



*Photo courtesy of the UofS Cognitive Kitchen Project Spotlight on page 10-11*

## MESSAGE FROM THE PROJECT TEAM

We are pleased to provide an update on the Dementia Supports in Rural Saskatchewan initiative. Since our last update, a new memory clinic in Esterhazy was introduced, and a project was launched in the Métis community of Île-à-la-Crosse, allowing for new opportunities within the project's scope of addressing dementia stigma and isolation in rural communities. As we move into the project's final year, we will continue discussing the sub-project's sustainability and prepare for the Windup Summit in June 2024.

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# Dementia Supports in Rural Saskatchewan

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

The project team at the University of Regina is collaborating with other provincial and local organizations to design and implement individual, community and organizational level interventions that enhance social inclusion of older adults with dementia living in small towns and rural communities in Saskatchewan.

### **RADAR RURAL & REMOTE MEMORY CLINICS**

UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

A project that supports greater social inclusion of people living with dementia by building capacity and establishing services for dementia diagnosis and ongoing management directly in local rural communities.

### **COGNITIVE KITCHEN**

UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

A project that invites older adults living with dementia and their care partners to prepare food together and socialize.

### **CITY OF YORKTON**

A project to encourage public facilities in Yorkton to be more inclusive and accessible.

### **PARKLAND VALLEY DISTRICT**

A project to assess business and community services and programs.

### **BELONG WHERE YOU FIND YOURSELF**

GODFREY DEAN ART GALLERY

A project that invites older adults living with dementia and their care partners to create and exhibit art.

### **PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN**

ALZHEIMER SOCIETY OF SASKATCHEWAN

A project that focuses on building awareness and reducing stigma.

### **ÎLE-À-LA-CROSSE**

UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN &  
SAKITAWAK ELDERS GROUP

A project that enhances the quality of life of Métis people aging with dementia and their families/caregivers, through social inclusion in the Métis community of Île-à-la-Crosse.

### **DEMENTIA FRIENDLY LIFE ENRICHMENT PROGRAM**

SASKABILITIES

A project to enhance the Quality of Life of individuals living with dementia.

<https://www.ruraldementiask.ca/>



# A Collective Impact Approach

Selected organizations from different sectors will work together to build a collective impact approach based on their shared vision.

The objective of this collective impact approach is to implement interventions at three levels:



## Individual Level

Providing individuals living with dementia and their care partners an opportunity to participate in activities that build social connections.



## Community Level

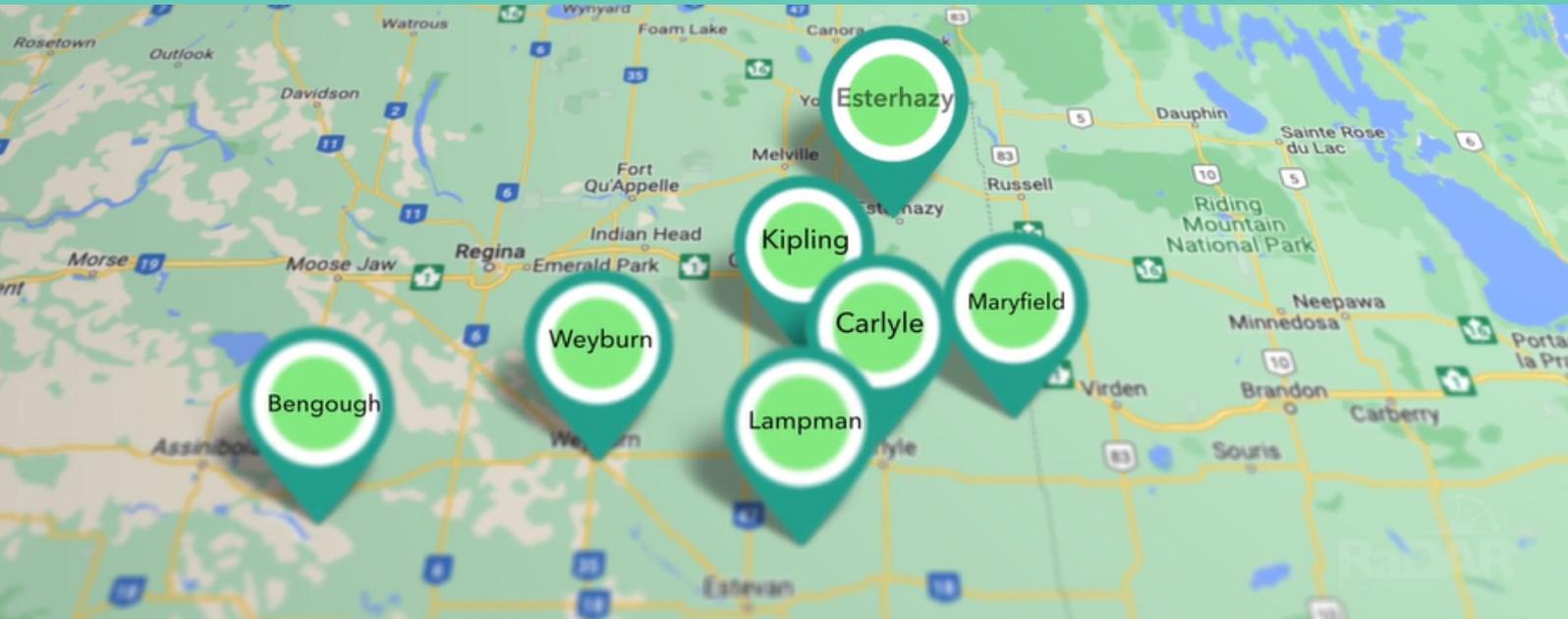
Supporting communities with tools to engage those living with dementia and their care partners to participate fully in community life.



## Organization Level

Engaging businesses and organizations to adopt policies and practices that facilitate those living with dementia and their care partners to fully access their services.

# NEW MEMORY CLINIC



RaDAR Memory Clinic in Esterhazy Video:  [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7R\\_M81Y9Plg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7R_M81Y9Plg)

## Rural Dementia Action Research memory clinic launched in Esterhazy - UofR Press Release

The University of Regina's Dementia Supports in Rural Saskatchewan (DSRS) team, working in collaboration with the University of Saskatchewan's Rural Dementia Action Research (RaDAR) team, have established a memory clinic in the Esterhazy District Medical Clinic. The clinic provides assessment and management support for people with symptoms or concerns about dementia, including memory loss.

"The RaDAR memory clinic project is one of several projects we are supporting in the Yorkton - Melville area that seeks to improve the quality of life of people living with dementia in rural and smaller urban communities," said Dr. Bonnie Jeffery with the Faculty of Social Work, University of Regina.

Led by Dr. Mandi Nel, the Esterhazy memory clinic team includes a home care nurse, occupational therapist, pharmacist, and Alzheimer Society First Link Coordinator. The clinics, held once a month initially, will serve two clients, one in the morning and one in the afternoon.

Each half-day appointment will begin with a team meeting with the patient and family to discuss their concerns and review the appointment plan. Each team member will then assess the patient separately. At the end of the appointment, the team will meet with the patient and family to discuss recommendations and a care plan.

"The RaDAR memory clinics provide access to dementia diagnosis and support in rural communities, saving travel to specialists. We are excited to launch another clinic in Esterhazy with the outstanding team there," said Dr. Debra Morgan, Professor and Chair of Rural Health Delivery at the Canadian Centre for Rural and Agricultural Health in the Department of Medicine, University of Saskatchewan.

# NEW MEMORY CLINIC

...continued

The memory clinic model, developed as part of an ongoing intervention study by the RaDAR team at USask, is based on best practices in primary care for people living with dementia. The model consists of inter-professional team-based care, decision support tools, and specialist-to-provider support. The first one-day RaDAR memory clinic was held by the Kipling primary health care team in 2017. Since then primary health care teams have established clinics in Weyburn, Bengough, Carlyle, Maryfield, Lampman, and now Esterhazy.

The DSRS project team at the U of R collaborates with the Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan and other provincial and local organizations to design and implement individual, community and organizational level interventions to improve the social inclusion of older adults with dementia who live in small towns and rural communities in Saskatchewan.

The RaDAR memory clinic is part of the Interventions to Enhance Social Inclusion of Older Adults with Dementia in Saskatchewan, a five-year project funded in-part by the Government of Canada's New Horizons for Seniors Program, that focuses on raising awareness of the stigma and social isolation experienced by people with dementia and their care partners. The project is being conducted through the Saskatchewan Population Health and Evaluation Research Unit (SPHERU), a bi-university research centre at the University of Regina and University of Saskatchewan.



Check out the DSRS project presentations part of the virtual RaDAR Summit held in November 2023

The screenshot shows a presentation slide with the following content:

- Header:** Dementia Supports in Rural Saskatchewan, Esterhazy RaDAR Memory Clinic: Development and Implementation, Debra Morgan<sup>1</sup>, Julie Kosteniuk<sup>1</sup>, Megan O'Connell<sup>1</sup>, Dallas Seitz<sup>2</sup>, Valerie Elliot<sup>1</sup>, & Chelsie Cameron<sup>1</sup>.  
<sup>1</sup>University of Saskatchewan, <sup>2</sup>University of Calgary
- Background:** Rural older adults may experience barriers to accessing specialized services and resources including delays in dementia diagnosis and management.<sup>1,2</sup> Primary care professionals have a good understanding of the medical and personal circumstances of patients and families<sup>3</sup> and offer a familiar environment where concerns can be raised related to cognition or behaviour.<sup>4</sup> Canadian experts recommend that dementia diagnosis and management occur mainly within collaborative primary care settings, with referrals to specialists and resources as needed.<sup>5</sup> Interprofessional 1-day primary care memory clinics in rural Saskatchewan communities have been developed in collaboration between RaDAR and local primary health care teams (Kipling, Weyburn, Bengough, Carlyle, Maryfield, and Lampman).
- Objective:** With funding from Dementia Supports in Rural Saskatchewan, our objective was to implement and sustain 1-day rural memory clinics in the Yorkton and Esterhazy areas.
- Map:** A map of Saskatchewan showing the locations of RaDAR Memory Clinic Sites: Kipling, Weyburn, Bengough, Carlyle, Maryfield, Esterhazy, and Lampman.
- Team Photo:** A group photo of the Esterhazy RaDAR Memory Clinic Team (l to r): Carolee Zorn, Jenna Kulovany, Holly Scheier, Glenda Erickson, Dr. Mandi Nel, Lori Henderson, Kristin Lomenka, Kallie Bomberak, Deborah Mitsella.
- Team List:**
  - Esterhazy Memory Clinic Team
  - Family Physician (Lead)
  - Home Care Nurses
  - Occupational Therapist
  - Community Pharmacist
  - Alzheimer Society First Link Coordinator
  - Primary Health Care Facilitator
  - Esterhazy Population: 2,345 plus surrounding area
- Footer:** First memory clinic held June 2023

<https://www.ruraldementiask.ca/community-presentations/>

For more information, please contact:

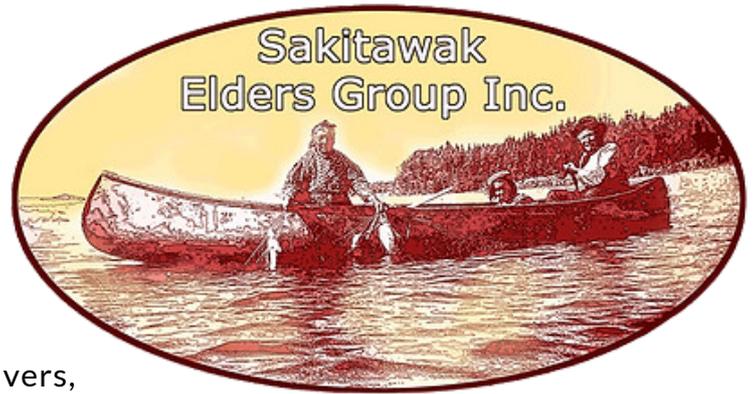
**Dr. Debra Morgan**

Canadian Centre for Health & Safety in Agriculture  
College of Medicine, University of Saskatchewan

debra.morgan@usask.ca



## Addressing Dementia in the Community of Île-à-la-Crosse



To enhance the quality of life of Métis people aging with dementia, and their families/caregivers, through social inclusion in the Métis community of Île-à-la-Crosse. This project will work with the Sakitawak Elders Group established in the community.

### Program Delivery

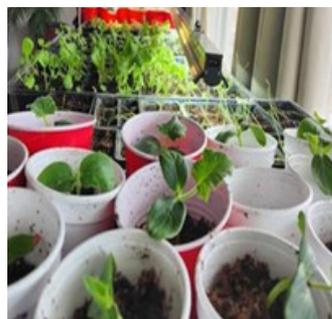
A Métis community-based intergenerational dementia support group will provide guidance, expertise, and oversight of the 15-month early intervention planning and implementation.



The intervention began with a planning meeting of the Métis intergenerational dementia support group for a community-wide launch/workshop, which constituted the first intervention activity. This workshop will unite diverse community members aging with dementia, their families and caregivers, including other key community decision-makers, health professionals, and service leaders. Youth from the community supported the launch event and will be included throughout all intervention activities.

Events will include food, entertainment (music, art, and other activities) integrated with conversations and questions about the intervention activities, as is the norm for Métis gatherings. A Métis artist will engage in the intervention by capturing conversations, ideas, and stories via visual notetaking and storyboarding.

Seasonal activity-centred visiting will be organized, such as beading, jam making, cooking, puzzles, art, carving, gardening, walking and harvesting, with opportunities to link with youth during these activities. The coordinator will also convene monthly meetings of the intergenerational support group generating such deliverables as videos, podcasts, radio & call-in shows, family support guides, and facilitated discussions.



For more information, please contact:  
Edna Daigneault  
Sakitawak Elders Group  
Community Member  
jimieddy20@gmail.com  
306-941-0019

## Dementia Friendly Life Enrichment Program: Sustainability

By Jackie Washenfelder, Program Manager  
SaskAbilities Yorkton Branch



SaskAbilities is proud to be part of the collaborative effort that launched the Dementia Friendly Life Enrichment Program. This program aims to enhance the quality of life of individuals living with dementia in Yorkton and surrounding rural communities.

Two Dementia Friendly Facilitators work with individuals and their families to develop person centred plans. These plans will guide personalized programming and activities that will be facilitated in the individual's home and community. By engaging in people's communities, the program also aims to increase overall awareness of dementia, thus creating dementia friendly communities.

On September 25, 2023 SaskAbilities hosted a Community Partners and Stakeholder Meeting with the purpose of facilitating an Environmental Scan and Collaborative Discussion for supporting individuals living with dementia. Discussions of identifying available programs and services was facilitated and several concerns, barriers and/or challenges were identified.

The Dementia Friendly Life Enrichment program was specifically discussed by participants. Care Partners noted the immense value and support that the program provided, and continues to be, for them. It was further felt that although advancement of the disease may eventually require placement in long term care, transition for the individual with dementia from home to the long care home, may not have been as difficult as initially anticipated. Remaining in the community setting as long as possible was of great importance.

This was echoed by the community stakeholders in attendance. It was also noted that there has been inquiry and interest for the program to be implemented in other communities. There is a commitment to ongoing work towards sustainability of the program beyond June 2024.

**For more info about the Dementia Friendly Life Enrichment program, please contact:**  
**Jackie Washenfelder**  
**Program Manager**  
**SaskAbilities - Yorkton Branch**  
**1-833-444-4126**  
**[jwashenfelder@saskabilities.ca](mailto:jwashenfelder@saskabilities.ca)**

## Belong Where You Find Yourself: Presentations

By Amber Phelps Bondaroff, Artist-Facilitator  
Godfrey Dean Art Gallery in Yorkton

Lead artists Alana Moore and Amber Phelps Bondaroff oversaw four community presentations and artist talks in November in Yorkton, Saltcoats, and Melville. These events were intended to share information about the Belong Where You Find Yourself project with broader audiences impacted by dementia, in the home communities of participating artists. These events also served to hold space for connection and community support amongst participants, as the project reaches the end of its more than two-year timeline.



Presentations were held at the Yorkton District Nursing Home, Yorkton Library, Saltcoats Library, and Melville Community Works on the first and last weekends of November. Amber and Alana spoke about the project in its entirety, before inviting featured artists to speak in more detail about their work and experiences with Belong Where You Find Yourself. Participating artists spoke sincerely about their experiences over the last two years, sharing many personal challenges and triumphs along the way. Presentations included time for questions from the audience, which often transformed into meaningful conversation amongst those in attendance, many of whom had personal experiences in navigating dementia.

Included in these presentations were, photos from the exhibition at the Godfrey Dean Art Gallery in the spring of 2023, as well as documentation assembled from the two years spent working together as a community. Additionally, clips were screened for the first time, from a forthcoming documentary about the project, by Regina-based filmmaker Adrienne 'Sunny' Adams. Sunny was in attendance at the events to gather more footage and share about her experiences so far in working on the film. The film is scheduled to be completed early in 2024 with plans to distribute it to a broad viewing audience across the country, and possibly beyond.



For more info about the *Belong Where You Find Yourself* program, please contact:

**Amber Phelps Bondaroff**  
Artist-Facilitator  
Godfrey Dean Art Gallery  
amberpb@gmail.com



## Community Momentum in Rural Saskatchewan

By Denine Hilderman,  
Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan

Since May 2021, the Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan has been an active and supporting partner in the Dementia Supports in Rural Saskatchewan project in Yorkton, Melville, and the surrounding rural communities. Our central goal throughout the project, has been to reduce stigma and isolation that is experienced by people who are affected by dementia, by helping rural residents learn more about dementia and dementia friendly communities.



Saltcoats Public Library has hosted the Alzheimer Society for two public presentations about dementia and the branch has also introduced dementia friendly signage to help people with dementia better navigate their space.

To help support our project goals, we created a new staff position, known as our Dementia Community Coordinator. Our Dementia Community Coordinator, Jackie Hofstrand, has been working with businesses, organizations, shared interest groups, and local clubs in Yorkton, Melville, and the surrounding areas over the past three years, providing education and resources to help them become more welcoming and accessible to people living with dementia and their care partners.

*“When I first approached some businesses in the area about the Alzheimer Society’s dementia friendly initiatives, they did not think they served customers who have dementia. Because so much misunderstanding exists around dementia, lots of people I spoke with only thought about it in terms of the final stage where the person is living in long-term care. But, the majority of people living with dementia live in their homes and want to participate in community life.” - Jackie Hofstrand*

Throughout Jackie’s tenure in this role, the Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan was able to engage 28 organizations across 20 communities in rural Saskatchewan.

The most remarkable part of the project, however, is not a number – it’s the community-minded individuals we met along the way who recognized the importance of increasing their knowledge of dementia. It’s the businesses, organizations, and community members who have committed to using that new knowledge in their everyday interactions and are working to increase the inclusion of people living with dementia, their families, and care partners. They are the people who are making the lasting impact in the project area.

*“During my time in this role, I have seen how our communities really build who we are and what we do. I am truly grateful for getting the chance to work with so many organizations - both formal and informal - as they began to see why being inclusive to those living with dementia is so needed and important. It has been a privilege being a part of so many learning journeys.” - Jackie Hofstrand*

Although her contract ended in December 2023, the work and support for people living with dementia in Yorkton, Melville, and surrounding rural communities has not.

Carolee Zorn, our First Link Coordinator for Yorkton and East-central Saskatchewan, is still available to connect individuals and families to local programs and services for people living with dementia and their care partners. Phone: 306-786-3600 or email: [sunrise@alzheimer.sk.ca](mailto:sunrise@alzheimer.sk.ca)



## What is Cognitive Kitchen?

*"It's a lot of fun!"*



Sub-project SPOTLIGHT presented at the Community Table Meeting on October 5, 2023

Cognitive kitchen is a culinary nutrition intervention that pairs evidence-based eating strategies and lifestyle habits with socialization to support dementia prevention or living well with dementia. The idea germinated about supporting persons with dementia and their care partners in navigating this complex world of nutrition and nutrition misinformation. Practical indications and research being collected indicate that better nutrition can help increase quality of life and delay the progression of dementia.

The psychosocial benefits of cooking include improving attitudes towards nutritional health and cooking and self-efficacy around culinary health and socialization. Socialization has a vital and valuable role in dementia, prevention and quality of life. Recommendations for healthy eating and socialization such as those in Canada's Food Guide are essential to nutritional health.

*Each session has a theme and a cognitive kitchen program book.*

Each session in the six-week Cognitive Kitchen program is about two hours. Participants learn about nutrition strategies through an educational component led by a Registered Dietitian and 2-3 recipes are selected for demonstration. Participants either prepare the dishes together with provided ingredients in person, or purchase the ingredients in advance to follow along virtually. Participants typically take home several servings of the food prepared in person following an opportunity to eat together in class. For the virtual sessions, participants are invited to submit receipts for their ingredients and receive reimbursement of up to \$50/session x 6 sessions.

### Cognitive Kitchen Sessions:

- 1) **"Nutritious, Delicious, Connect with Us,"** we capture the important ways food supports our physical, emotional, and social well-being.
- 2) **"Bringing Science to the Table,"** where we dive into what risk reduction and living well with a condition look like.
- 3) **"To Taste"** This session aims to inspire creativity in the use of flavours and emphasizes the importance of taste for our nutritional health and well-being.
- 4) **"To Share"** In this session, we explore the ways cooking and eating with others serve our well-being, which can become particularly important when someone is living with dementia.
- 5) **"Minute Meals and Top Kitchen Tips"** This session focuses on practical, time-saving strategies to support eating well.
- 6) **"Around the World,"** where we talk about Blue Zones, dementia-friendly communities and dementia-friendly kitchens and meals.

**COGNITIVE KITCHEN** No cost to participate!

- A 6-session social cooking class ft. discussions on strategies to support dementia risk reduction and living well with dementia
- Two streams available:**
  - One for adults 55+
  - One for care partners of people living with dementia
    - We welcome people living with dementia to attend the program most suitable for them
- Open to SK residents - Virtual and in-person options available**
  - In-person offerings in communities within a 150 km radius of Yorkton
  - Priority given to participants living in rural SK

**To Sign Up:** Scan the QR code or enter the link below to complete the intake survey to express your interest  
[www.surveymonkey.ca/r/cognitivekitchenintake](http://www.surveymonkey.ca/r/cognitivekitchenintake)  
 OR  
 Contact the Cognitive Kitchen Coordinator at [julie.beitel@usask.ca](mailto:julie.beitel@usask.ca) or (306) 966-5303

The optional research component of this program has received ethical approval from the University of Saskatchewan Behavioural Research Ethics Board (Beh #4108).

UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN  
 Dementia Supports in Rural Saskatchewan  
 Funded in part by the Government of Canada's New Horizons for Seniors Program  
 Canada 150

# PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

## Experiences Running a Mobile Cooking Program: A Reflection from Cognitive Kitchen Coordinator, Julie Beitel

With the first of our in-person Cognitive Kitchen programs wrapped until spring of this year, I'd like to reflect on the exciting journey it has been so far. There is no guidebook on running a mobile cooking program 3 ½ hours from the place you call home! I am so grateful to all of the communities who welcomed our team of two in. We were met with so much support as we navigated new kitchen spaces, boil water advisories, and even a tire blowout halfway through our trip one early morning! Changing that tire on the side of the highway was made slightly more challenging with a packed vehicle of ingredients and equipment, so we were especially grateful when a stranger turned back on his way to Saskatoon to offer us assistance and ensure we got safely on our way. While we made every effort to be prepared to take the kitchen from place to place by stocking our vehicle with portable cook tops and several bins of essentials, the most important component was adaptability.



### Red Lentil Crepes

🍴 4-5 crepes ⌚ 20 mins + time to soak  
split red lentils

#### Why this works

Soaked split red lentils add a boost of protein and fibre to this twist on the traditional delicate French pancake.

I look forward to the next of our virtual classes coming soon, where we have two streams available: one for care partners and people living with dementia and one for adults 55+ interested in learning about reducing risk factors for dementia.

### Ingredients

- 1/2 cup **split red lentils**, rinsed well and soaked for 4 hrs, or overnight
- 3/4 cup **milk**
- 1/2 cup **all-purpose flour**
- 1 **egg**
- 1 TBSP **sugar**
- 1 tsp **vanilla extract**
- 1 pinch **salt**
- 1 TBSP **canola oil**
- **butter, margarine, oil, or cooking spray**, for greasing pan

### Suggested Toppings

- strawberries
- banana
- peanut butter

In both streams, we discuss lifestyle practice that are beneficial to support dementia risk reduction and living well with dementia, but we adapt our discussions and the pacing depending on participants' preferences. More in-person sessions will be scheduled in the spring in communities within a 150 km radius of Yorkton and we welcome people to express their interest in these at any time. Participants will be contacted by email or phone when a program is scheduled to suit their interests.

## Upcoming Sessions

### Cognitive Kitchen for Carepartners and People Living with Dementia (CK-CP)

Wednesdays | 11am-1pm

OR

Wednesdays | 4:30-6:30pm

Expected Start Date: January 24, 2024



### Cognitive Kitchen for Adults 55+ Interested in Dementia Risk Reduction (CK-OA)

Tuesdays 5:30-7:30pm

Expected Start Date: January 23, 2024

To express your interest in either the virtual or in-person Cognitive Kitchen sessions, the best option is to complete the program intake survey located at [www.surveymonkey.ca/r/cognitivekitchenintake](http://www.surveymonkey.ca/r/cognitivekitchenintake) as it allows us to gather some important information to tailor the program to your needs. However, if preferred, we can arrange to register you over the phone. Please contact me at [julie.beitel@usask.ca](mailto:julie.beitel@usask.ca) or by phone at (306) 966-5303 if you prefer to register by phone.

Please note, the expected start dates are when a 30-min orientation session will be held. There will then be 6 consecutive classes held during the scheduled timeslot. Participants will receive a program workbook with recipes and will be emailed a grocery list each week. Reimbursement for groceries up to \$50/session (x6 sessions) is available. **PAGE 11**

## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

OCTOBER 2022 TO APRIL 2023

### Impacts at the Individual Level



“[CP] seems to be less anxious about others knowing about her partner's dementia at this point, and she mentioned how this project has helped her come to terms with this new reality...she has been involved in other research and outreach groups to help raise awareness about dementia and to lessen the stigma. This was a massive shift for [CP] who started off not wanting her neighbors to know about [PLWD's] diagnosis.” Lead Artist, GDAG Program

### Impacts at the Organizational and System Level

Requests for training from Organizations:

- The Good Spirit Housing Authority and Foam Lake Credit Union invited the Dementia Community Coordinator (DCC) to provide guidance on creating a dementia friendly environment. The Good Spirit Housing Authority specifically requested a presentation for their staff. These invites were a direct result of the DCC's engagement with attendees during the Springside Community Resource Center event.
- The Yorkton Family Resource center has requested recommendations on space alterations and orientation for six staff so that they can provide supportive environments for grandparents accompanying families to participate in the center's activities and programming.

Networking between Collaborating Organizations:

The ASOS DCC worked with the Lead Artists at the GDAG to promote the art exhibition for the community and handled the information session for SaskAbilities participants during one of the social outing events. These networking events enable participants to connect in person with the First Link Coordinator.

### Impacts at Community Level

- More businesses are accommodating of the SaskAbilities program's group outing in different rural locations and venues. For example, many restaurants allow private areas for group programming to occur.
- New Partnerships are developing among healthcare providers working together to provide services for dementia diagnosis and management in their local communities. The team for the new memory clinic in Esterhazy includes professionals from the Esterhazy District Medical Clinic, the Primary Health Care (PHC) Services department at the Saint Anthony's Hospital, Esterhazy, and the PHC Services department in Melville, a Community Pharmacist and the Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan Sunrise Resource Centre First Link Coordinator in Yorkton.
- Three pharmacies sponsored the the ABCs presentation at the Golden Jets Senior center which had 70 persons in attendance. The Dementia Community Coordinator shared information packages including the Dementia Friendly Pharmacies toolkit with the sponsoring pharmacies.

...continued

## Impacts at Policy Level

- The Yorkton RCMP, Yorkton Tribal Council, and the area MLA Greg Ottenbreit's office participated in the Dementia in Our Communities Stakeholder Lunch. The event aimed at sharing current efforts to promote dementia friendliness and engaging with stakeholders about collaborative possibilities to achieve a shared community goal of making their communities more dementia friendly.
- The Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) leadership has been collaborating in the process of establishing the first RaDAR memory clinic.

*"PLWD was just blown away with the scenery and she was able to name equipment in the fields like the combines and trucks hauling grain. She even called the grain cart by its correct name. I have not seen her this happy in a long time, she was smiling and saying how she was extremely joyful to have this time out. She mentioned you can only look at the four walls for so long."*

DFF SaskAbilities Program

## Success story: Importance of champions in the Saltcoats community

The Saltcoats Library and Laketown Leaders in May 2022, was inspired to take a more active role in advocating for dementia friendly changes. She contacted the Dementia Community Coordinator of the Alzheimer's Society who helped draft a letter to the town council requesting permission to tour the community-run buildings and provide feedback. Changes recommended for seating at the Library have been addressed and their board is reviewing options of purchasing a large print. The DCC also visited the town office and the curling rink; recommendations included installing hooks on restroom doors to facilitate reach for patrons who used canes. The site managers were enthusiastic about these recommendations as they acknowledged that they had never thought about these easy fixes, which could have big impact for their patrons and make their setting more dementia friendly.



Lake Town Leaders and the Saltcoats Public Library were inspired to host an educational event and become more dementia-friendly after seeing the media posts and positive feedback and wanted the same opportunities for their community and area.

For more info about project evaluation, contact:  
**Dr. Nancy Akwen**  
Evaluation Coordinator  
Dementia Supports in Rural Saskatchewan  
(306) 337-3252  
nancy.sahakwen@uregina.ca

*"...this is nice, I have no artistic abilities or even a notion of what is art...It is nice to see her doing things that give her joy and something to share with family and friends when we visit and talk on the phone. She will show these to her sister tomorrow, because we are having them over"*

CP/ Artist, GDAG Program

# CAG2023

## Community Engaged Teaching, Research & Practice

October 26-28, 2023  
Toronto, Ontario, Canada



### "The 5-year grant period is over before you know it": Rethinking sustainability planning for enduring community-led dementia friendly interventions

Nancy Akwen, Akram Mahani, Bonnie Jeffery, Nuelle Novik, Tom McIntosh  
Saskatchewan Population Health and Evaluation Research Unit (SPHERU), University of Regina  
email address of the corresponding author: Nancy.Sakwen@uregina.ca



### Engagement of persons with lived experience of dementia in designing, implementing, and evaluating community-driven programs

Bonnie Jeffery, Akram Mahani, Nancy Akwen, Nuelle Novik, Tom McIntosh  
Saskatchewan Population Health and Evaluation Research Unit (SPHERU), University of Regina  
email address of the corresponding author: Bonnie.Jeffery@uregina.ca



#### Introduction

In collective impact initiatives, the sustainability of collaborating organizations' programs is the cornerstone upon which the legacy and lasting impacts of the collective impact are built. However, the main challenge lies in maintaining the momentum and funding beyond the initial project period. Organizations operating in small towns and rural areas may face particular challenges because of the dearth of stakeholders with the capacity to sponsor projects for extended periods. Hence, exploring additional pathways for longevity is vital for organizations to ensure sustainability.

#### Purpose

To identify organizational and community options to sustain project impact beyond grant period.

This paper draws on the Interventions to Enhance Social Inclusion of Older Adults with Dementia in Saskatchewan, a five-year project (2019-2024) funded by the New Horizons for Seniors Program (Employment and Social Development Canada).

The project has funded 08 Collaborating Organizations (COs) to implement interventions that promote awareness and enhance social inclusion of older adults living with dementia in small towns and rural communities in Saskatchewan.

#### Methodology

We interviewed 24 participants from Collaborating Organizations (11 interviews), Community Table (6 interviews), Advisory Committee (3 interviews), and Backbone Management Group (4 interviews) between February and April 2022 via Zoom. [1]

Data analysis: We employed a thematic framework analysis using a combined approach (deductive and inductive analyses) and focused on the factual and non-factual statements expressed in our interviews.

[1] Results presented here constitute part of a process evaluation, which analyzed the capacity of collaborating organizations to obtain resources to continue project operations, maximize the untapped potential within their communities and adjust their procedures to sustain dementia-friendly services.

#### Findings

**Rethinking Sustainability**  
Apart from relying on guaranteed funds, Organizations can sustain certain dementia interventions by adjusting their organizational operations and maximizing resources within their communities.

**Beyond business as usual for organizations**  
Re-evaluate the experience of the target population and adopt measures that enhance dementia awareness within other organizational operations.

Apply lessons learned about dementia-friendly initiatives that improve public awareness.

"...we can't continue this program the way that it was. But we now know things we didn't know before. And we do know that there's a need... so there's a way that we can integrate some of this into our other programming... they can take their learnings and experiences and apply them consistently on an organizational level. Even if this program never comes back in the way that it currently being run, that to me is sustainability. Because the system has worked something and is applying it." - Collaborating Organization Representative

**Leveraging community assets to promote and maintain dementia awareness**  
Smaller rural communities often have a solid network system that can provide a platform to collaborate with the community after project activities end.

Organizations have the opportunity to utilize these network systems to disseminate dementia relevant information, and maintain activities that improve public awareness, foster social inclusion and reduce the stigma and social isolation associated with dementia.

Faith based institutions, Recreation centres and Primary Healthcare Institutions count as major stakeholders within these networks:  
Example: Staff in Primary Healthcare offices can display or hand out material about organizations providing dementia related services in the region.

In rural communities, it is "...not so much what you know or what you're trying to give, it's who you know, and who's gonna back what you're about." - Collaborating Organization Representative

Organizations can successfully advocate for practical measures for persons living with dementia because local authorities are more likely to welcome proposals that create an inclusive environment for the whole community.

"...if you make a facility, you know, accessible with the ramp, well, that's good not only for seniors, but also people in wheelchairs, also mothers pulling pushing strollers... the whole broadness of some of the stuff that we do around making things Age Friendly for seniors, does support accessibility through the whole lifespan, and for others." - Collaborating Organization Representative

#### Conclusions

In the face of the limited availability of dementia care resources in rural communities, and increasing health and caregiver costs, avenues exist for organizations to build relationships with several partners in the community to sustain dementia awareness initiatives, thus promoting a more dementia friendly environment.

For some organizations providing dementia care services, public support is crucial for sustaining program activities beyond the project timeline and guaranteeing continued impact.

#### Introduction

The powerful slogan of "nothing for us without us" has been widely adopted in policy and practice change efforts to reinforce the opportunities for people with lived experience (PWLE) to be meaningfully engaged. Despite these efforts our knowledge of effective engagement practices is somewhat limited. The meaningful engagement of PWLE of dementia is arguably an untapped resource in research (Snowball et al., 2022) and policy and practice domains (Milton, 2016).

#### Objectives

To contribute to the learning about effective engagement strategies, we report on the activities and processes we have been employing during a Collective Impact project that addresses the necessary supports for persons with dementia and their care partners in rural Saskatchewan. Dementia Supports in Rural Saskatchewan is a five-year (2019-2024) initiative that is funded in part by the Government of Canada's New Horizons for Seniors Program. This funding has supported our team to distribute funds to local organizations to implement individual, community and organizational interventions that promote awareness, reduce stigma and enhance social inclusion of older adults living with dementia in small towns and rural communities in Saskatchewan.

#### Methodology

The data presented here are part of an ongoing evaluation of the overall initiative and are drawn from observations, document reviews, and interviews across the funded projects. Our analysis used qualitative approaches to summarize some of the key areas where we have engaged persons with dementia and their care partners in various levels of the project.



#### Findings

Our findings suggest 5 levels of engagement (individual, service/program, organizational, community, and policy) and strategies used at each level to capitalize on the tacit knowledge of PWLE of dementia in the design, implementation, and evaluation of community-driven programs.

**Individual:** Effective individual strategies use a person-centered approach to support the person with dementia in the shared-decision making to tailor services based on their needs and preferences.

Persons with dementia in a community-based art program determined how they wanted to be involved:

"It was really organic. You both melted with us and our family. You were both very calm. Didn't have any preconceived ideas of what we should do. But open to what we have in mind. You both came with great ideas, too." Care partner/Artist, Godfrey Dean Art Gallery project

Every person with dementia with the SaskAbilities Dementia Friendly Life Enrichment project has a person-centered plan that is updated regularly. Facilitators use the plans to organize individual and group activities for PLWD and their care partners. The person-centered care plan is a tool that can be adapted for home care and day wellness programs that provide services to persons with dementia.

**Service/Program:** Engagement of persons with lived experience in the design of services and programs can ensure that these are appropriately tailored to the needs of persons with dementia and their care partners.

The Godfrey Dean Art Gallery consulted PWLE of dementia in the community for the design, implementation and ongoing evaluation of the Belong Where You Find Yourself Project that aims to promote social inclusion, improve public awareness and reduce stigma around dementia through art creation and exhibition.

#### Organizational: Engagement as active members of the Advisory Committee in providing advice and direction on the most appropriate interventions to support in rural areas

The project lead sought advice on reviewing and supporting the co-design of the Godfrey Dean Art Gallery project.

**Community:** We have engaged with a network of community leaders/members through our Community Table meetings in order to provide a platform for stories of lived experience of dementia.

"...the most engaging stories for learning are lived experience stories. So, I think that [engaging persons with lived experience in the community table meeting] was a good idea to use that. And it doesn't matter if you're an expert in the area, hearing of someone's lived experience view is always, you know, interesting and beneficial. Just you know, continuing that model. People remember better when they have stories and emotional connections to it." - Advisory Committee member

**Policy:** Engaging people with lived experience of dementia in advising on specific policy changes that should be implemented by municipal government.

We engaged two couples with lived experience with the City of Yorkton Audit Program:

"We as people that work in our facilities, and in some instances, some of my colleagues have grown up in these facilities, if they played hockey or have been swimming, they don't take the built environment in the same way outsiders. So if [engaging persons with lived experience in the audit program] gave us some concrete examples, in a way that was very valuable." Manager of one public facility

#### Conclusions

The findings can be used as a framework to support organizations in redefining their engagement practices and rethinking how to meaningfully and sustainably engage PWLE in designing, implementing, and evaluating programs and in leading organizational policy and practice change. This poster describes some of the strategies that were used but what is still needed is an evaluation of the effectiveness of these strategies from the perspective of those with lived experience.

#### Acknowledgements

The Collaborating Organizations that participated in the process evaluation:  
The City of Yorkton  
SaskAbilities  
Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan  
Godfrey Dean Art Gallery  
Parkland Valley Sport, Culture and Recreation District

Poster presented at the 52nd Annual Scientific and Educational Meeting of the Canadian Association on Gerontology (CAG2023), Toronto, Ontario, October 26-28, 2023. Poster design by S. Mc Gee.

#### References

Wheeler, S. G., Hill, L. K., Brand, K. L., P. (2020). Implementation dynamics for sustainability planning in rural Canada. *The Journal of Rural and Community Development*, 45(2), 58-78.

Phillips, B., Carter, A. & Kirby, T. (2022). Exploring how to sustain "legacy" rural health systems research: offering rural health systems research a sustainability framework. *Healthcare Research Promotion*, 1-10.

Milton, S. (2016). *Nothing for us without us: people with dementia in the design of services, practice and research*. London: Sage.

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The Collaborating Organizations that participated in the collective impact initiative:

The City of Yorkton  
SaskAbilities (Yorkton)  
Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan  
Godfrey Dean Art Gallery  
Parkland Valley Sport, Culture and Recreation District

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Go far, Together.



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Dr. Bonnie Jeffery and Dr. Nancy Akwen presented posters at the 52nd Annual Scientific and Educational Meeting of the Canadian Association on Gerontology (CAG2023) held in Toronto Ontario from on October 26-28, 2023.

To view poster presentations:

<https://www.ruraldementiask.ca/resources-2/>

# UPCOMING EVENTS



## COMMUNITY TABLE MEETING

Spring 2024 - Date TBD (Virtual)

Join the project team and community members for the next Community Table meeting.



## WINDUP SUMMIT

Thursday, June 20, 2024

Dementia Supports in Rural Saskatchewan project windup to be held in Yorkton, SK.

# PODCAST

## Green Care Farms in the Media

Rebekah was interviewed by Elisa Birnbaum on the SEE Change podcast. Listen to the interview: *Nurturing Purpose for People with Dementia: Rebekah Churchyard of Green Care Farms*. SEE Change is a global digital magazine and podcast about social entrepreneurship.

**Podcast link:**

<https://www.seechangemagazine.com/nurturing-purpose-for-people-with-dementia-rebekah-churchyard-of-green-care-farms/>



# REPORTS

*Dementia Supports in Rural Saskatchewan* project's **Interventions to Enhance Social Inclusion for Persons Living with Dementia and Their Care Partners in Rural Saskatchewan** - Process Evaluation Report October 2023

**READ REPORT:**

<https://www.ruraldementiask.ca/evaluation/>



*Dementia Supports in Rural Saskatchewan* project's **Evaluation Report: City of Yorkton Facility Audit November 2023**

**READ REPORT:**

<https://www.ruraldementiask.ca/evaluation/>

# Thank you!



Thank you to the members of the Backbone Management Group, Collaborating Organizations, Community Table, and Advisory Committee, who have participated in the project as part of the Collective Impact approach. We greatly appreciate all your contributions and engagement!

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