

Healthy Aging in Place

Winter 2013

Healthy Aging in Place

Improving Rural and Northern Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Seniors' Health through Policy and Community-Level Interventions

New Report Highlights Actions that Support Rural Healthy Aging

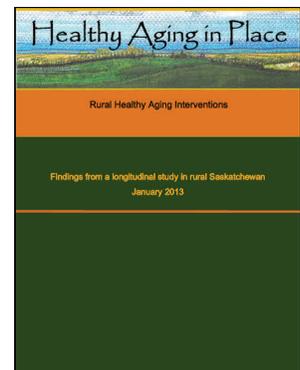
A new report by SPHERU researchers highlights actions that support healthy aging in rural Saskatchewan. The report entitled, *Rural Healthy Aging Interventions*, looks at the supports that enable rural seniors to remain within their homes and communities to age.

Guided by a community-based research approach, this study is being conducted through local partnerships and direct collaboration with community members. Through consultation and interviews, this study sheds light on the perspectives of rural seniors themselves. The study's findings were shared and validated with seniors from across the province at the Saskatchewan Seniors Association's Annual Convention.

This report shares findings from the first two years of interviews in a three year longitudinal study with rural seniors in Watrous, Young and Wolseley. The study is over three years to track the changing needs of rural older adults through the aging process. This research builds on work conducted by SPHERU in the rural communities of Preeceville, Watrous, Young, Rosetown, and more recently in the northern community of Ile a la Crosse.

The report identifies a number of actions to support rural healthy aging at three levels, including policy, community and kin-level interventions. The report identifies that rural older adults' health needs extend significantly beyond access to physicians, and calls for an expansion of measures beyond formal healthcare services, including investment to increase awareness of services available to rural seniors. Access to information was identified as a major challenge in several key areas including seniors' housing, public transportation and home care.

Long term goals of the study include creating an assessment framework to monitor and evaluate the impact of different interventions to improve rural healthy aging. The report is available on the SPHERU website at www.spheru.com.



Researchers Meet with Health Officials

SPHERU researchers met with representatives from the Saskatoon Health Region and the Ministry of Health in December 2012 to discuss the Healthy Aging in Place study. The researchers have also been working to collaborate with representatives from the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region and the Sunrise Health Region. Throughout all stages of the research process, SPHERU researchers work to engage with and inform community leaders, policy-makers and health practitioners to support healthy aging in place. SPHERU is committed to conducting leading edge policy-relevant research, done in collaboration with policy makers and communities around the province.



Dr. Shanthi Johnson Appointed to National Seniors Council

Dr. Shanthi Johnson was recently appointed as a new member of the National Seniors Council, a national body that provides guidance to the federal government on seniors' issues. "Dr. Johnson's academic career and vast research experience in the field of seniors' health and nutrition will be a genuine asset to the Council," Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, Diane Finley said in a news release. Dr. Johnson is a SPHERU researcher on the Healthy Aging in Place study.

Healthy Aging Presentation at Event with Over 700 Delegates

SPHERU researcher Dr. Sarah Oosman presented a poster on the Healthy Aging in Place study at the Canadian Association on Gerontology conference held in Vancouver, British Columbia on October 18-20, 2012. The poster was entitled, *Healthy Aging through the Eyes of Rural Saskatchewan Seniors: Factors that Support Aging in Rural Saskatchewan*. Over 700 delegates attended the event including health professionals, academics, community leaders and government representatives.

Team Shares Findings with Health Professionals Across Canada

Researchers from the Healthy Aging in Place study attended the Canadian Rural Health Research Society Conference to share findings and exchange ideas to support healthy aging across Canada.

The team delivered two presentations on healthy aging and chaired a session on rural mental health. The presentations focused on two areas, policy interventions to support rural healthy aging and rural seniors' mental health. The conference was held in Levis, Quebec on October 25-27, 2012 and was well attended by policy makers, community leaders and health professionals.



Juanita Bacsu, Dr. Bonnie Jeffery and Dr. Nuelle Novik in Quebec.

Research Updates

The 3rd round of interviews will take place in Watrous and Young from January—February, 2013 and in Wolseley from March—April, 2013. A researcher will phone participants to schedule interviews. Community presentations will be held in the spring to share study findings.

Join us on Facebook
For study progress updates
and other exciting news
please search
"Healthy Aging in Place"
on Facebook.

Contact Us

Juanita Bacsu
Toll Free:
1-888-966-7942
juanita.bacsu
@usask.ca
www.spheru.ca

