



SASKATCHEWAN POPULATION HEALTH AND EVALUATION RESEARCH UNIT



# ANNUAL REVIEW 2010-2011

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## WHO WE ARE

SPHERU is a bi-university interdisciplinary research unit committed to critical population health research. We currently have ten faculty researchers, one associate researcher, two post doctoral fellows, and several research officers, project coordinators and research assistants working from the Universities of Regina and Saskatchewan and based out of three Saskatchewan sites: on the main campus at both universities; and at a satellite office and research lab in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. Established in 1999, SPHERU is the first bi-university health research unit of its kind in Saskatchewan and is funded by the Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation (SHRF), with additional project-specific funding provided by other provincial and national health research funding agencies.

The unit's mission – the promotion of health equity by understanding and addressing population health disparities through policy-relevant research – is incorporated into all of our research projects. SPHERU research is categorized by four inter-related types:

- The creation of new knowledge;
- Independent policy analysis;
- Collaborative research with policy makers around shared research questions and evaluation of policies and programs; and
- Collaboration with communities on strategies to reduce health inequities.

SPHERU - Saskatchewan Population Health and Evaluation Research Unit

## FUNDERS AND PARTNERS



### **SASKATCHEWAN HEALTH RESEARCH FOUNDATION**

As lead agency for the provincial government's Health Research Strategy, the Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation (SHRF) works as a catalyst, supporting the work of individual health researchers and those working in teams such as SPHERU. The Health Research Strategy identifies research priorities that reflect the province's geography and people, including the health needs of Aboriginal people and seniors, innovative health care delivery models, and research into mental health and addictions. Prevention of chronic lifestyle-related diseases such as obesity and diabetes is also a priority. These priorities align well with SPHERU's efforts to actively involve communities, non-governmental organizations, and policy makers in the research enterprise itself and in making policy and program changes consistent with research evidence.

### **UNIVERSITY OF REGINA**

Health research is a major focus for the University of Regina, with 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. 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 health determinants and provide equitable access to health services. Through the provision of funding and office space in both Prince Albert and Regina, the University of Regina continues to support SPHERU in its work to produce high-quality, policy-relevant research.



### **UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN**

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 in 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 of Saskatchewan contributes to SPHERU's funding and 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 continue to achieve its goals.

## MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

I am pleased to present the Saskatchewan Population Health and Evaluation Research Unit's (SPHERU) 2010-2011 Annual Review, which outlines our research, our people, and our activities over the past year.

As we cross the threshold into our eleventh year of operation, our research program remains guided by our core values and mission. We continue to build upon a strong foundation of conducting policy relevant and community-based research and are now moving to the next phase of our work. Our focus on population health intervention research moves beyond research that simply recognizes health inequities to several new projects that focus on reducing those inequities.

We continue to work in three theme areas – Northern and Aboriginal Health, Healthy Children, and Rural Health – as well as Evaluation Research. A SHRF Phase 3 Group Grant is supporting our three-year research program, Population Health Intervention Research: Addressing Health Inequities in Vulnerable Populations, which includes three interrelated projects:

1. Healthy Aging in Place: Improving Rural and Northern Aboriginal Seniors' Health through Policy and Community Level Interventions;
2. Origins and Import of Health Inequities in Saskatchewan, 1905-1984; and
3. Reducing Child and Family Health Inequity in an Urban Setting through Intervention Research.

Building on a strong foundation of our experiences and knowledge, we are now able to focus our research on interventions that can improve the health of Saskatchewan communities. Throughout the coming years we will continue to expand our research team, enhance our networks of institutional, governmental and community partners, and share our knowledge through innovative knowledge translation and exchange activities as well as continue to provide training opportunities for new health research professionals.

This foundation has enabled us to maintain a strong commitment to health equity by understanding and addressing population health disparities through practice and policy-relevant research. It will continue to serve us well in the coming decade of population health research during which we will investigate strategies and interventions whose lessons will provide us with an improved understanding and enable us to better the health of all Saskatchewan communities.



Dr. Bonnie Jeffery  
Director, Saskatchewan Population Health and Evaluation Research Unit



## MANAGEMENT ADVISORY GROUP

As chair of the Management Advisory Group (MAG), I am delighted to congratulate SPHERU on its continued funding from the Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation, which will aid SPHERU in ushering in a new phase of research where commitment to producing quality, relevant, and innovative population health research remains a top priority.

MAG, representative of both the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Regina, provides advice and direction to SPHERU on management level issues. We consist of senior university administrators who are appointed by the Vice-President of Research at both the Universities of Saskatchewan and Regina and meet with SPHERU's director bi-annually.

We are proud of the reputation and achievements of SPHERU and its faculty, and look forward to the exciting weeks, months, and years ahead where SPHERU's work will continue to inform an understanding of population health that spreads beyond the borders of Saskatchewan, and even Canada. Each faculty member brings a unique population health research perspective to SPHERU's overall research program. Together, they collaborate with communities, government agencies, and other academics and institutions to improve the health of our communities and inform dialogues on population health and its many facets.

As this award-winning team of researchers continues to grow and promote a truly collaborative and inter-disciplinary approach to population health research, we would like to offer our continued support, encouragement, and congratulations to the faculty and staff of SPHERU on their past successes and look forward to hearing of future achievements.



Dr. Beth Horsburgh  
Chair, Management Advisory Group

### ***SPHERU Mission:***

***The promotion of health equity by understanding and addressing population health disparities through policy relevant research.***

## MANAGEMENT ADVISORY GROUP...

The Management of SPHERU is guided by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by the University of Regina and the University of Saskatchewan. This MOU outlines the cooperative agreement to support the work of SPHERU and highlights the role of the Management Advisory Group (MAG) in providing consultation and advice to the director and members of SPHERU. The members of this group are appointed by the Vice-Presidents Research at each university, and bi-annual meetings allow for an update of research and financial activities of the Unit as well as the provision of collegial support to the research program.



**DR. M.E. (BETH) HORSBURGH** was appointed Associate Vice-President Research-Health at the University of Saskatchewan and Vice-President Research & Innovation at the Saskatoon Health Region on July 1, 2007. The overarching purpose of this joint position is to support excellence in health research and innovation and to create synergies between the University of Saskatchewan and the Saskatoon Health Region. Dr. Horsburgh is a key participant in strategic planning related to health research at both the Saskatoon Health Region and the University of Saskatchewan. This includes developing and implementing strategies and programs with community stakeholders, and leading efforts to translate research knowledge into clinical

innovation, evidence-based policies, practices, and decision-making. A member of both the Office of the Vice-President Research Executive Committee at the University of Saskatchewan and the Senior Leadership Team of the Saskatoon Health Region, Dr. Horsburgh plays an important role in ensuring the integration of health research and innovation initiatives between the University and the Health Region.

**DR. JIM THORNHILL** is a Special Assistant for Health Research to the Vice-President Research Office at the University of Saskatchewan, a position to promote research success in the Health Science Colleges. He received his Ph.D. in Pharmacology from the University of Western Ontario in 1978 and did Post-Doctorate work at the University of Calgary from 1978-80 in the Department Medical Physiology. He joined the University of Saskatchewan, Department of Physiology in 1980 and worked through the ranks over 22 years as an active instructor, supervisor and well-funded researcher, and was also the department head of Physiology from 1988-94. From 2002-2010, he was Associate Dean of Research & Graduate Studies for the College of Medicine at the University of Saskatchewan. His research focus was in the area of stroke, investigating the effects of temperature on the ischemic insult, with findings that led both to publications and patents. As part of the University's Second Integrated Plan, he is currently one of twenty Commitment Leaders appointed by the University Provost, his specific portfolio being to investigate ways to accurately assess and promote Research Collaboration and Success at the University. In 2009, he was presented with the Award of Merit by the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada for his long-term, exceptional service to the mission of heart and stroke disease in Canada.



## MANAGEMENT ADVISORY GROUP...



**CRAIG J. CHAMBERLIN** is an associate professor and Dean of the Faculty of Kinesiology and Health Studies at the University of Regina. He was hired into this position in 2002 and is currently serving a second five-year term. Dr. Chamberlin's area of specialization is in motor learning and control. His research interests are investigating powerful variables that impact on the learning of motor skills – in particular, the structure of practice, and the use of simulators and virtual reality in enhancing the learning process. He has published in journals such as the *Journal of Motor Behavior*, *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, *Perceptual and Motor Skills*, and *Police Practice and Research*. He has an extensive record of administrative service and currently serves as the secretary-treasurer for the Canadian Council of University Physical Education and Kinesiology Administrators (CCUPEKA) and on the Partners Advisory Group for Saskatchewan in motion.

**DR. MICHAEL TYMCHAK** has served the University of Regina for the past 19 years as Dean of Education from 1992-2000, and again from 2006-2008. During his tenure as Dean, he served as Chair of The Role of the School Task Force and Public Dialogue created by the Minister of Education. This resulted in SchoolPLUS and the focus on inter-agency initiatives in public policy. He also served as research consultant and coordinator of the Transdisciplinary Project at the University of Regina, which sponsored dozens of inter-disciplinary teaching and research projects throughout the university. Currently, he is the Director of the Saskatchewan Instructional Development and Research Unit (SIDRU), and Professor of Educational Foundations in the Faculty of Education.



## RESEARCH FACULTY



**BONNIE JEFFERY, PH.D.**

Dr. Jeffery has been Director of SPHERU since July 2006 and a research faculty member since 2000. As a professor with the Faculty of Social work at the University of Regina, she has maintained a long-standing commitment to access to post secondary professional education for rural and northern residents. Dr. Jeffery's research work is concentrated primarily in the Northern and Aboriginal Health and Rural Health research themes.

**SYLVIA ABONYI, PH.D.**



Dr. Abonyi is an anthropologist working primarily in the area of Aboriginal health. She explores the role of culture in health with a number of research projects located in northern and remote Saskatchewan and across the Prairie provinces. She is an associate professor with the University of Saskatchewan's Community Health and Epidemiology Department and a Canada Research Chair, Aboriginal Health.



**PAUL HACKETT, PH.D.**

Dr. Hackett's interests focus on the impact of cultural change on Aboriginal community health. Research projects include examining the factors that helped set the stage for the current epidemic of Type 2 diabetes among First Nations in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, and investigating the history of tuberculosis among the western First Nations. Dr. Hackett is an assistant professor with the University of Saskatchewan's Department of Geography and Planning.

**SHANTHI JOHNSON, PH.D.**



Dr. Johnson is a professor and Associate Dean (Research and Graduate Studies) at the Faculty of Kinesiology and Health Studies at the University of Regina. Her research program is two-fold: 1) Epidemiological research related to the surveillance and monitoring of falls and fall-related injuries among seniors; and 2) Intervention research focusing on the understanding of the underlying mechanisms of factors associated with falls among seniors in community and long-term care settings – specifically the role of exercise and nutrition to improve an individual's capacity to carry out activities of daily living and to decrease the frequency of debilitating falls are examined. Her research interest also extends to the cross-cultural study of aging, rural-urban differences, and health beliefs and practices related to chronic diseases such as osteoporosis.



**DIANE MARTZ, PH.D.**

Dr. Martz mainly works in the area of rural women's health. She brings to the SPHERU research team extensive experience in working in large research teams, a research focus on the social, economic, and cultural dimensions of rural health as well as established relationships with many Saskatchewan and Alberta rural communities. She is co-investigator with other SPHERU research faculty on the several projects and aids in the development of an evaluation framework, workshops, and supporting materials for communities evaluating Aboriginal health projects.

## RESEARCH FACULTY...



### **TOM MCINTOSH, PH.D.**

Dr. McIntosh joined SPHERU in 2002 and brings expertise on public policy making and knowledge transfer and exchange to numerous SPHERU projects. He is presently working on the political and economic components of SPHERU's historical analysis of population health in Saskatchewan. He was also the co-editor of *Redistributing Health: New Directions in Population Health Research in Canada* (CPRC: 2010). Dr. McIntosh is currently an associate professor and head of the Department of Political Science at the University of Regina.

### **NAZEEM MUHAJARINE, PH.D.**

Dr. Muhajarine is a social epidemiologist and leads SPHERU's Healthy Children research area. His work includes researching questions related to community and family contextual influences in child development and health, risk in the prenatal period, and developing community-university research partnerships to improve knowledge creation, transfer and application. His current research includes evaluations of population-level early childhood intervention programs. He particularly cherishes the mentoring role and works closely with junior colleagues and graduate students. He is the recipient of several awards of distinction including the recently (in December 2009), his province's 2009 Health Research Achievement Award, and in 2006, the CIHR Knowledge Translation Award. He is a professor and chair in Community Health and Epidemiology, University of Saskatchewan.



### **PAMMLA PETRUCKA, PH.D.**

Dr. Petrucka's research interests include Aboriginal health, rural women's health, informatics in health care, and global health. She currently leads/co-leads various community-based research projects with Aboriginal groups in Saskatchewan. Dr. Petrucka is an associate professor at the University of Saskatchewan's College of Nursing.

### **NAZMI SARI, PH.D.**

Dr. Sari is a health economist with specific research interest in quality and efficiency issues in hospital markets, provider reimbursements and healthcare financing reforms, and economics of smoking and physical activity. He is an associate professor of Economics with the University of Saskatchewan since 2004.



### **MARY HAMPTON, PH.D.**

Dr. Hampton focuses her research interests on developing materials to increase cross-cultural knowledge and facilitate delivery of culturally appropriate end-of-life care for Aboriginal families. She is the academic research coordinator for Research and Education Solutions to Violence and Abuse (RESOLVE) and a professor of Psychology with Luther College, University of Regina.



## RESEARCH ASSOCIATE



### **JAMES DASCHUK, PH.D.**

Dr. Daschuk joined the SPHERU team in 2008 and brings experience as an historian with a background in anthropology. He has been researching and teaching in the field of Aboriginal health for nearly 20 years. He is an assistant professor in the Faculty of Kinesiology and Health Studies at the University of Regina.

## POST DOCTORAL FELLOWS



### **GLORIA DESANTIS, PH.D.**

Dr. DeSantis is a post doctoral fellow in the area of socio-health. Working under the direction of Dr. Tom McIntosh, Dr. DeSantis continues to advance interdisciplinary research on voluntary sector social service agencies that work with marginalized populations toward the creation of healthier communities. Her research interests focus on health inequities and social justice, health impacts of the voluntary social service sector, community involvement in health/social policy development, knowledge creation, and translation for public policy from the ground up, and structural and political determinants of health.

### **HONGXIA SHAN, PH.D.**

Dr. Shan graduated from the adult education and community development program at the University of Toronto. Her research interests include immigration, health literacy, lifelong learning, qualitative methods, gender studies, and community development. Under the supervision of Dr. Nazeem Muhajarine, Dr. Shan works on the Healthy Children research team. She brings an interdisciplinary perspective and mixed methods to understanding the health of marginalized communities within Saskatchewan.



***“We have a wonderful researcher named Gloria DeSantis who is working with the community data and writing a report for the Regina Regional Intersectoral Committee and other agencies interested in determinants of well-being. Gloria did an amazing job of synthesizing the data. We think it’s going to be a masterpiece.”***

***Wendy Stone and Carla Bolen Anderson, community agency partners***

## ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH STAFF

**JUANITA BACSU,  
UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN, SINCE 2009**

Juanita works as the project coordinator for the SPHERU Team Project. She has a Bachelor of Arts degree as well as a Master's in Political Studies from the University of Saskatchewan. Prior to joining SPHERU, Juanita has worked as a communications manager and a research associate.

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**COLLEEN HAMILTON,  
UNIVERSITY OF REGINA (PRINCE ALBERT CAMPUS),  
SINCE 2002**

Colleen has worked as project coordinator on a number of research projects from the Prince Albert site, along with coordinating the site's administrative activities. Before she joined SPHERU, she was the administrative coordinator with the Faculty of Social Work's Prince Albert Community Education Centre, and served for a term as Faculty Administrator in Regina.

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**AMY HUNTER,  
UNIVERSITY OF REGINA, 2011**

Amy joined SPHERU in 2011 as a research secretary for the Regina site. She has an honours degree in English with a minor in History, as well as, two administration certificates from the University of Regina. Amy also works on two of the SPHERU projects: the History project and the Rural Seniors project as a research assistant.

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**RICHELLE LEONARD,  
UNIVERSITY OF REGINA, FROM 2008 – 2010**

Richelle joined SPHERU in 2008 as research administrator for the Regina site. She coordinated the administrative and financial activities for both the unit as a whole and for individual researchers.

**JANICE MICHAEL,  
UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN, FROM 2007 – 2010**

A graduate of the University of Saskatchewan, Janice served as research administrator for the Saskatoon site from April 2007 to June 2010. She recently completed her Certified General Accountant designation.

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**BONNIE ZINK,  
UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN, FROM 2008 – 2011**

Bonnie handled communications and knowledge exchange activities for the unit. Prior to this, she served as a term research officer for SPHERU's Healthy Children research program. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Regina.

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**LISA MESS,  
UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN, FROM 2010 – 2011**

Lisa worked as the research administrator for the Saskatoon site, providing administrative support for SPHERU's director and Saskatoon-based faculty at the University of Saskatchewan.

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**FLEUR MACQUEEN SMITH,  
UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN, SINCE 2004**

Fleur is the knowledge transfer manager in the Healthy Children research program at SPHERU. She has recently completed an interdisciplinary master's degree and was awarded a 2011 National Collaborating Centers for Public Health Knowledge Translation Graduate Award

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**DIANA FEDOSOFF,  
UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN, SINCE 2003**

Diana has worked with SPHERU in a variety of roles. She current works as a Research Officer for Dr. Sylvia Abonyi.

## PROJECT STAFF



### UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

Anderson, Janelle - Research Assistant  
Chouinard, Michael - Research Officer  
Delanoy, Susan - Research Officer  
Deller, Walter - Research Officer  
Gnyp, Colleen - Coordinator  
Green, Kathryn - Professional Res Assoc  
Heitmar, Joel - Research Assistant  
Jungwirth, Michele - Research Technician  
Loptson, Kristjana - Research Assistant  
McKinlay, Penny - Consultant  
McMullin, Kathleen - Research Officer

Misfeldt, Jostein - Research Assistant  
Peddle, Judith - Admin Assistant  
Pierson, Kathleen - Coordinator  
Premji, Shainur - Research Officer  
Ridalls, Tracy - Research Officer  
Schewaga, Cory - Research Officer  
Stolar, Jessica - Research Assistant

### UNIVERSITY OF REGINA

Millman, Chelsea - Research Assistant  
Nilson, Chad - Project Assistant  
Shand, Stacy - Research Assistant

## RESEARCH TRAINEES

### UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

Bartlett, Elizabeth - Masters  
Grant, Jessica - Masters  
Konrad, Stephanie - Masters  
Lavallee, Amanda - PhD  
Le, Ha - PhD  
Ludlow, Natalie - Masters  
Macintosh, Alison - Masters  
Martin, Michele - PhD  
Marwa, Nyankomo - PhD  
Novakovik, Ana - Masters  
Peterson-Poulin, Jessica - Undergrad  
Pruden, Kayla - Undergrad  
Puchala, Chassidy - Masters  
Rahman, Kazi - PhD  
Raymond, Jordan - Masters  
Reddy Katapally, Tarun, - PhD

Roberts, Matthew - Undergrad  
Rowe, Paul - Masters  
Schmidt, Jennifer - Masters  
Stoops, Melissa - PhD  
Wickremarachchi, Sugandhi - Masters  
Wiebe, Lesley - Masters  
Wylie, Lakelyn - Undergrad

### UNIVERSITY OF REGINA

Bernard, Travis - Undergrad  
Boneleye, Iris - Community RA  
Bonsu, Nana - Masters  
Burles, Meridith - PhD  
Comaniuk, Jessica - Undergrad  
Harris, Jonathan - Masters  
Isley, Karolayna - PhD  
Lidguerre, Rita - Community RA

Martin, Sylvia - Community RA  
McLeod, Katherine - PhD  
Shukla, Riddhi - Masters  
Sowa, Carollee - Community RA  
Tremblay, Larina - Masters  
Vuong, Minh - Undergrad



## WHAT WE DO

SPHERU's research focuses on three main themes: Northern and Aboriginal Health, Healthy Children, and Rural Health. Our themes are derived directly from our understanding of population health outcomes and from issues that are particularly relevant to Saskatchewan.

**NORTHERN AND ABORIGINAL HEALTH RESEARCH** seeks to develop culturally relevant health frameworks and examines the role that culture plays as a health determinant.

**HEALTHY CHILDREN RESEARCH** considers how contexts shape children's health and development outcomes.

**RURAL HEALTH RESEARCH** focuses on the impacts of socioeconomic determinants of health in rural populations.

SPHERU also conducts **EVALUATION RESEARCH**, which studies the effectiveness of policies and programs against their desired outcomes.

Our researchers take a collaborative approach to population health research working with communities and policy makers through:

1. Mobilizing and building upon the expertise of our researchers, students, trainees, and research partners;
2. Ensuring our research questions and results are relevant to improving the health of Saskatchewan residents;
3. Exchanging our research knowledge through engagement with communities and policy makers.



# NORTHERN AND ABORIGINAL HEALTH



The health of indigenous peoples all over the world suffers disproportionately. They continue to show disparities in most social and health indicators when compared with mainstream populations. SPHERU's work on northern and Aboriginal health is grounded in this global context.

We know culture is an important determinant when looking at the health of Aboriginal people in Canada, and our projects explore the role of culture and how it affects health. This means developing culturally relevant definitions of health, as well as suitable health indicators.

These areas of research are new and still unfolding, and we recognize there are still limits on our understanding of culture and health. We also

need to better understand how culture intersects with more defined determinants – income, social status, education and employment.

There are several examples of the recent work we have done in the area of Northern and Aboriginal Health including a project funded through the Canadian Institutes of Health Research to provide a comprehensive and critical understanding of culture as it relates to the health of Aboriginal peoples. As well, we have also secured funding from the Indigenous Peoples Health Research Centre for SPHERU and the Saskatchewan Northern Health Strategy Working Group to carry out population health intervention research.

Another example of work in Northern and Aboriginal Health is a comparative analysis of the epidemic of diabetes among First Nations populations in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. As well, we have received funding to establish a History of Diabetes Processing and Dissemination Unit.

Our projects explore the role of culture in population health by looking at it as a determinant of health, by considering culturally relevant definitions of health, and through cultural identity as an indicator of health.



## HEALTHY CHILDREN

Children's environments not only have effects on their health and wellbeing in the short term but also for them over the course of their life.

Some evidence has shown broad social influences – for example, a neighbourhood in which the child grows up – affects children's wellbeing but to a lesser degree than individual differences among children. However, studies of child health outcomes are now finding children could be more deeply affected by neighbourhood factors than had been understood previously. Policy makers lack an evidence base to support interventions that are contextual and locally based.

Research on the impact of physical and social environments on healthy childhood development is complex, and research to date suffers from a lack of conceptual clarity, lack of data at the level of place of residence, lack of activity that is meaningful to subjects, and little incorporation of social theories that explain the importance of context in the lives of individuals. Our research addresses the limitations of previous studies and incorporates a critical population health approach.

The Smart Cities, Healthy Kids project continued its look at how Saskatoon's built environment affects the active living potential of all neighbourhoods, at actual physical activity levels of children throughout the city, and at how children and their families feel their neighbourhoods influence their activities. A sister study examining food environment also got underway.



Another project, which SPHERU has completed, was the collection of data from 649 pregnant women in Saskatoon and in the Five Hills Health Region, based in Moose Jaw. The information was used to study maternal mental health and how it affects birth outcomes.

SPHERU's work in the area of Healthy Children provides a deeper understanding of how various contexts – family, neighbourhood social and physical environments, schools – play a crucial role in determining the health and development of children, and by working closely with decision makers, we contribute to achieving better health and development for all children in Saskatchewan.

*"We appreciate the depth and breadth of KT knowledge Nazeem Muhajarine and his staff have brought to NeuroDevNet to help translate our research on children's neurological development into policy and practice."*

*Dr. Dan Goldowitz,  
Scientific Director, NeuroDevNet  
([www.neurodevnet.ca](http://www.neurodevnet.ca))*

## RURAL HEALTH

Despite urbanization, more than a third of the Saskatchewan population – 36% – still lives in rural areas. These areas have been affected by economic restructuring in farming and forestry, young people moving out, deteriorating infrastructure, and restructuring of health and education services.

Government cutbacks in health and social services have led to a decline of primary services in communities, and in turn have forced communities to look to community groups and residents to provide care and services to a population that is aging. One result of these developments is that rural people's health status is relatively poor when compared with that of people in urban communities.

A key element of our work in Rural Health is that SPHERU research is not simply conducted on rural communities but is done in conjunction with these communities. The rationale is that to best bring about change at the local level, it is important to involve local partners early and often. This way, the research outcomes are in the hands of the decision makers that have the ability to effect change at the local level, creating healthier communities where Saskatchewan people can thrive.

Much of the focus of projects in the area of Rural Health has been on understanding the kind of impacts that social and economic determinants have on the health of women, men and youth who live in rural areas. For example, SPHERU researchers are conducting the Saskatchewan component of a national Youth Smoking Survey. The study, funded by Health Canada, will support the assessment of policy and program interventions whose target is to reduce smoking levels among youth. Another example is a study examining patterns of falls among elderly people in rural areas, as well as urban areas, and developing evidence-based interventions. Funding from the Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation helped with the completion of this project.

As a result, the Rural Health research projects conducted by SPHERU continue to provide a better understanding of the impact of economic and cultural determinants on the health of people in rural communities.

***“For your purposes and with mine too, I was honoured to be invited to participate. Obviously, I am not a researcher. I hope I added some input to the work... Because sometimes researchers are strictly at the university and I think a rural perspective on this research project in particular, having a rural person living it, working it, directly involved, if not necessarily as researcher, it just broadens the opportunity for the questions and sometimes the wording. I think that was great.”***

***Noreen Johns, Community Partner***

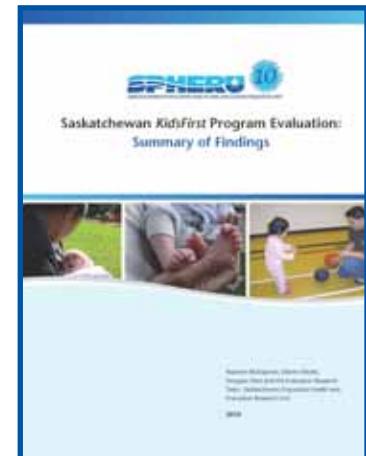
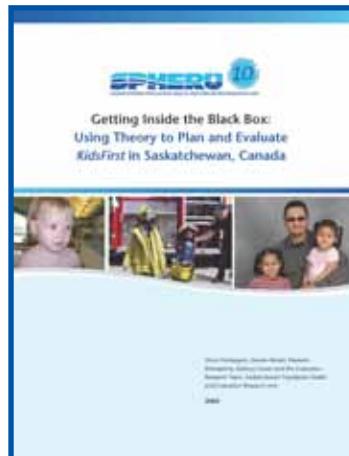
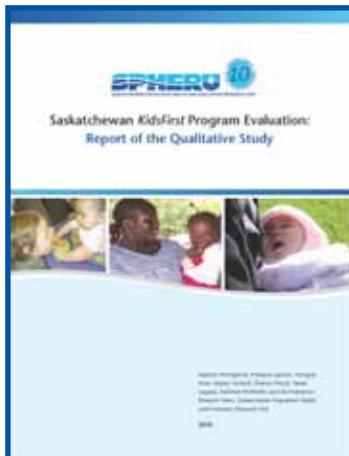
# EVALUATION RESEARCH

SPHERU also conducts evaluation research that studies the effectiveness of policies and programs in their efforts to make social and environmental conditions healthier and more equitable. These evaluations are usually undertaken in partnership with policy and program personnel, so that their knowledge can contribute to evaluation design and their engagement in the process can better equip them to put the findings into practice.

During the last year, we completed a comprehensive three-year evaluation of KidsFirst, a federally-funded, provincially-run intervention program that provides supports and services for vulnerable families of young children. The evaluation was designed to inform the emerging body of knowledge on promising or best early childhood intervention practices in Canada. It looked at how successful KidsFirst has been, and established a framework that can be used for future evaluations of the program. (For more information about this project, see page 25.)

Another SPHERU project is development of an evaluation framework of the Chronic Disease Self-Management Program in Northern Saskatchewan. The project objectives include: 1) the development of individual, cultural, and community indicators to assess the implementation and outcomes of chronic disease self-management programs in selected northern communities; and 2) the creation of capacity among community representatives and research trainees in community-based participatory program evaluation.

Key to evaluation research is the idea of collaboration. In the case of KidsFirst, this meant a partnership between SPHERU and the Ministry of Education's Early Childhood Development Unit, which oversees the KidsFirst program. The Canadian Population Health Initiative and the Government of Saskatchewan, also played an important role as the primary funders of the evaluation.



## KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION AND EXCHANGE



SPHERU brings researchers together in an environment that promotes and supports collaboration among academics and between academic and community partners. Researchers developing projects are able to draw on their colleagues' disciplinary expertise, experience, and relationships that they have with other researchers, policy makers, and community members.

SPHERU's knowledge translation and exchange activities are conducted as an integral part of our collaboratively driven research strategy. We begin by identifying potential users of research knowledge, involving them early and often throughout the research process.

SPHERU has developed and tested promising practices for effective knowledge translation and exchange throughout the research process, including:

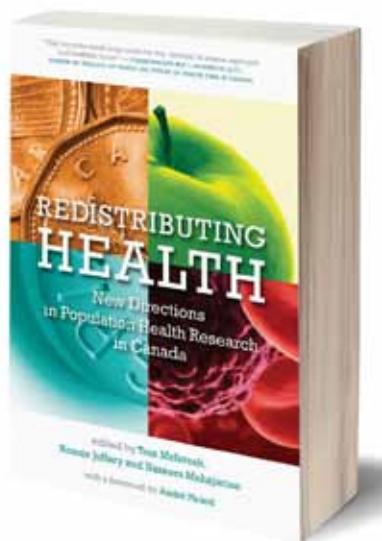
- Developing collaborative research projects with many stakeholders;
- Publishing research findings in more accessible, plain language documents;
- Producing videos to share findings;
- Developing toolkits of findings for communities to use as resource guides;
- Developing research networks for knowledge exchange; and
- Delivering and participating in presentations, forums, and expert dialogues.

This approach to integrated knowledge translation and exchange helps strengthen capacity for researchers, students, policy makers, and communities to act on shared findings, ensuring that new understandings are in the hands of those who can bring about changes that address health disparities associated with social inequities.

While each of SPHERU's research projects integrates knowledge translation throughout the research process, SPHERU also shares findings and experiences on an ongoing and regular basis.



## KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION AND EXCHANGE...



*"This important book helps point the way forward to a more equitable and healthier future."*  
– Roy J. Romanow, Q.C., Author of *Building on Values: The Future of Health Care in Canada*.

### **REDISTRIBUTING HEALTH: NEW DIRECTIONS IN POPULATION HEALTH RESEARCH IN CANADA**

Edited by Tom McIntosh, Bonnie Jeffery, and Nazeem Muhajarine

Canadian Plains Research Centre Press  
([www.cprcpress.ca](http://www.cprcpress.ca))

Released: November 16, 2010

Highlighting the papers and presentations delivered at the 2008 New Directions in Population Health Research: Linking Theory, Ethics, and Practice conference, the book explores "the theory, ethics, and practice of critical population health research as it aims to change policy, politics, outcomes, and the socio-economic dynamics that underpin the health of populations in Canada."

Please visit [www.spheru.ca](http://www.spheru.ca) or <http://www.cprcpress.ca/publications/Redistributing-Health> to order your copy today.

### **GIS AS A TOOL FOR POPULATION HEALTH RESEARCH... PAST, PRESENT, & FUTURE: THE SPHERU EXPERIENCE NOVEMBER 17, 2010: UNIVERSITY OF REGINA AND UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN**

Both the University of Regina and the University of Saskatchewan celebrated geographic information systems (GIS) – the data available to researchers who work with spatial and numeric social science quantitative data – on November 17, 2010. Presenters represented many disciplines including Arts, Business Administration, and Education.

SPHERU researchers presented their experiences and helped make people aware of the substantial contributions the use of GIS makes to the research community. The poster showcases the real world applications of this innovative technology within several of SPHERU's projects.



## KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION AND EXCHANGE...

### SPHERU TO PUBLISH KT CASEBOOK ON INNOVATIONS IN KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION

In November of 2009, SPHERU issued a call for abstracts on knowledge translation. We invited researchers, academics, policy makers, community practitioners, and others to submit examples highlighting their work with knowledge translation initiatives.

The result is a handbook focusing on knowledge translation best practices within the following three themes:

- Knowledge Translation Strategies;
- Knowledge Translation in Action: Leading to Change in Policy or Practice; and
- Evaluation of Knowledge Translation Effectiveness.

Cases range from the development of a music video for sharing healing stories of Aboriginal women's drug addiction, to a national symposium to promote healthy lifestyle behaviours among school-aged children in Trinidad and Tobago.

The casebook, available in August 2011, provides a valuable toolkit of knowledge translation strategies, actions, and evaluations to help guide academics, researchers, community practitioners, policy makers, and others in their application of knowledge translation.



**Research Update**, published quarterly in the Alberta Centre for Active Living (<http://www.centre4activeliving.ca>), summarizes and promotes recent research of interest to practitioners in health promotion and physical activity. The work of SPHERU researchers is published bi-annually in the spring (March) and fall (September) editions of Research Update.

#### **Evaluating Chronic Disease Self-Management in Northern Saskatchewan (Volume 17, Number 3, September 2010)**

Bonnie Jeffery and her research team describe an evaluation framework and study that incorporates individual, cultural, and community factors relevant to assessing the effectiveness of the Chronic Disease Self-Management Program in northern Saskatchewan communities.

#### **“Ocanku Duta Amani” or Paths to Living Well for Aboriginal Youth in Saskatchewan (Volume 18, Number 1, March 2011)**

Pammla Petrucka and her research team describe a research program that builds understanding, identifies barriers and facilitators, and informs programs and policies related to the wellness challenges and opportunities of Aboriginal youth at Standing Buffalo First Nation in Saskatchewan.

For further information regarding our knowledge translation and exchange activities, please visit [www.spheru.ca](http://www.spheru.ca).

## CURRENT RESEARCH PROJECTS

### ***EVALUATION OF THE CHRONIC DISEASE SELF MANAGEMENT PROGRAM IN NORTHERN SASKATCHEWAN***

*SPHERU RESEARCHER: BONNIE JEFFERY (ACADEMIC PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR), NAP GARDINER (COMMUNITY PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR)*

Indigenous People's Health Research Centre

\$20,000

2010 – 2011

This project will develop and test an evaluation framework that incorporates individual, cultural and community factors relevant to assessing the effectiveness of the Chronic Disease Self Management Program in northern Saskatchewan communities. The project will engage northern community representatives in developing the framework and will pilot the evaluation approach in one northern community.



### ***IMPACT OF A HOME-BASED EXERCISE PROGRAM ON FALLS AND FALL-RELATED INJURIES AMONG SENIORS LIVING IN RURAL AND URBAN AREAS IN SASKATCHEWAN***

*SPHERU RESEARCHER: SHANTHI JOHNSON (PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR)*

Canadian Institutes of Health Research

Knowledge Translation Branch

\$100,000

2010 – 2011

Unintentional falls are one of the leading causes of mortality and morbidity among frail older adults. While a majority of the community-based falls prevention programs have been shown to reduce falls and falls-related injuries, there is a need for exploring this issue among frail, largely homebound older adults. The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of a home-based exercise program on functional capacity, falls, and fall-related injuries among seniors living in rural and urban areas.

## CURRENT RESEARCH PROJECTS...

### **INDIGENOUS PEOPLE'S HEALTH RESEARCH CENTRE**

#### **CIHR NETWORK ENVIRONMENTS FOR ABORIGINAL HEALTH RESEARCH**

*FREDERIC WIEN, DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY, JOANN EPISKINEW, CARRIE BOURASSA, FIRST NATIONS UNIVERSITY OF CANADA, ET AL. – (PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS)*

*SPHERU RESEARCHERS: SYLVIA ABONYI, JIM DASCHUK, MARY HAMPTON, BONNIE JEFFERY, NAZEEM MUHAJARINE, PAMMLA PETRUCKA (CO-INVESTIGATORS)*

Canadian Institutes of Health Research

\$9,280,961

2010 – 2012

Launched by CIHR in 2007, Network Environments for Aboriginal Health Research (NEAHR) has resulted in the formation of 9 centres including former ACADRE centres. As one of the NEAHR centres, IPHRC is part of a national network known as the Aboriginal Health Research Networks (AHRNets) which coordinates the collaborative activity of the centres. The NEAHR centres focus solely on exploring critical aboriginal health issues and are the initial links in a developing network of centres across Canada responsible for developing the next generation of aboriginal health researchers and for focused research efforts on determinants of health in aboriginal communities.

### **INTERVENTION RESEARCH TO REDUCE CHILD AND FAMILY HEALTH INEQUITY IN AN URBAN SETTING**

*SPHERU RESEARCHERS: NAZEEM MUHAJARINE (PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR); SYLVIA ABONYI, BONNIE JEFFERY, NAZMI SARI*

Canadian Institutes of Health Research

Letter of Intent

\$15,000

This funding will allow for development of a proposal for a program of research that will generate new knowledge about interventions that aim to improve health equity in children and families, including knowledge about the specific mechanisms or pathways by which interventions operate in Saskatoon and region. Individual projects will be conducted at each level of the prevention care continuum (identified as 'themes') and a fourth theme of research will consist of developing and applying methodological tools and measures under a Monitoring Framework for research.



## CURRENT RESEARCH PROJECTS...



### ***KIDSFIRST EVALUATION – KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER & EXCHANGE***

*SPHERU RESEARCHER: NAZEEM MUHAJARINE*

Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI)

\$16,500

2010 – 2011

KidsFirst is an early childhood intervention program that supports families in difficult circumstances in nine sites in Saskatchewan. This KT grant will develop knowledge exchange materials and activities to facilitate the transfer and uptake of findings from the KidsFirst qualitative study conducted in 2007 to 2009 to the policy and practice community.

### ***RURAL AND NORTHERN COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE***

*SPHERU RESEARCHERS: MARY HAMPTON (PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR);*

*BONNIE JEFFERY, PAUL HACKETT, DIANE MARTZ (CO-INVESTIGATORS)*

Social Science and Humanities Research Council

Community-University Research Alliance

\$1,000,000

2010 – 2015

This CURA project, led by RESOLVE Saskatchewan at the University of Regina, will build upon the established connections among the three RESOLVE provincial research offices, and justice and community family violence agencies across the provinces. The project will conduct research to enhance our understanding of current community responses to intimate partner violence in rural and northern regions of the Canadian Prairie Provinces in order to expand support in targeted areas experiencing abuse and violence.



### ***TUBERCULOSIS EDUCATION IN CANADIAN ABORIGINAL AND NON-ABORIGINAL YOUTH: AN HISTORICAL, SOCIO-CULTURAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH PROMOTIONAL CURRICULUM***

*RICHARD LONG, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA (PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR); SPHERU RESEARCHER: SYLVIA ABONYI (CO-INVESTIGATOR)*

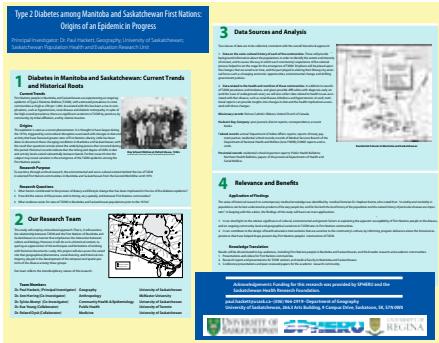
Public Health Agency of Canada, Lung Health Program Phase II

\$350,000 (\$119,613 to Univ of Saskatchewan)

2010 – 2011

This project will address gaps in TB knowledge in high incidence communities by developing a TB-specific curriculum for First Nations, Metis and Inuit youth. The objectives are to strengthen TB elimination strategies by imparting knowledge of transmission and risk factors to youth who are at increased risk of contracting TB, and to promote public health careers in these under-represented groups. The curriculum also aims to de-stigmatize the disease by highlighting TB as an airborne disease, and that air is something that we all share.

# CONTINUING RESEARCH PROJECTS



## **ATLAS PROJECT**

**SPHERU RESEARCHERS:** PAUL HACKETT, NAZEEM MUHAJARINE, DIANE MARTZ, BONNIE JEFFERY

Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation  
Health Research Team Grant (2008 – 2011)

The goal of this project is to develop a digital atlas of Saskatchewan in which to showcase the work conducted by the SPHERU team. While the final product will provide the full range of SPHERU researchers' work, the initial focus will be on a selected group of projects.

## **CANADIAN OBSERVATORY: RESEARCHING THE JUSTICE SYSTEM'S RESPONSE TO INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE**

**CARMEN GILL, UNIVERSITY OF NEW BRUNSWICK (PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR)**

**SPHERU RESEARCHER: MARY HAMPTON (CO-INVESTIGATOR)**

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council  
\$2,200,000  
2007-2012

Observatories are proactive investigators, providing strong political messages that inform policy making. The Canadian observatory mobilizes knowledge by creating and sustaining a synergy among those who are studying intimate partner violence and the justice system response, and by facilitating the sharing and transferring of knowledge across the country and abroad.

## **THE DETERMINANTS OF TB TRANSMISSION IN THE CANADIAN-BORN POPULATION OF THE PRAIRIE PROVINCES**

**RICHARD LONG, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA (LEAD PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR)**

**SPHERU RESEARCHER: SYLVIA ABONYI (CO-INVESTIGATOR)**

Canadian Institutes of Health Research  
Operating Grant  
\$902,410  
2006 – 2011



This study reflects a region-wide, multifaceted and programmatic approach to informing TB elimination strategies. One goal of the project is to translate the results into practical solutions to help those who need it most. The study has the potential to influence social determinants of health in marginalized communities, provide impetus for improved outcomes for Aboriginal people and explore a regional model of coordinated activity.

## CONTINUING RESEARCH PROJECTS...

### ***HISTORY OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND HEALTH CARE IN SASKATCHEWAN: THE ORIGINS AND IMPORT OF HEALTH INEQUITIES IN SASKATCHEWAN 1905-1985***

*SPHERU RESEARCHERS: JIM DASCHUK, GLORIA DE SANTIS, PAUL HACKETT, TOM MCINTOSH*

Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation

Health Research Team Grant

2008 – 2011



Despite Saskatchewan's long standing commitment to providing health care for all, the province manifests among the most extreme disparities in health outcomes in the nation. These disparities have been long entrenched, and yet ongoing attempts to achieve a solution have been largely historical. This project seeks to understand the root causes of these current health inequities through the use of an historical approach. This approach will identify the past patterns of health in Saskatchewan, how they have changed over time, and how key medical, policy, and other interventions impacted, and were impacted by, the inequitable distribution of health for specific sub-populations.



### ***HIV/AIDS, MATERNAL HEALTH AND MOTHER IDENTITIES: NARRATIVE CONSTRUCTIONS, HEALTH-RELATED BEHAVIOURS AND PROGRAMMING IMPLICATIONS***

*PAMELA DOWNE, UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN (PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR)*

*SPHERU RESEARCHER: SYLVIA ABONYI (CO-INVESTIGATOR)*

Canadian Institutes of Health Research

Operating Grant

\$231,627

2008 – 2011

This community-based research determines the inter-relationship between women's experiences with motherhood and HIV/AIDS in a context where HIV/AIDS is highly indigenized. It assesses how mother identities affect the health-related beliefs and behaviours of women accessing the services of AIDS Saskatoon and determines what HIV/AIDS related resources and services in Saskatoon and regionally are empowering to mothers infected with and affected by HIV/AIDS.

## CONTINUING RESEARCH PROJECTS...

### ***INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE NETWORKS FOR INFANT, CHILD, AND FAMILY HEALTH***

*JANET SMYLIE, ST. MICHAEL'S HOSPITAL (PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR) SPHERU RESEARCHER: SYLVIA ABONYI (CO-INVESTIGATOR)*

Canadian Institutes of Health Research

Operating Grant

\$980,000

2008-2013

This knowledge translation project has the goal of improving the content and flow of Indigenous and Western public health information into community health programs for the young First Nations and Metis families in Ontario and Saskatchewan. Our transdisciplinary team of scientists and Indigenous knowledge apply a cutting edge mixed method evaluation of knowledge products and processes.



### ***KIDSKAN – EARLY YEARS KNOWLEDGE TO ACTION NETWORK: LINKING COMMUNITY, UNIVERSITY AND GOVERNMENT FOR CHILD HEALTH AND WELLBEING***

*SUE DELANOY, COMMUNITIES FOR CHILDREN; STEVEN WHITEHEAD, SASKATOON PUBLIC HEALTH OBSERVATORY (CO-PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS) SPHERU RESEARCHERS: NAZEEM MUHAJARINE, DIANE MARTZ (CO-PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS); FLEUR MACQUEEN SMITH (CO-INVESTIGATOR)*

Canadian Institutes of Health Research

Knowledge to Action Grant

\$200,000

2008 – 2011

This initiative is focused on improving the wellbeing of children. It is our aim to take what has been primarily a Saskatoon-based knowledge-to-action early childhood research network to one that has greater relevance provincially - to Aboriginal and rural and northern communities in Saskatchewan.

## CONTINUING RESEARCH PROJECTS...

### **NEURODEVNET**

*DAN GOLDOWITZ, UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA (PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR)*

*SPHERU RESEARCHER: NAZEEM MUHAJARINE (DIRECTOR/PLATFORM MANAGER, KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER AND EXCHANGE)*

Government of Canada – Networks of Centres of Excellence

\$19.5 million (total project)

\$1 million (University of Saskatchewan portion)

2009 – 2014



NeuroDevNet is the first trans-Canada initiative dedicated to studying children's brain development from both basic and clinical perspectives. The network will receive \$19,572,000 in funding over five years to accelerate the pace of understanding the causes of neurological deficits, with an initial focus on autism spectrum disorder, fetal alcohol spectrum disorder and cerebral palsy. Researchers will explore how the normal brain develops, how to detect abnormalities, and how to repair the damaged brain. NeuroDevNet will also train the next generation of researchers in pediatric brain development, and it will disseminate new knowledge into improved diagnosis, treatments and interventions to inform care delivery and policy decisions.

*"WORKING ON THE FALLS*

*PROJECT HAS BEEN A GREATLY REWARD-  
ING EXPERIENCE. WITH THE AGING CANADIAN  
POPULATION, I KNOW MY WORK AT SPHERU IS  
CONTRIBUTING TO A FIELD OF RESEARCH THAT IS  
INVALUABLE TO THE FUTURE DIRECTION  
OF OUR HEALTH SYSTEM."*

*Minh Young*

*SPHERU Research Assistant*

*University of Regina*

### **PREVENTING FALLS AND FALL-RELATED INJURIES AMONG SENIORS IN LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES**

*SPHERU RESEARCHER: SHANTHI JOHNSON (PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR)*

Canadian Institutes of Health Research

Catalyst Grant

\$49,685

2010 – 2011

Unintentional falls are one of the leading causes of mortality and morbidity among older adults. This pilot project supports existing research aimed at reducing falls and fall-related injuries among residents of Long Term Care (LTC) facilities. This objective is realized through positive, collaborative action by those who are at risk and those who are responsible for their care and safety. The pilot will test the study protocol in two long-term care facilities (one rural and one urban) in Saskatchewan.

## CONTINUING RESEARCH PROJECTS...

### **REDUCING MENTAL HEALTH DISPARITIES THROUGH POPULATION HEALTH PROMOTION: TRANSLATING KNOWLEDGE INTO PRACTICE - PRACTICE INTO KNOWLEDGE**

*LEWIS WILLIAMS, CAROLINE TAIT, UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN (CO-PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS) SPHERU RESEARCHERS: SYLVIA ABONYI, MARY HAMPTON (CO-INVESTIGATORS)*

Canadian Institutes of Health Research Interdisciplinary Capacity Enhancement Teams Grant Program

\$900,000

2006 – 2011

Through knowledge development and translation activities this project aims to understand and address mental health disparities among vulnerable populations, specifically Indigenous and racialized immigrant women. This project mobilizes a trans-disciplinary and multifaceted research program that creates new knowledge in mental health promotion theory, policy and practice that is achieved by bringing together a unique blend of research scientists, policy and decision makers, and community-based practitioners.



*Bill Jeffery, Age 90, Eston, SK.*

### **ROLE OF SOCIAL SYSTEMS IN THE HEALTH OF SENIORS LIVING IN RURAL SASKATCHEWAN**

*SPHERU RESEARCHERS: SYLVIA ABONYI, JUANITA BACSU, BONNIE JEFFERY, SHANTHI JOHNSON, DIANE MARTZ*

Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation

Health Research Team Grant

2008 – 2011

The objective of this study is to examine the relationship between social systems and the health of seniors living in rural Saskatchewan. Using a population health approach, the study will examine the capacity of rural communities to address the health care needs of seniors and to focus on the ways in which social systems influence seniors' health. The exponential growth of seniors in rural areas makes collecting information on the rural aging imperative. In the absence of existing research, this study will provide groundbreaking data on rural seniors' health and rural communities' capacity and sustainability to care for an aging population.

## CONTINUING RESEARCH PROJECTS...



### ***ROLE OF SOCIAL SYSTEMS IN THE HEALTH OF SENIORS LIVING IN RURAL SASKATCHEWAN***

*SPHERU RESEARCHERS: BONNIE JEFFERY (LEAD PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR); SHANTHI JOHNSON (CO-PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR); SYLVIA ABONYI, DIANE MARTZ & JUANITA BASCU (CO-INVESTIGATORS)*

Canadian Centre for Health and Safety in Agriculture /Canadian Institutes of Health Research

\$20,000

2010 – 2011

This pilot project will gather preliminary information to examine the relationship between social systems and the health of seniors living in rural communities in two

different size health regions in Saskatchewan. Researchers will develop, implement, and test a conceptual framework and methodology and compare a largely 'urban' health region with one that is more 'rural' to reveal if differing views exist of both the capacity of rural communities to address the health care and service needs of seniors and the ways in which social systems influence seniors' health.

### ***RURAL POSTSECONDARY STUDENTS COLLABORATE TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH OF THEIR CAMPUS COMMUNITIES***

*WILLIAM CARE, BRANDON UNIVERSITY (LEAD PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR) SPHERU RESEARCHERS: BONNIE JEFFERY, PAMMLA PETRUCKA (CO-INVESTIGATORS)*

Manitoba Health Research Council

\$90,729

2010 – 2012

Canadian Institutes of Health Research

Operating Grant

\$85,044

2010-2011

In this project students, community partners and researchers will create partnerships to identify and take action on factors that contribute to the health, well-being and quality of life of university and college students at postsecondary institutions in Brandon Manitoba and Prince Albert Saskatchewan. Focus groups, workshops, campus meetings and the use of photography in addition to a website, student blog and online survey are research strategies that will be used to gather data to create a student community health framework and set of indicators that will be used to measure student health and quality of life.

## CONTINUING RESEARCH PROJECTS...

### **TIER 2 CANADA RESEARCH CHAIR IN ABORIGINAL HEALTH**

*SPHERU RESEARCHER: SYLVIA ABONYI*

Canada Research Chairs Secretariat / University of Saskatchewan

\$500,000

2010 – 2015

This CRC renewal continues a program of study exploring the role of culture in health and wellness of Aboriginal peoples. Working closely with northern Aboriginal communities out of the population health research lab in Prince Albert, the research is focused on two questions: “What is a healthy community? How would we measure that?” Current research is exploring the lived experience of selected indicators from the Community Health and Wellness Toolkit, created in an earlier phase of the research. The toolkit included over 200 indicators including strong and vital community cultures, food security, a healthy environment, and access to health and social services. Over the next five years, the toolkit will be implemented with the Athabasca Health Authority in northern Saskatchewan, building a community database of information and creating ways of evaluating programs and policies.



*Sylvia Abonyi, SPHERU Researcher and Canada Research Chair (Photo Courtesy of University of Saskatchewan)*



### **TOOLS 2 – COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLNESS INDICATORS REFLECTING DAILY LIFE IN SASKATCHEWAN’S ISOLATED FAR NORTH: IMPLICATIONS FOR PROGRAM PLANNING AND EVALUATION**

*SPHERU RESEARCHERS: SYLVIA ABONYI, BONNIE JEFFERY (CO-PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS)*

Canadian Institutes of Health Research

Operating Grant

\$543,355

2007 – 2011

This project builds upon previous work that created a conceptual framework that reflected northern Saskatchewan Aboriginal views of healthy community. The former study addressed what is a healthy community and how we measure that. This study will now address how healthy a community is and why measurement is important in the domains of food security, identity and culture, and services and infrastructure-housing. Community and health authority representatives on the research team see the purpose of this research as leading to their goals of providing information to the public, as well as to administrators, program planners, policy makers, and funders to identify where programs are making a positive impact as well as identify challenges and gaps.

## CONTINUING RESEARCH PROJECTS...



### ***WORKING UPSTREAM: EFFECTING HEALTHY CHILDREN THROUGH NEIGHBOURHOOD DESIGN (SMART CITIES, HEALTHY KIDS)***

*SPHERU RESEARCHER: NAZEEM MUHAJARINE (PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR)*

Canadian Institutes of Health Research  
Childhood Obesity Prevention and Treatment  
Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada Health Research Foundation  
\$447,000  
2008-2011

This research attempts to understand whether municipal policy linked to neighbourhood built environment makes a difference in children's physical activity levels. Combining expertise, knowledge about physical activity, built environment, urban planning, public health, geography, and municipal decision-making will create new knowledge and apply this knowledge to local decision-making and new neighbourhood development.

### ***YOUTH SMOKING SURVEY, SASKATCHEWAN***

*STEVE MANSKI, UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOU (PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR)*

*SPHERU RESEARCHER: NAZEEM MUHAJARINE (SASKATCHEWAN PROVINCIAL COLLABORATOR)*

Funder: Health Canada  
\$50,000  
2010 – 2011



SPHERU has subcontracted with the University of Waterloo to implement a national youth smoking survey with high school students in Saskatchewan. The survey will include students from 28 schools across the province.

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Jonathan Harris, Research Trainee  
Katherine McLeod, Research Trainee  
Manitou Beach, SK  
Watrous, SK. Annual Car Show  
Manitou Beach, SK. Golf Course  
U of R Photography Department  
Dr. Mary Hampton

U of R Photography Department  
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