SARAH OOSMAN (CO-PI), BONNIE JEFFERY (CO-I), SHANTHI JOHNSON (CO-I), NAZEEM MUHAJARINE (CO-I), NUELLE NOVIK (CO-I)

CIHR Operating Grant (IIPH) (1,253,649 CAD), 2014-2019 (extended to 2022)

In partnership with the Métis community of Île-à-la-Crosse, SK, and guided by Indigenous ecological epistemology, this population health intervention research fills knowledge gaps and provides evidence of the effectiveness of program and policy interventions promoting aging well for Métis and other Indigenous peoples. Supports and services for older adults in the community are systematically identified, with some undergoing evaluation. Along with effectiveness of selected interventions, gaps and overlaps between them are identified. Findings will enhance aging well strategies in the research community, and in other Indigenous communities, looking to improve the health status of this growing population. **Research Partners: Sakitawak Elders' Group, Inc.; Sakitawak/Northern Village of Île-à-la-Crosse**

INTERVENTIONS TO ENHANCE SOCIAL INCLUSION FOR OLDER ADULTS WITH DEMENTIA IN SASKATCHEWAN

SPHERU RESEARCHERS: BONNIE JEFFERY (PI), TOM MCINTOSH (CO-PI), NUELLE NOVIK (CO-PI)

Employment and Social Development Canada, New Horizons for Seniors Program (3,000,000 CAD), 2019-2024 & University of Regina (25,000 CAD), 2019-2024

This project implements a collective impact approach to address the needs of persons with dementia and their care partners living in Yorkton and the surrounding rural communities. Individual, community and organizational interventions are being supported to improve the feeling of social inclusion of older adults with dementia and their care partners, to improve public awareness of and reduce stigma related to dementia, and to improve supports for customers, clients, and employees who are living with dementia. The project will evaluate the impacts of individual projects as well as the effectiveness of the overall collective impact approach. **Research Partners: Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan, SaskAbilities (Yorkton), City of Yorkton, Godfrey Dean Art Gallery (Yorkton), Parkland Valley Sport, Culture and Recreation, RaDAR (University of Saskatchewan), Dr. Allison Cammer (University of Saskatchewan)**

At SPHERU, we recognize place is a culture and a geography.

Voice...



At SPHERU, we are committed to research that reflects the diversity of voices within local communities, specifically the voices of the unheard and vulnerable communities. People have a lot to say, and often they know what is best for themselves and their communities. They just need an opportunity to be heard. Our role as researchers is to turn up the volume so they can be heard.

THE CURRENT STATE OF RURAL HEALTH CARE IN SASKATCHEWAN

SPHERU RESEARCHERS: NUELLE NOVIK (PI), BONNIE JEFFERY (CO-I), TOM MCINTOSH (CO-I), CHERYL CAMILLO (CO-I)

CUPE Local 5430 (25,300 CAD), 2022-2023

The focus of this project is to understand how changes in the delivery of healthcare in rural Saskatchewan have impacted CUPE members and what these changes mean for rural health service delivery. This project will provide a picture of what changes have happened over the past five years through a document and literature analysis, and through semi-structured key informant interviews. We will also undertake a facilitated policy dialogue about the current state and potential future directions of healthcare service delivery bringing together healthcare policymakers, stakeholders, and patient advocates in a virtual World Cafe.

MAXIMIZING SASKATCHEWAN BREAST CANCER SCREENING PROGRAM RATES THROUGH PATIENT-PARTNERED RESEARCH

SPHERU RESEARCHERS: CHERYL CAMILLO (PI), BONNIE JEFFERY (CO-I), AND TOM MCINTOSH (CO-I)

Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation (102,660 CAD), 2020 - 2024

This patient-centered collaborative research project intends to produce actionable information that will assist the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency (SCA) in accomplishing its strategic objective of increasing participation rates in its Screening Program for Breast Cancer (SPBC), thereby improving early detection of breast abnormalities and follow-up care. This research will fill a gap in understanding. The project will consist of two phases: 1) identification of barriers and facilitators for Saskatchewan women and sub-groups thereof; and 2) co-development of new or revised outreach strategies and program features. **Research partner: Saskatchewan Cancer Agency**

VIRTUAL KEHOKATOWIN IN THE TIME OF COVID-19 AMONG ÎLE-A-LA-CROSSE SENIORS AND ELDERS IN SASKATOON

SPHERU RESEARCHERS: SYLVIA ABONYI (NPI), SARAH OOSMAN (COPI)

Rapid Response COVID-19, College of Medicine (9999.88 CAD), 2020-2021

This project documents lived experiences of Métis older adults (OA) living in the remote, northern community of Île-à-la-Crosse during the Covid-19 pandemic. Presently, this knowledge is being generated but neither documented nor mobilized, thus creating a gap in essential knowledge critical for responding to unmet health needs among Métis OA. Engaging with Métis OA and mobilizing their experiential knowledge during the Covid-19 pandemic will nurture a community of caring and connectedness that has been compromised. Furthermore, collecting Métis knowledge and experience as it is emerging will facilitate effective and responsive allocation of resources towards greatest needs. **Research partners: Sakitawak Elders' Group, Inc.; Sakitawak/Northern Village of Île-à-la-Crosse**

Research can give a voice to people, their experiences, and their community needs.

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO SOCIAL ISOLATION AMONG OLDER ADULTS: A CANADIAN AND INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

SPHERU RESEARCHERS: TOM MCINTOSH (PI), BONNIE JEFFERY (CO-PI), NUELLE NOVIK (CO-PI)

AGE-WELL/APPTA Innovation Hub Award (5,000 CAD), 2021-2022

This project synthesized the current literature regarding the barriers that contribute to the social isolation of older adults in Canada. The review focused on peer-reviewed scientific literature published in English with a focus on older adults living independently in the community as opposed to those in long-term care or other institutional settings. Social isolation of older adults is an important health and social issue that has a significant impact on older adults themselves, as well as the communities in which they live. The findings from this project highlight interventions and policy responses that will alleviate isolation and improve the lives of older adults in our society.



MOZAMBIQUE-CANADA MATERNAL HEALTH PROJECT

SPHERU RESEARCHERS: NAZEEM MUHAJARINE (PI), SYLVIA ABONYI (RESEARCHER)

Global Affairs Canada (\$16,970,000 CAD), 2017-2024

The Mozambique-Canada Maternal Health project by the University of Saskatchewan combines international development and applied research with the goal of improving sexual, reproductive, maternal, and newborn health. The project, which is based in Inhambane province of Mozambique, strives to promote gender equity by enhancing women's and girls' active participation in their health care and communities. The project has implemented three research projects: comprising of 1) a maternal experiences study employing a longitudinal, qualitative study of women's lived experiences related to pregnancy, motherhood and role of women, critical interpretive approach, 2) a maternal near-miss study and 3) Realist synthesis and evaluation of maternity waiting home implementation. **Research Partners: Inhambane Provincial Health Directorate, Ministry of Health, Mozambique, and the University of Saskatchewan**



Eyes...



SEE US, HEAR US (SUHU) 1.0 & 2.0— MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING IMPACTS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES IN SASKATCHEWAN

SPHERU RESEARCHERS: NAZEEM MUHAJARINE (PI), BONNIE JEFFERY (Co-I), TOM MCINTOSH (Co-I), NUELLE NOVIK (Co-I)

Canadian Institutes of Health Research (149,926 CAD), 2021- 2024 & Mental Health Research Canada (25,000 CAD) & RUH Foundation (25,000 CAD)

SUHU1.0 used quantitative surveys to examine the COVID-19 impact on the mental health and well-being of children and youth (8 to 18 years) and their needs for mental health services in Saskatchewan. Building on SUHU 1.0, SUHU 2.0 investigated the impact of the second year of COVID-19 pandemic on the prevalence and severity of mental health and quality of life among children (8-11y), adolescents (12-15y), and youth (16-18y) and the need for and receipt of mental health services. Through this research, we aim to provide evidence-based recommendations to decision-makers and practitioners that, if acted on, will improve the mental health well-being of children and youth in Saskatchewan. Visit us at <https://spheru.ca/covid-19/childrenmentalhealth/childmentalhealth-suhu2.php> for more information. Research Partners: Dept of Psychiatry, USask, SHA Mental Health Services, Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation, E-Gadz.

SPHERU's research seeks to provide context, open up perspective, and move away from assumptions, blame, or bias toward evidence-based understanding and action. We take a critical eye towards structural and systemic violence and oppression that influences research findings and their interpretation, and we understand that we need many eyes on the issues to see the truth.

MENTAL HEALTH IMPACT OF COVID- 19 ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN SASKATCHEWAN PARENT/CAREGIVER AND CHILD PERSPECTIVES

SPHERU RESEARCHERS: NAZEEM MUHAJARINE (SUPERVISOR), SAHANA RAMAMOORTHY (STUDENT)

Mental Health Research Canada (15,000 CAD), 2022/05-2022/08 (4 months)

This study used the SUHU 1.0 data to examine how parents/caregivers and children assess changes in the child's mental health and help-seeking during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic in Saskatchewan. It also explored factors influencing agreement/disagreement between parents/caregivers and children's reports. See <https://spheru.ca/covid-19/childrenmentalhealth/childmentalhealth-suhu1.php#SUHU10Results>

SEE US, HEAR US—QUALITATIVE RESEARCH ON HOW CHILDREN AND FAMILIES COPE WITH MENTAL HEALTH DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN SASKATCHEWAN

SPHERU RESEARCHERS: NAZEEM MUHAJARINE (PI), NATALIE KALLIO (Co-Applicant)

Jim Pattison Children Hospital Foundation (25,000 CAD), 2021-2022

As the second phase of the SUHU1.0 study, we collected qualitative data to understand the lived experience of the impact of the pandemic on the lives of children, youth and families. We conducted in-depth interviews with 31 child-parent pairs. Parents and children were asked how the pandemic had affected their mental health, what had made it easier or harder for them to cope and seek mental health services in Saskatchewan during the pandemic. Research Partners: Dept of Psychiatry, USask, SHA Mental Health Services, Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation.

REMEMBERING AND REBUILDING: SASKATCHEWAN'S COVID 19 PUBLIC ARCHIVE

SPHERU RESEARCHERS: NAZEEM MUHAJARINE (Co-Applicant), SYLVIA ABONYI, PAUL HACKETT, TOM MCINTOSH, MICHELLE STEWART, BONNIE JEFFERY

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, Partnership Development Grant (199,094 CAD), 2022-2024

Through this study, we are documenting the pandemic's effect on health equity across Saskatchewan through data and stories. Understanding wellbeing means exploring access to housing, food security, mental health, and substance use. Our project is gathering information about these sensitive topics through data, stories, and web archiving.

By comprehensively documenting the impact of COVID-19 in Saskatchewan, we remember, and we contribute to rebuilding Saskatchewan. Combining quantitative and qualitative research approaches our team is committed to working with local communities to study the pandemic and apply lessons as we collectively remember and rebuild. Visit our website at <https://rememberrebuild.ca/>

PEOPLE, PLACES, POLICIES AND PROSPECTS: AFFORDABLE RENTAL HOUSING FOR THOSE IN GREATEST NEED

SPHERU RESEARCHERS: NAZEEM MUHAJARINE (CO-APPLICANT)

SSHRC Partnership Development Grant (186,015 CAD), 2019-03 to 2020-03 and SSHRC Partnership Grant (1,308,314 CAD) 2020 to 2025.

The central question driving this partnership is the following: How do affordable rental housing approaches of different kinds affect the most vulnerable Canadians? An interdisciplinary team captures expertise in housing studies, gender studies, sociology, social economy, geography, planning, community economic development, social policy and community health and epidemiology, from the West Coast (UBC) to the prairies (U Sask), central Canada (Carleton and the Institut national de la recherche scientifique), and the East (CBU and UNB), and from the US (University of Illinois-Chicago). Partner organizations are involved in housing provision and policy development from across Canada.

TOWARDS A PARTICIPATORY FRAMEWORK ON THE SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH OF FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER

SPHERU RESEARCHERS: MICHELLE STEWART (PI), M.
HIMMELREICH (EMERGENT COLLABORATOR)

Canadian Institutes of Health Research (20,000 CAD), 2017-Current

The proposed intersectoral project focused on equity and Social Determinants of Health for individuals with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). The intent was to center lived experience so future research was relevant and accountable to individuals. Delays, including the pandemic, revealed a unique opportunity. Unknown earlier, large-scale socio-medical research project had been co-designed by individuals with FASD. In response, the project shifted to a collaboration with survey designers (with FASD) to promote findings and expand application intended to create free co-designed resources, intersectoral knowledge translation, and outreach focused on self-advocacy and equitable access to research and findings for those with FASD.

**Our research works to
widen the lenses of
communities, researchers,
and policy makers.**

INTERVENTIONS, EQUITY, RESEARCH AND ACTION IN CITIES TEAM (INTERACT)

SPHERU RESEARCHERS: DANIEL FULLER (CO-PI), NAZEEM
MUHAJARINE (Co-Applicant)

CIHR (918, 000 CAD), October 2021-2026

The INTerventions, Equity, Research, and Action in Cities Team (INTERACT) is a pan-Canadian collaboration of scientists, urban planners, public health practitioners, community partners, and members of the public, uncovering how the design of cities shapes the health and well-being of all Canadians. In 2017, INTERACT launched a multiyear cohort study and intervention research platform to understand how built environment changes influence health. We have since expanded INTERACT's research program to help cities respond effectively to today's most pressing challenges. Our aim is to address the need for better evidence, generated by and for communities, that can guide local action and national conversation on the design of healthier and more equitable Canadian cities.



Dissemination Highlights

During the period 2019-2022, Canadians and people globally experienced one of the most life-altering pandemics faced in recent history. The resilience of SPHERU researchers was evident as they continued their research and make an impact at multiple and various levels of decision-making and to society in general. While the world waited with bated breath, these researchers were writing articles, book chapters, reports, briefs, infographics, etc. They communicated what they knew from science-based and expert perspectives, and many became noted household names during this unprecedented time.

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Our research staff
were instrumental as
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- McIntosh, T., Mahani, A., Jeffery, B., & Novik, N. (2021). Enhancing Social Inclusion for Older Adults Living with Dementia, Policy Brief, University of Regina: Johnson-Shoyama School of Public Policy.
- McIntosh, T., McLeod, E., Jeffery, B., & Novik, N. (2022). Social Isolation of Older Adults in Canada: A Research Synthesis. AGE-WELL National Innovation Hub, APPTA. Fredericton: NB.
- McIntosh, T., Novik, N., DeCorby, A., Muhajarine, N., Jeffery, B., & Kallio, N. (2021). Mental Health and Covid-19 in Saskatchewan Adults, Regina, SK: Saskatchewan Population Health and Evaluation Research Unit.
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Muhajarine, N., Hinz, T., Adeyinka, D.A., Damodharan, S., Dena, I., Green, K.L., Habbick, M., Jeffery, B., Kallio, N., Macleod, J., McAdam, C., McCutcheon, J., McIntosh, T., Novik, N., Pisolkar, V., Ramamoorthy, S., Roesler, A., Shakurun, N., & Taras, V. (September 2022). Research Brief: Mental health and well-being impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on children, youth and families in Saskatchewan. Research Brief 1. See Us, Hear Us 2.0. Saskatoon/Regina, Saskatchewan: Saskatchewan Population Health and Evaluation Research Unit (SPHERU).

Nilson, C., Jeffery, B., McIntosh, T., Novik, N., Caffet, S., and Hamilton, C. (2019). Reducing Isolation of Seniors - Saskatchewan Impact Plan: Final Evaluation Report. Regina, SK: Saskatchewan Population Health and Evaluation Research Unit.

Rowein, S., Sing, S., Mehdiyeva, K., Camillo, C.A., Muhajarine, N., & Neudorf, C. (2022). Addressing Vaccine Hesitancy in Children. Document no.: [Update of SBAR 9.1a]. CoVaRR-Net Public Health, Health Systems, Social Policy Team. <https://covarrnet.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/SBAR-Vaccine-Hesitancy-in-Children.pdf>

Rowein, S., Singh, S., Habbick, M., Mehdiyeva, K., Miller, L., Gagneur, A., Groot, G., Neudorf, C., Camillo, C.A., Muhajarine, N., & Tokhmafshan, F. (2022). Motivational Interviewing for Vaccine Hesitancy. Document no.: [12.1]. CoVaRR-Net Public Health, Health Systems, Social Policy Team. <https://covarrnet.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/SBAR-Vaccine-Hesitancy.pdf>

Rowein, S., Allin, S., Camillo, C.A., Fitzpatrick, T., Habbick, M., Mauer-Vakil, D., Muhajarine, N., & Roerig, M. (2022). COVID-19 Vaccination Rollout: Saskatchewan. Canada: CoVaRR-Net and North American Observatory on Health Systems and Policies. <https://covarrnet.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/covid-19-vaccination-rollout-saskatchewan-2022-01-21.pdf>

Rowein, S., Pham, A., Habbick, M., Mackay, A., Young, C., Howell-Spooner, B., Groot, G., Neudorf, C., Camillo, C.A., & Muhajarine, N. (2022). Rapid Antigen Tests in Various Settings & Populations. Document no.: [10.1a]. CoVaRR-Net Public Health, Health Systems, Social Policy Team. <https://covarrnet.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/sbar-rats-in-various-settings-and-populations-en.pdf>

Rowein, S., Pham, A., Habbick, M., Mackay, A., Young, C., Howell-Spooner, B., Groot, G., Neudorf, C., Camillo C.A., & Muhajarine, N. (2022). Rapid Antigen Tests & Outbreak Management. Document no.: [10.1b]. CoVaRR-Net Public Health, Health Systems, Social Policy Team. <https://covarrnet.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/sbar-rats-and-outbreak-management-en.pdf>

PRESENTATIONS

2019

Abonyi, S., Durocher, L., Roy, T. J. & Oosman, S. (2019, November). *Wuskiwiy-tan! (Let's Move) to Tah-Nigahniwak! (They Will be Leaders): Aging Well in a northern Saskatchewan Metis Community*. Joint Conference of American Anthropological Association and Canadian Anthropology Society (CASCA-AAA) 2019, Vancouver, BC, November 18, 2019 to November 24, 2019.

Abonyi, S. & Oosman, S. (January 2019). Experiences and Aspirations for Aging Well in a Northern Saskatchewan Métis Community. 2019 Geriatric Grand Rounds, Saskatoon, SK, January 1, 2019 to January 1, 2019.

Abonyi, S. & Oosman, S. (January 2019). Aging well in a northern Saskatchewan Métis Community: Experiences, Aspirations, and Implications for Health Care. 2019 Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Grand Rounds, Saskatoon, SK, November 1, 2019 to November 1, 2019.

Bacsu, J., Abonyi, S., Johnson, S., Viger, M., Jeffery, B., Novik, N., & Hackett, P. (2019). Improving Cognitive Health in Rural Areas: Stigma, Implications, and Next Steps. Community Health and Epidemiology 60th Anniversary Conference. Saskatoon, SK, October 25, 2019. p. 6.

Bacsu, J., Johnson, S. & Viger, M. (2019). A scoping review of anti-stigma interventions of dementia: Implications for geriatric health services. 16th Annual Geriatric Services Conference: Connect, Collaborate, Create. Vancouver, BC, April 12, 2019.

Bacsu, J., Johnson, S., Viger, M. (2019). Older Adults' Perspectives of Cognitive Health Promotion and Activities to Ameliorate Cognitive Decline. Gerontological Society of America Conference. Austin, Texas, November 15, 2019.

Bacsu, J., Johnson, S., Viger, M., McIntosh, T., Jeffery, B., Novik, N. & Hackett, P. (2019). Anti-stigma interventions of dementia: Findings from a scoping review. 12th Annual Summit of the Knowledge Network in Rural and Remote Dementia Care, Saskatoon, SK, November 6, 2019. p. 2.

Bacsu, J., Viger, M., Johnson, S. McIntosh, T., Jeffery, B., Novik, N. & Hackett, P. (2019). Interventions to reduce stigma of dementia: Findings from a scoping review. Gerontological Society of America Conference. Austin, Texas, November 15, 2019.

Fuller, D. Friday November 15, 2019: Fuller D. Canada Research Chair Panel on Health and Wellbeing. Memorial University of Newfoundland.

Fuller, D. February 7-8, 2019: Fuller D. Methods development for cycling research in Canada. NSERC Workshop: Cycling Research Collaboration with Industry in Canadian Context. Calgary, Alberta.

Jeffery, B., McIntosh, T., & Novik, N. (2019). Social Isolation and Older Adults: Understanding their Experience. Presented at Gerontological Society of America Annual Scientific Meeting, November 14, 2019, Austin, TX

Jeffery, B., McIntosh, T., & Novik, N. (2019). Social Isolation: Understanding the Experience of Older Adults, Rural Dementia Action Research Summit, Saskatoon, SK, November 6, 2019

Jeffery, B., McIntosh, T., & Novik, N. (2019). Addressing Social Isolation of Older Adults: The Community Perspective and Contribution. Presented at Gerontological Society of America Annual Scientific Meeting, November 15, 2019, Austin, TX

Novik, N., Jeffery, B., & McIntosh, T. (2019). Older Adults and the World Café Approach: Cross-Generational Initiatives in Research and Education, Presented at Gerontological Society of America Annual Scientific Meeting, November 16, 2019, Austin, TX

Novotna, G. (2019). Knowledge Translation in the Knowledge-Based Economy: Expanding or Reducing the Field of Current Research? Congress of Qualitative Inquiry, Urbana-Champaign, United States of America

Oosman, S., Smith, L.*, Durocher, L. & Roy, T. (June 2019). Healthy Aging in a Northern Métis Community: How cultural understanding can inform physiotherapy health promotion interventions and program implementation. Invited plenary for the CPA Leadership Forum: Maximizing potential: promoting healthy aging, Charlottetown, PEI, June 1, 2019

Oosman, S., Durocher, L., Roy, T. J. & Abonyi, S. (September 2019). Around the kitchen table - informing physical therapy practice through community engagement and partnerships. Building Research Connections: Thinking Outside the Box, School of Rehabilitation Science, University of Saskatchewan Saskatoon, SK, September 21, 2019 to September 22, 2019.

Viger, M., Bacsu, J., & Johnson, S. (2019). Supporting older adults' engagement in geriatric health services: Findings from a rural cognitive health study. 16th Annual Geriatric Services Conference: Connect, Collaborate, Create. Vancouver, BC, April 12, 2019.

While in-person conferences
were paused, SPHERU
researchers actively attended
virtual conferences and events.

2020

Bacsu, J., Johnson, S., & Viger, M. (2020). Interventions to reduce dementia-related stigma: Improving dementia care policies, programs and practices. Virtually Canadian Association for Health Services and Policy Research (CAHSPR) Annual Conference 2020. Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. May 26-29, 2020. Available from, <https://cahspr.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Bacsu-266.pdf>.

Bacsu, J., Johnson, S., Viger, M., McIntosh, T., Jeffery, B., Novik, N. & Hackett, P. (June 2020). Supporting Rural Seniors' Engagement in health research, planning and policies: Findings from a Rural Cognitive Study. Canadian Association of Health Services and Policy Research, [virtual presentation]

Fuller, D. Friday December 4, 2020: Fuller D. The Health Costs and Benefits of Urban Planning. Atlantic Planners Institute.

Fuller, D. Wednesday February 19, 2020: Fuller D. Emergency Panel on Pedestrian Safety in St. John's. Green New Drinks organized by the St. John's Social Justice Cooperative.

Heendeniya A, Hackett P, "Potential impact of inter-jurisdictional mobility of First Nations community members on tuberculosis care and prevention" (Poster Presentation), The Union World Conference on Lung Health, Chicago, 26/02/2020 - 29/02/2020

Jeffery, B., & Harazny, M. (2020). Interventions to Enhance Social Inclusion of Older Adults with Dementia in Saskatchewan, Presented at Saskatchewan Rural Dementia Action Research Summit, November 9, 2020. [virtual presentation]

Jeffery, B. & Wolfe, A. (2020). Social Isolation in People with Dementia, Presented at University of Saskatchewan, College of Medicine, Continuing Medical Education Webinar on Older Adults, November 4, 2020, [virtual presentation]

Williams-Roberts H., Jeffery B., Muhajarine N., Novik N., & McIntosh T. (2020). *Reducing isolation in older adults: A scoping review of interventions*. Saskatchewan Health Research Showcase, November 16-18, 2020. [virtual presentation]

2021

Abonyi, S., Durocher, L., Roy, T.J. & Oosman, S. (November 2021). Virtual kehokotowin (visiting one another) to understand the impacts of covid-19 on Metis seniors from northern Saskatchewan. CHEP Faculty Research Day, Saskatoon, November 19, 2021 to November 19, 2021.

Fitzpatrick T, Rowin S, Allin S, Camillo CA, Habbick M, Mauer-Vakil D, Roerig M, Muhajarine N. Comparison of COVID-19 Vaccination Rollout Approaches across Canada: Case Studies from Four Diverse Provinces to the Canadian Public Health Association Conference for presentation I June 14-16, 2022

Fitzpatrick T, Rowin S, Allin S, Camillo CA, Habbick M, Mauer-Vakil D, Roerig M, Muhajarine N. Comparison of COVID-19 Vaccination Rollout Approaches across Canada: Case Studies from Four Diverse Provinces to the Canadian Association of Health Services and Policy Research Conference for presentation I May 31- June 2, 2022

Fuller, D. Saturday October 16, 2021: Fuller D. Walkability, Health, and Urban Planning. Keep Rolling: An event to promote diversity, inclusion in Saskatoon's cycling community. Saskatoon Cycles.

Jeffery, B. (2021). Survey on awareness and knowledge of dementia in rural Saskatchewan, Presented at Saskatchewan Rural Dementia Action Research Summit, November 2, 2021. [virtual presentation]

Jeffery, B. (2021). A collective impact approach to dementia supports in rural Saskatchewan. Seizing the Moment Workshop, University of Regina, May 25, 2021 [virtual presentation]

Masoodi H*, Nisbet C^, Abonyi S, Oosman S, Durocher L, Roy TJ, Vatanparast H. (2021). Nutritional status and seasonal intake among older Métis adults in a remote northern Saskatchewan community in Canada. SCPOR Saskatchewan Health Research Showcase, Saskatoon SK November 16-19, 2021 (live & virtual)

McIntosh, T., Novik, N., DeCorby, A., Muhajarine, N., Jeffery, B., & Kallio, N. (2021). Results from a world cafe event on Covid-19 and Saskatchewan Adults, 2021 Saskatchewan Health Authority Research Showcase, November 16, 2021. [virtual presentation]

Muhajarine, N., McIntosh, T., Jeffery, B., Adeyinka, D., Novik, N., Pisolkar, V., & Kallio, N. (2021). Mental health and COVID-19 in Saskatchewan. COVID-19 and Public Health Forum, April 21-22, 2021. [virtual presentation]

Oosman S, Abonyi, S (April 2021). International (Virtual) Visitors Series: "Wuskiwiw-tan! (Let's Move!) Aging well in a northern Saskatchewan Metis community", University of Otago, New Zealand.

Novotna, G., & Siddique, A. (2021). Coming out of the Fog: Counsellors with Lived Experience of Recovery Reflecting on Their Professional Identity Development. Issues of Substance: Conference of CCSA, November 23-25, 2021. Ottawa, ON, Canada

Oosman, S, Abonyi S, Durocher L, Roy TJ. (2021). Mâwawi-atoskewin (working together in partnership) . . . using the 5 R's in community-engaged research. Department of Surgery Networking Virtual Rounds: Indigenous Health (March 4, 2021) University of Saskatchewan.

Oosman S, Abonyi S (2021). Intergenerational caring practices among rural & remote communities: experiences from northern Saskatchewan, Canada. A Canadian Norwegian collaboration webinar: Intergenerational caring practices among rural and remote communities: Experiences from the Circumpolar North. February 26, 2021

2022

Camillo, C.A. (2022). COVID-19 Lessons Learned from Provincial/Territorial Vaccination Campaigns, VOC (COVID-19 Variants of Concern) Expert-User Panel, Regina, Saskatchewan, March 3, 2022.

Camillo, C. A. In Canada, Urban Public Health Network (UPHN)/Public Health Physicians of Canada (PPHC) Biannual Meeting, Toronto, Ontario (and virtually), October 14, 2022.

Camillo, C.A. (2022). Differences in Provincial/Territorial Roll-out of COVID-19 Vaccination Campaign Programs: Findings from Pilot Case Studies, Canadian Association for Immunization Research, Evaluation and Education (CAIRE) Research Sponsor Advisory Board Meeting, Toronto, Ontario (and virtually), November 30, 2022.

Camillo, C.A., Allin, S., Fitzpatrick, T., Habbick, M., Mauer-Vakil, D., Muhajarine N., Roerig, M., & Rowein, S. (2022). Comparing the Goals, Governance, Policies, and Communication Strategies of Provincial COVID-19 Vaccination Campaigns (oral presentation by C.A. Camillo). Public Health 2022 Virtual Conference, June 15, 2022.

Camillo, C.A., Colijn, C., & Muhajarine, N. (2022, March 22). Lifting public health measures will boost transmission and if Canadians don't mask up, infections will increase significantly. CoVaRR-Net. Retrieved from <https://covarnet.ca/lifting-public-health-measures-will-boost-transmission-and-if-canadians-dont-mask-up-infections-will-increase-significantly/>

Camillo C, Rowein S, Muhajarine N. Presented COVID-19 Vaccine Policy Lessons to the Saskatchewan Ministry of Health Vaccine Hesitancy group I February 11, 2022.

Jeffery, B., Novik, N., & McIntosh, T. (2022). Level of dementia knowledge and stigma in rural areas. Canadian Association on Gerontology Annual Conference and Scientific Meeting, October 21, 2022, Regina, SK

Jeffery, B. McIntosh, T. & Novik, N. (2022). Using a collective impact approach to enhance social inclusion of older adults with dementia and their care partners in rural Saskatchewan. Canadian Association on Gerontology Annual Conference and Scientific Meeting, October 22, 2022, Regina, SK

Langlois, M. A., & Camillo, C.A. (2022). Comparing the Goals, Governance, Policies, and Communication Strategies of Provincial COVID-19 Vaccination Campaigns, Deputy Minister, Health Canada and President, Public Health Agency of Canada (oral presentation delivered by M-A. Langlois), June 6, 2022.

Mahani, A., Jeffery B., Washington, L., McIntosh, T., Novik, N. & Harazny, M. (2022). Implementation of a policy instrument to assess age and dementia friendliness of public facilities in rural Saskatchewan. Canadian Association on Gerontology Annual Conference and Scientific Meeting, October 22, 2022, Regina, SK

Muhajarine, N. Invited presentation to LEADS Saskatchewan. See Us, Hear Us 1.0 – Mental Health Experiences of Children, Youth and Families in Saskatchewan in 2020-22. Attended by 35+ leaders in the education sector in Saskatchewan.

Novotna, G. (2022). Evidence-Informed Responses to Opioid-Related Harms in Saskatchewan. Regina Public Library, Regina, Canada

Oosman S, Abonyi S, Roy TJ, Durocher L. (March 2022). Virtual kehokatowin among multilocal northern Saskatchewan Métis Seniors in the time of Covid-19 (presentation). Collaborating for Health and Wellness: Rehabilitation Research including the Impacts of Covid-19 - USask School of Rehabilitation Science Virtual Research Conference. Thursday, March 24th, 2022.

Rowein, S., Camillo, C.A., Allin, S., Fitzpatrick, T., Habbick, M., Mauer-Vakil, D., Muhajarine N., & Roerig, M. (2022). Comparison of COVID-19 Vaccination Rollout Approaches across Canada: Case Studies from Four diverse Provinces (oral presentation by S. Rowein). Virtually CAHSPR 2022, June 1, 2022.

Roy TJ, Oosman S, Abonyi S, Durocher L. (2019) Truth (Land Acknowledgement) and Reconciliation (5Rs) Lanyard Card. Co-designed around a kitchen table in Ile a la Crosse, this Truth and Reconciliation Lanyard Card features a broad land acknowledgement for Canada on one side, and values for reconciliation on the other. These have been distributed (with some verbal explanation) at conferences, to medical residents as well as graduate research and health professional trainees at the University of Saskatchewan.

TECHNICAL REPORTS/RESEARCH BRIEFS (Websites)

- [Copy of Compliance with Government Mandated COVID-19 Guidelines \(spheru.ca\)](https://spheru.ca)
- [Vaccine Administration for Children – CoVaRR-Net \(covarrnet.ca\)](https://covarrnet.ca)
- [Mental Health Research Brief \(spheru.ca\)](https://spheru.ca)



Remember Lives Not Numbers

The Remember Rebuild Saskatchewan team at the University of Saskatchewan is working to help the province remember the lives lost and help us see memorialize the people behind statistics. The Remember Lives Not Numbers project is creating a digital memorial to remember the individuals taken too soon by COVID-19.

The team hopes the community will help identify people missing from the memorial. The website includes the option to send details about friends and family who died from COVID. We also hope it gives us all a chance to reflect, three years later, on the lasting effects of the pandemic. <https://rememberrebuild.ca/remember-lives-not-numbers/>

SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS



**Shanti Johnson,
PhD**

In 2020, Research Associate Dr. Shanti Johnson was named one of Canada's top 25 immigrants. The Top 25 Canadian Immigrant Awards is an annual campaign by Canadian Immigrant magazine that recognizes outstanding work by immigrants to Canada, and who have made positive impacts on their community while themselves seeking to settle in to the country.



**Nazeem Muhajarine,
PhD**

Nazeem Muhajarine received the distinguished researcher award from the University of Saskatchewan. The Distinguished Researcher Award recognizes a faculty member's contributions to scholarship through the creation, expansion and critique of knowledge. The award was presented at the Fall Convocation in 2019. Read full article here: <https://students.usask.ca/documents/convocation/fall-2019.pdf>

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