

LEARNING, ENGAGING AND COMMUNICATING

PROJECT ACTIVITY UPDATE

Historical Health and Aging presentations

The SPHERU team recently gave presentations in its two partner communities on the Healthy Aging in Place project – in May in Wolseley and the following month in Watrous.

The events included presentations on the Historical Health and Healthy Aging in Place projects, highlighting the influence of past events on current health outcomes in each community, as well as a progress update from the Healthy Aging in Place study.



The team also made some other stops along with the way – for example, a visit with Grade 5 and 6 students at Wolseley's Dr. Isman Elementary School to share some entertaining stories of past health care in the community from people such as retired nurses Lucie Lemcke and Evelyn Smith, school

principal Tim Taylor and Mayor Dennis Fjestad.

Other project work has included a trip to Cuba to examine strategies used there to promote healthy aging in place, and an invitation to present study findings at the Saskatchewan Seniors Association convention in June.

The Healthy Aging in Place project uses a model of population health intervention research to identify effective interventions at the policy, community, and kin levels that will support healthy aging in place for both non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal seniors in rural communities that face escalating challenges in meeting health care needs.

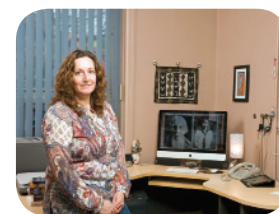
OUR RESEARCH

While much population health research describes health inequities, our research focuses on population health interventions. We look at how to address inequities on the social determinants of health through the creation of new knowledge, policy analysis, and collaborative research. Much of our work falls within the themes of Northern and Aboriginal Health, Healthy Children, Rural Health and the History of Health Inequities, as well as Intervention Research.

First Nations' respiratory study moves ahead

In April, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research – Institute of Aboriginal Peoples' Health awarded a research team led by the University of Saskatchewan's Dr. Jim Dosman more than \$1.5 million over a five-year period for research on the respiratory health of First Nations children and adults.

SPHERU's Dr. Sylvia Abonyi is a Co-Principal Investigator, along with Dr. Punam Pahwa at the University of Saskatchewan and Dr. Jo-Ann Episkenew from the Indigenous Peoples' Health Research Centre and the University of Regina. They will work with the communities of Beardy's and Okemasis First Nation and Montreal Lake Cree Nation. The project will include baseline data collection, intervention activities and follow-up data collection and evaluation on respiratory health.



Kathy McMullin at the Prince Albert SPHERU lab is coordinating the work. Over the summer a group of students, including a number from participating communities, were trained to collect the baseline data on lung function and allergies as well as administer individual and household surveys. The participation rate in the communities was excellent, Abonyi says.

The team will study conditions such as asthma, chronic bronchitis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and obstructive sleep apnea and work with the participating communities to address such conditions as poor housing and to promote healthy lifestyles.

The baseline data collection on adults is complete. The project will now turn its attention to collecting baseline data for children, as well as conducting household environmental assessments for the remainder of the project's first year. The next phase will be to take the findings to the communities to develop and implement intervention strategies locally and programmatically as well as at multiple policy levels. In its final phases, the study will evaluate the interventions with follow-up health and survey data collection.

OUR RESEARCH TEAM

University of Regina

Tom McIntosh, Interim Director
Bonnie Jeffery, Research Faculty
Shanthi Johnson, Research Faculty
James Daschuk, Research Faculty
Mary Hampton, Research Associate
Gloria DeSantis, Research Associate/
Post Doctoral Fellow

University of Saskatchewan

Nazeem Muhajarine, Research Faculty
Sylvia Abonyi, Research Faculty
Paul Hackett, Research Faculty
Diane Martz, Research Faculty
Pammla Petrucka, Research Faculty
Nazmi Sari, Research Faculty
Sarah Oosman, Post Doctoral Fellow

WHO WE ARE

SPHERU is an interdisciplinary team of population health researchers from the Universities of Regina and Saskatchewan with sites in Regina, Saskatoon, and Prince Albert. Established in 1999 and funded by the Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation, with additional project specific funding provided by other provincial and national health research funding agencies, SPHERU is the first bi-university research unit of its kind in Saskatchewan.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Shanthi Johnson appointed to National Seniors Council

Dr. Shanthi Johnson was appointed as a new member of the National Seniors Council. The mandate of the NSC is to advise the federal government on issues concerning the well-being and quality of life for the country's rapidly growing and increasingly diverse seniors population.



Rosetown. The goal of the Community Voices study, funded by the Mitacs Accelerate internship program and the Rosetown RFCSS, is to identify Rosetown's priorities for future policies and programs. "Together, we hope what we learn will help shape policy and inform development of programs to improve quality of life," says Dr. Bonnie Jeffery, who leads the study.

Researchers collaborate with Rosetown

Researchers from the University of Regina and the University of Saskatchewan are collaborating with Rosetown Regional Family and Community Support Services to examine both the strengths and challenges of supports available for different age groups within

New Smart Cities website

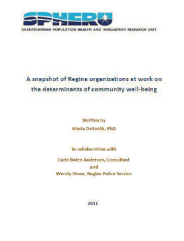
Smart Cities, Healthy Kids has launched its new website, www.smartcitieshealthykids.com. It includes articles, fact sheets and other information about the built environment study and its sister study looking at Saskatoon's food environment.



PUBLICATIONS

A Snapshot of Regina's Organizations at Work on the Determinants of Community Well-being

Dr. Gloria DeSantis co-produced this 88-page report examining community-based organizations whose work takes into account the determinants of community well-being among Regina's vulnerable populations. The aim is to help point to new strategies for a healthier community. The report was the subject of a community meeting in Regina in March.



Developmental Health Knowledge as a Catalyst for Healthy Family Policies in Canada

Dr. Nazeem Muhajarine and Fleur Macqueen Smith co-authored this "made-in-Canada" tool to promote children's developmental health. The National Collaborating Centre for Healthy Public Policy released the first fact sheet based on the report this spring (online at the NCCHP website / Past Bulletins – May 2012).

Alberta Centre for Active Living Research Update

"Confronting Health Disparities: University of Regina Promotes Sports for Life and

Aboriginal Youth Leadership Camp" (Vol. 19 / No. 3 September 2012). This article (<http://www.centre4activeliving.ca/>) by Dr. James Daschuk and Nicole Akan discusses how the University of Regina is promoting athletics, health and leadership to confront the continuing health disparity between Aboriginal people and the rest of the population in Saskatchewan.



SPHERU Annual Review 2011-2012

The latest review, with emphasis on our knowledge translation work, is now available on our website at www.spheru.ca.

MEET OUR RESEARCHERS



Dr. Tom McIntosh, PhD, is serving as SPHERU's Interim Director for one year. He will be working with faculty and the Unit's Management Advisory Group on the process to find a new Director.

He joined SPHERU in 2002 and brings expertise on public policy making and knowledge transfer and exchange to numerous SPHERU projects. He also spent three years with Canadian Policy Research Network, an Ottawa think-tank, where he led their health research program.

Dr. McIntosh's recent work examines the political and economic components of SPHERU's historical analysis of population health in Saskatchewan. Currently, he is on a sabbatical from his work as a Professor and Head of the Department of Political Science.

Dr. Sarah Oosman, PhD, joined SPHERU this spring. She is a post doctoral fellow and physiotherapist working 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.



Dr. Oosman is currently collaborating on the Healthy Aging in Place project with Northern Métis and First Nations communities.

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