

LEARNING, ENGAGING AND COMMUNICATING

PROJECT ACTIVITY UPDATE

The Good Food Junction: A community-based food intervention to reduce nutritional health inequities

The Good Food Junction, which opened in September 2012, is a 4,900-square-foot, full-service, not-for-profit grocery store containing a full range of fresh, frozen, and packaged foods. It is located in a low-income food desert neighbourhood in Saskatoon's inner city.

The GFJ research team has been working on two surveys. The first was a health status questionnaire, between July and September, for people that had made at least three visits to the store and are the primary household shopper. The participants will be surveyed again in the winter and next summer. The second survey is a door-to-door, demographic survey of people living within walking distance of the store. It started in July and is ongoing.



The goal of this two-year study is to understand and model how the introduction of this large community-based food program impacts the health of individuals and families. This research presents a unique opportunity to study and understand how transformation

occurs from a food desert with poor health outcomes to neighbourhoods with healthy food and healthy citizens.

This project is led by Principal Investigators Nazeem Muhajarine and Rachel Engler-Stringer, and is related to SPHERU's Smart Cities, Healthy Kids food security project. Sylvia Abonyi and Cory Neudorf are Co-Investigators. It has been funded by the Canadian Institutes for Health Research; Public Health Agency of Canada.

History of public health and health care in Saskatchewan: The origins and import of health inequities in Saskatchewan 1905 -1985

SPHERU's team grant project has a number of things happening right now. Dr. Paul Hackett and Dr. Sylvia Abonyi are continuing work on using historical data on body mass index and its links to the growth of conditions such as Type 2 diabetes in the First Nations community. (We featured this in the April 2013 newsletter.)

As well, the team has set up a timeline that chronicles benchmark dates in the history of health and health care in the province. It's an online resource and educational tool, which can be set up to handle multiple timelines on many topics.



The timeline includes historical events such as the Spanish flu epidemic in 1918, the opening of the Weyburn Mental Hospital in 1921 and the 1961 Hall Report on health care services. The project was made possible with the help of the Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation, as well as the University of Regina and the University of Saskatchewan. The Saskatchewan Archives Board contributed photographs.

As well, Dr. James Daschuk's book, *Clearing The Plains*, (see Publications) has received much acclaim since its release. The book chronicles the health of First Nations from prehistory through the fur trade era up to the late 1800s and the time of the National Policy. The book received positive advance press and media attention. It even inspired MP Charlie Angus and his band the Grievous Angels to write a song based on the events in the book.

OUR RESEARCH TEAM

University of Regina

Tom McIntosh, Associate Director
James Daschuk, Research Faculty
Bonnie Jeffery, Research Faculty
Shanthi Johnson, Research Faculty
Nuelle Novik, Research Faculty
Mary Hampton, Research Associate
Gloria DeSantis, Research Associate

University of Saskatchewan

Nazeem Muhajarine, Director
Sylvia Abonyi, Research Faculty
Rachel Engler-Stringer, Research Faculty
Paul Hackett, Research Faculty
Diane Martz, Research Faculty
Sarah Oosman, Research Faculty
Nazmi Sari, Research Faculty
Cory Neudorf, Research Associate
Pammla Petrucka, Research Associate

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 from other provincial and national health research funding agencies, SPHERU is the first bi-university research unit of its kind in Saskatchewan. While much population health research describes health inequities, ours focuses on population health interventions and how to address inequities on the social determinants of health. Much of our work falls within the themes of Northern and Aboriginal Health, Healthy Children, Rural Health, the History of Health Inequities, and Intervention Research.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

New director at SPHERU

This spring Dr. Nazeem Muhajarine accepted the role of Director of SPHERU for a five-year term through 2018. Dr. Tom McIntosh, who filled the position of Interim Director this past year, will be serving for the coming year as Associate Director and act as SPHERU's point person for the University of Regina side of the unit.

Two join faculty

SPHERU has added two more faculty members. Dr. Sarah Oosman, currently a SPHERU post doc, is joining as a researcher. She is currently collaborating on the Healthy Aging in Place project. Dr. Rachel Engler-Stringer is also joining the faculty. She is Co-Principal Investigator with Nazeem Muhajarine on the Smart Cities Healthy Kids Food Environment study and The Good Food Junction projects.

New kidSKAN website

Our kidSKAN project has a new website at www.kidskan.ca. It's got a cleaner, more up-to-date look, is more user-friendly and easier to navigate, and has several new features, such as Our Research and For The Record.



We've moved

SPHERU has moved its Saskatoon offices. After several years at Innovation Place, we're back on the main campus inside the new Royal University Hospital building. The address is 3rd Floor, E Wing, Health Sciences Building, 104 Clinic Place.

PUBLICATIONS

Clearing The Plains

Dr. James Daschuk's book (University of Regina Press) looks at how Old World diseases, climate and Canadian politics conspired to cause the deaths and subjugation of thousands of Aboriginal people, victims of the realization of Sir John A. Macdonald's "National Dream."



Healthy Aging in Place journal article

Bacsu, J., Jeffery, B. Johnson, S., Martz, D., Novik, N. & Abonyi, S. (2012). "Healthy aging in place: Supporting rural seniors' health needs" *Journal of Rural Nursing and Healthcare*, 12(2), pp. 78-87.

The Healthy Aging in Place team examines the key determinants that support healthy aging in rural communities.

The Philanthropist is a quarterly journal for practitioners, scholars, supporters and others engaged in the nonprofit sector. DeSantis's article and her original report focus on 37 community-based organizations in Regina working on the social determinants of health.

Smart Cities Healthy Kids KT report

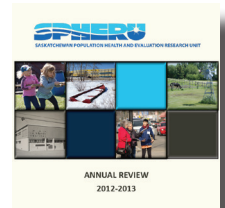
There is a brand-new evaluation of knowledge translation for the Smart Cities project. It's available on the website, [www.http://smartcitieshealthykids.com/](http://smartcitieshealthykids.com/) under Resources/Reports.

DeSantis article in The Philanthropist

DeSantis, G. (2013). "Voluntary Social Service Organizations Working on the Determinants of Health: Cause for Concern?" *The Philanthropist*, 25(1) pp. 57-71.

SPHERU Annual Review 2011-2012

The latest review, again with heavy emphasis on our knowledge translation work, is available on our website. To download a copy, go to www.spheru.ca.



MEET OUR RESEARCHERS



Dr. Nazeem Muhajarine, PhD, is a social epidemiologist, leads SPHERU's Healthy Children research program and is now director of the research unit. 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. He is a professor and department head of Community Health and Epidemiology, University of Saskatchewan.

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



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