



Yorkton Public Library staff attended a dementia friendly training presented by the Dementia Community Coordinator.

MESSAGE FROM THE PROJECT TEAM

Our aim for this issue of the newsletter is to share the recent achievements and progress of *Dementia Supports in Rural Saskatchewan*. Through awareness campaigns and public presentations, knowledge about dementia is growing in Yorkton, Melville and surrounding communities. Over the last six months, Collaborating Organizations have been working hard to connect with organizations such as pharmacies, libraries, and city/town government offices. Communities have taken steps towards creating spaces that are inclusive and accessible for people living with dementia and their care partners. In this issue, we are happy to share examples of dementia-friendly communities in action!

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For more information, please visit:



RuralDementiaSK.ca



[@RuralDementiaSK](https://www.facebook.com/RuralDementiaSK)



[@RuralDementiaSK](https://twitter.com/RuralDementiaSK)



A new large-print, high-contrast keyboard can be used by patrons at the Yorkton Public Library.

What Becoming More Dementia Friendly Can Look Like

By Denine Hilderman,
Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan

There's knowledge and then there's action. Yorkton Public Library (YPL), who is a participating organization in the *Dementia Supports in Rural Saskatchewan* project, has taken meaningful steps towards increasing both in terms of their dementia friendliness.

After hosting our Dementia Community Coordinator for a staff education session in February, YPL staff are more aware of person-centred approaches to support people living with dementia and their care partners. Since the learning day, they have also made changes to the physical environment of the branch to enhance its accessibility.

Yorkton Public Library now features a quiet news-media area for patrons who may need a rest during their visit, and for

patrons who may become distracted by ambient noise. The news-media area features a computer with a large-print, high-colour contrast keyboard for better key navigation, a big coffee table for personal belongings and reading materials, padded chairs for extra comfort, and books with large print.

With libraries serving as central hubs for community resources and connection, many of the staff who participated in the learning day recognized that there is a real opportunity to help enhance the quality of life for people living with dementia and their care partners.

"I am grateful for how the Alzheimer Society made me aware just how broad and varied dementia can be, but also how easy it is to continue helping people affected by dementia with a bit of understanding and a few extra tools to deploy. Hopefully more people take this Dementia Friendly training to realize how widespread the effects of dementia are but also how simple and rewarding it can be to make public spaces more dementia friendly."

- Library Attendant,
Yorkton Public Library

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60% of people living with dementia live in their homes in their communities and want to continue doing so as fully and for as long as possible. YPL staff have recognized that people living with dementia are a part of their community and want to ensure that they have a place in their library to call home.

It's the local businesses, organizations, and community services that help add meaning to people's lives. We hope that others will follow YPL's lead in becoming more dementia friendly.

The Alzheimer Society's Dementia Community Coordinator can help your organization learn more about dementia and the dementia friendly framework, which includes:

- Challenging stigma;
- Developing partnerships to enhance community supports;
- Adapting physical and social environments;
- Creating inclusive community routines and patterns.



A quiet news-media area for patrons of the Yorkton Public Library.

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“Yorkton Public Library is truly grateful to have had the opportunity to learn about what it means to be a Dementia Friendly organization. Learning more about what it means to be Dementia Friendly has broadened our perspective so that we can improve our facility and our service in hopes of being more accessible to those patrons who face the challenges of dementia. We want them, as well as their care partners, to know that our Library is a safe and welcoming place.”

*- Amber Harvey, Branch Manager,
Yorkton Public Library*

Learn More

To find out more, please contact:
Jackie Hofstrand
Dementia Community Coordinator
Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan
(306) 783-6606
jhofstrand@alzheimer.sk.ca



Rural Recreation Spaces Assessment Using Age- and Dementia- Friendly Lenses

This new project will assess rural recreation facilities using Age-Friendly and Dementia-Friendly Lenses. The project's vision is for communities and sport, culture, and recreation organizations in the rural areas surrounding Yorkton and Melville to have inclusive and accessible spaces for older adults including those living with dementia and their care partners.

Assessments of rural recreation facilities will take place over the next few months. Following the assessment, a report with suggestions will be provided to participating organizations. A small amount of financial support will be available for making the spaces more inclusive.

To Participate

If you would like more information about this project, email Sheila:
shryniuk@parklandvalley.ca





Lived Experience: A Care Partner's Story

By Brenda Leppington,
Community Table Member

Brenda Leppington was interviewed for the podcast 'Island Treasures' and wrote two chapters in the book 'Chicken Soup for the Soul: Navigating Eldercare and Dementia'.

I can still remember the day the doctor told us that mom had vascular dementia. Mom was able to grasp what he was telling us, and her response was simply “what now?”

What mom struggled with the most was her frustration of not feeling “normal” any more. At the time, I had no idea what that meant or what I could do to make things better? Over time, we came to understand what “mindfulness” means and how it could help us and help her. We learned to accept her new reality and better understand that although there were things that she couldn’t remember, there were also things that she didn’t want to remember.

In various books and podcasts that I listened to, I knew that it was recommended that you do not argue with a person with dementia, but it took some time to understand it also meant to simply accept the world as they see it. My mom patiently explained that she wanted to live in the past, where her life was the same. She wanted to pretend that my dad was still alive and so were her brothers and sisters. She posed the question to me “If I choose to relive a life where I wouldn’t have changed a thing, who am I hurting?” She found comfort in believing that my dad was still alive and that she had to think of something to make for supper. Those thoughts would be forgotten when the staff would bring her own meal, but in the moment where she was anticipating dad coming home for supper....you could see the peace that it brought her.

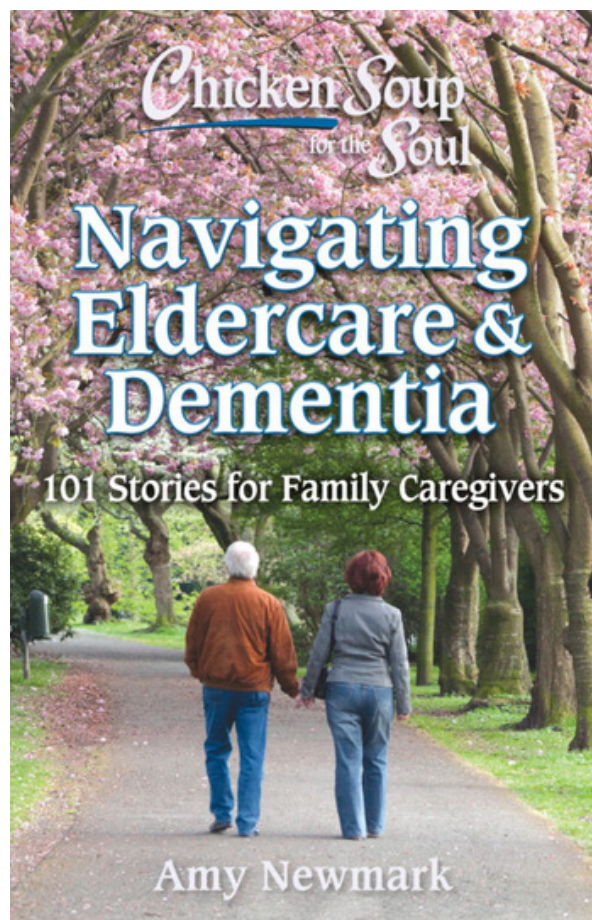
We began to better understand what it means to “live in the moment”. It also helped us to understand what “I want to feel normal again” meant. It meant things like, “Would you like to go to the Dairy Queen for a sundae?”. “Would you like to have coffee outside today?”

...continued

Or activities like looking at old photos and reminiscing about a life well lived. There were lots of opportunities to still allow mom to be the person that she always was, and the chance to create new memories and new laughs.

Mom taught me so much in those final years of her life. In her memory, I wrote the story "Who am I Hurting" for Chicken Soup for the Soul's book, "Navigating Eldercare and Dementia". I was surprised at how much attention it received and how many people said they could relate to our story. I was also recently asked to participate in a podcast (Island Treasures), and got the chance to share some of the other things that we learned on our dementia journey.

Initially, you assume that you are alone in that journey and it took time and effort to understand how to best approach mom's situation. My mom is gone now, but I am so thankful that an organization like SPHERU is here to help others on their journey. Resources, knowledge and



support of others, is so critical to the well-being of the person affected, and the caregiver who is also dealing with a situation that is unfamiliar.

Podcast Link

Listen to an interview with Brenda Leppington on the Island Treasures podcast:

Listen to Podcast



Share Your Story

Do you have experience living with dementia in rural Saskatchewan or caring for someone who has dementia?

If you would like to share your story, email Michelle:
michelle.harazny@uregina.ca



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The majority of recommendations are toward improvement of signage to assist people with navigating more independently

*- Report to Council,
December 2021*

Community Table Meeting Brings Together New Members to Discuss Accessibility

By Michelle Harazny,
Project Coordinator

On April 1, 2022, thirty-five members of the Community Table met on Zoom to discuss how public spaces can become more inclusive and accessible for older adults living with dementia and their care partners in rural Saskatchewan. The Honourable Minister Everett Hindley, Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, Seniors and Rural and Remote Health for the Saskatchewan government, joined the Community Table meeting discussion.

At the meeting, Lisa Washington presented highlights from the City of Yorkton's Public Indoor Facility Audit in which experts living with dementia assessed public facilities using an age-friendly and dementia-friendly checklist. The report recommended making adjustments

to the physical environments of several public facilities. For example, changes to signage, lighting, and seating areas help people living with dementia navigate spaces more easily. While the report is still being reviewed, changes to signage at City Hall and the Yorkton Public Library have already been made thanks to the support and immediate action taken by the building staff and the community.

Facilities Audit Report

The full facilities audit report is available online:

Read Report





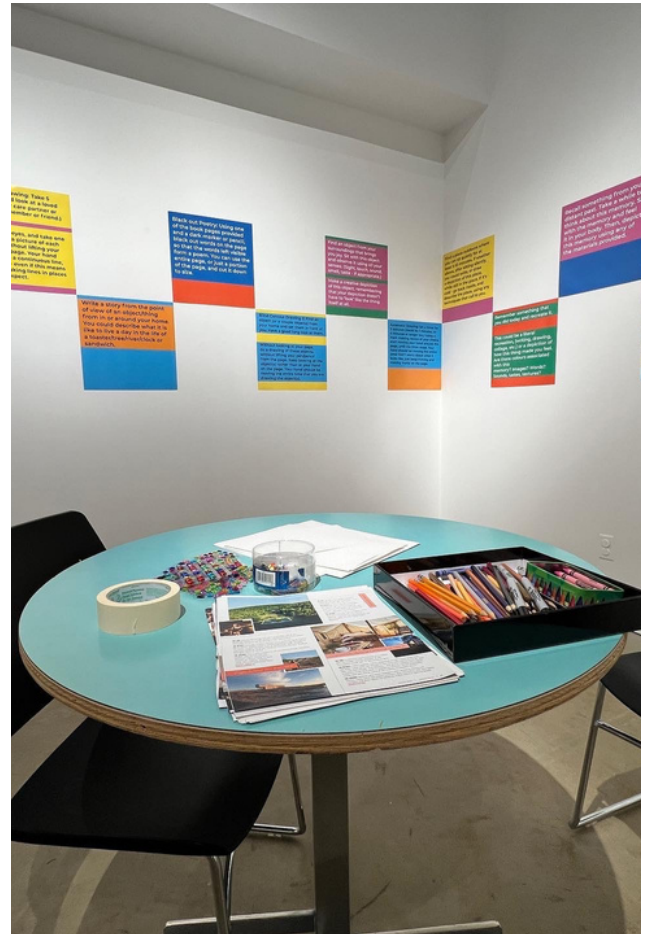
Project Showcase at Godfrey Dean Art Gallery

By Jeff Morton,
Godfrey Dean Art Gallery

Between April 22 and May 21, 2022, a project showcase was displayed at the Godfrey Dean Art Gallery to share some of the processes and ideas guiding our project *Belong Where You Find Yourself*. In the showcase, visitors encountered videos and printed materials that can help us better understand how dementia impacts our lives, and how to make our community more dementia friendly. We want to say a special thank you to Jackie Hofstrand at the Alzheimer's Society of Saskatchewan for collecting informational materials and sharing them with us as part of this showcase.

Visitors to the gallery were also invited to participate at an interactive art station, responding to the same artistic prompts as participating artists in the project, guided by lead artists Alana Moore and Amber Phelps Bondaroff.

Belong Where You Find Yourself is a community-engaged art project for people



living with dementia and their care partners, with the goal to increase public awareness and reduce stigma associated with dementia. In January 2022, two lead artists Alana Moore and Amber Phelps-Bondaroff, started working with 12 local artist participants through a one-year creation period leading to a gallery exhibition at Godfrey Dean Art Gallery and a presentation tour to local rural locations in 2023.

About

For more information
about this project, visit the
gallery's website:

[Read More](#)



Dementia Friendly Life Enrichment Program's New Team Members

Welcome to the newest staff members at SaskAbilities who are working with individual clients and their families:

Kristen Kosar

Dementia Friendly Coordinator at SaskAbilities

Kristen has spent the last 8 years at SaskAbilities working in the Crisis Support and Respite Services departments. As she loves new challenges, Kristen was happy to take on a new position with the Yorkton Branch as Dementia Friendly Coordinator, when it became available. Kristen finds her job incredibly rewarding and enjoys working with individuals of all abilities.



Curtis Goods

Dementia Friendly Facilitator at SaskAbilities

In 2019, Curtis completed his Social Work practicum with SaskAbilities and was offered a casual Support Worker position, which he accepted. During Curtis' time at SaskAbilities, he has worked in the Day Program, Partners in Mental Health and Well-Being, and Respite Services departments. Curtis has the ability to work with individuals of all abilities and is excited for his new position as the Dementia Friendly Facilitator.




The *Dementia Friendly Life Enrichment Program* at SaskAbilities aims to enhance the quality of life of individuals living with dementia in Yorkton and surrounding rural communities. The Dementia Friendly Coordinator and Facilitators work with individuals and their families to develop person centred plans. These plans guide personalized programming and activities that are facilitated in the individual's home and community.

About

For more info about this project, visit the website:

Read More





The Advisory Committee members bring a range of experiences and expertise related to addressing the needs of those living with dementia in rural communities and small cities in Saskatchewan.

Current Members of the Advisory Committee:

Juanita Bacsu
Gord Grant
Claudia Grant
Candace Kopec
Megan O'Connell
Edna Parrott
Shellie Pociuk
Les Quennell
Laurie Schmidt
Crystal Spooner
Dorothea Warren
John Wright

Why is this Collective Impact project needed in rural Saskatchewan?

"With the projected number of Saskatchewan people living with dementia expected to increase, this initiative is timely and critically needed to develop community-driven programs and services to enhance the quality of life of rural residents in Saskatchewan, whose lives have been impacted by dementia."

- Laurie Schmidt

Advisory Committee Member

"This project is important as there is a strong need for lived experience and partnerships to develop innovative actions to address stigma and improve social inclusion for rural people with dementia and their care partners."

- Juanita Bacsu

Advisory Committee Member

"This important project seeks to enhance community understanding of dementia while also focusing on initiatives to improve social contact by individuals with dementia. The economic benefits of this project can be substantial for patients, care givers, communities and the health care delivery system."

- John Wright

Advisory Committee Member

COLLECTIVE IMPACT: Evaluation Update & Success Stories

By Akram Mahani,
Evaluation Coordinator

Since the launch of our Collective Impact project in September 2019, we have made significant progress both in terms of process and outcomes. In what follows, we briefly present the short-term outcomes that our Collective Impact project has achieved during the first two years. We then provide a brief update of the process evaluation that is underway.

Evaluation Update

Read about the short term outcomes achieved so far (from September 2019 to October 2021) in the project's evaluation report:

[Read Report](#)



Short-Term Outcomes

In March 2022, we released an evaluation report that demonstrates our progress in terms of short-term outcomes since the project launch. In this report, we presented an analysis of data collected between September 2019 and October 2021. During this period, we had three Collaborating Organizations (Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan, SaskAbilities, City of Yorkton) actively providing services and programs in the region (Yorkton and surrounding rural communities). We presented our achievements and impacts at four levels: impacts at the individual level, organizational or system level, community level, and policy level.

Over the course of 2 years, our Collective Impact project has made significant progress at the **individual level** including:

- Our Life Enrichment program, launched by SaskAbilities in June 2021, provided direct services to 16 individuals with dementia and their care partners across 5 communities in the region (Yorkton, Melville, Canora, Esterhazy, Theodore). The program facilitators provided approximately **76 hours** (75 hours and 50 minutes) of services and travelled **1476 KM** within **4 months**.
- Our Needs Assessment program, run by the Parkland Valley Sports Culture and Recreation, engaged **8 individuals with lived experience** across **5 communities** (Yorkton, Melville, Preeceville, Sturgis, and Kamsack).
- Our Audit Program, designed and implemented by the City of Yorkton, engaged **4 individuals with lived experience** including one couple from **Kamsack** and one couple from **Melville**.
- Our Public Awareness program, run by the Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan, reached out to approximately 6,000 individuals in the region through 13 social media posts.

Our achievements at the **organizational level** include:

- Reaching out to **64 organizations and businesses** across **15 communities** in the region
- Developing **29 referrals** across Collaborating Organizations and other local community organizations
- Auditing **12 public facilities** affiliated the City of Yorkton

Our achievements at the **community level** include:

- Hosting **19** virtual ABC's of dementia presentations- **2 Yorkton-specific** presentations
- **495 Registrants** in the ABC's of dementia presentations- **44 registrants from the region**
- Reaching out to approximately **22,000 households** in the region through ad mail
- Sending **10 mass emails** to **600 individuals and organizations** in the region
- **8 weeks radio campaign** to promote signs of dementia
- Reaching out to **16 communities** in the region



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**Achievements
and impacts are
presented at the
individual,
organizational,
community
& policy level.**

Our impacts at the **policy level** include:

- Project being presented and promoted at local legislative and policy making bodies (Melville City Council)
- Planning to use the audit program findings and recommendations in the City of Yorkton Capital Planning budget cycle for 2022
- Engagement of City of Yorkton's Mayor in the Community Table

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We are applying what we have learned from our community...

Process Evaluation

We have been conducting a process evaluation since February 2022. Our process evaluation aims to evaluate the context as well as the design and implementation of the Collective Impact project including the learning culture and the five core elements of Collective Impact (i.e. common agenda, backbone support, mutually reinforcing activities, shared measurement system, continuous communication). This evaluation helps explore, among other things, how, why, under what conditions and context, and to what extent the Collective Impact process and its 5 core elements are designed and implemented. It also explores the relationships among the five core elements; for instance, the extent to which data from the shared measurement system supports continuous communication and mutually reinforcing activities.

We have conducted 24 interviews with the members of Collaborating Organizations (11 interviews), members of Community Table (6 interviews), Backbone Management Group (4 interviews), and members of Advisory Committee (3 interviews).

We are currently analysing the interview data and a final report will be released in a couple of months. However, with our real-time evaluation approach, we are applying what we have learned from our community during interviews. As an example, we learned that we need to make some adjustments to the structure and format of our community table meetings to optimize members' time and we made these adjustments.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Everyone is welcome to attend the following upcoming events:



COMMUNITY TABLE MEETING

June 23 @ 1:30pm CST (Virtual)

Join the project team and community members for the next Community Table meeting. For more information, email Michelle: michelle.harazny@uregina.ca



ABC'S OF DEMENTIA PRESENTATION

July 15 @ 2pm CST (Virtual)

Learn the warning signs of dementia through an online presentation by the Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan. To register, visit: [Alzheimer Society Website](#)



UPCOMING NATIONAL CONFERENCE

October 20-22 @ Delta Hotel, Regina

The Canadian Association on Gerontology's annual conference will take place in Regina this year. Participate in Canada's premier multidisciplinary conference for those interested in individual and population aging: [CAG2022 Website](#)

FEATURED RESOURCE



Canadian Red Cross Friendly Calls Program

The Friendly Calls program is free and is available to any adult who feels they could benefit from more social interaction. At a regularly scheduled time, Red Cross personnel call the people with whom they are paired for a social chat, connecting them, if needed, with resources available in their community. To learn more, visit: [Canadian Red Cross Website](#)

Thank You!

Thank you to all members of the Collaborating Organizations, Community Table, and Advisory Committee, who have participated in the project as part of the Collective Impact approach.

We greatly appreciate your contributions and engagement!

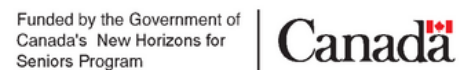
COLLABORATING ORGANIZATIONS



BACKBONE ORGANIZATION



FUNDER



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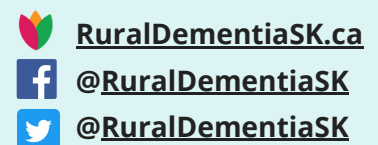
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