

The Northern Cultural Assessment of Memory (N-CAM): A Protocol Designed to Detect Cognitive Change in Indigenous Seniors

Cognitive screens for Indigenous seniors must address the cultural bias of existing assessment protocols, and be developed in consultation with front-line health care workers and health managers who work with Indigenous seniors, including partners from Northern and remote settings. Clinical researchers and graduate students at the University of Saskatchewan's Rural and Remote Memory Clinic developed the Northern Cultural Assessment of Memory (N-CAM; Crossley et al., 2011; 2012) in partnership with Keewatin Yatthé Regional Health Authority (KYRHA) Home Care Service staff and managers, in consultation with Indigenous seniors and health care staff from the Saskatoon Community Clinic, and with support from the Indigenous Peoples Health Research Centre (IPHRC) and Northern Medical Services. Intended as a dementia screening protocol for Indigenous seniors, the N-CAM does not assume or require formal education or fluency in English. The protocol incorporates colourful and familiar materials, includes a story-telling component, and can be administered in the preferred language of the senior with the assistance of a bilingual family member or other caregiver. The N-CAM was designed primarily for home-based assessment by front-line health workers and includes family caregivers in the assessment of activities of daily living and changes in functional status.

M. Crossley, S. Lanting, H. St. Denis-Katz, M. E. O'Connell, N. Haugrud & D. Morgan. (2012, February). The Northern Cultural Assessment of Memory (N-CAM): Normative Data from an Inner-city Clinic Supports Efficacy and Validity of a Cognitive Screen for Aboriginal Adults. Poster presented at the 40th Annual Meeting of the International Neuropsychological Society in Montreal, Canada. *Journal of the International Neuropsychological Society*, 18(S1).

M. Crossley, S. Lanting, M. O'Connell, D. Morgan, & D. Daigneault (2011, March). A dementia screening protocol for Aboriginal seniors. The 26th International Conference of Alzheimer Disease International. Toronto.

If you would like to access the N-CAM or if you have any questions or concerns about the administration, scoring, or interpretation of the N-CAM, please contact Margaret Crossley at: margaret.crossley@usask.ca

Margaret Crossley, Professor Emerita (University of Saskatchewan), developed the N-CAM in collaboration with her graduate students and colleagues at the University of Saskatchewan. She is a member of the interdisciplinary Rural Dementia Action Research (RaDAR) team and the Canadian Consortium on Neurodegeneration in Aging (Team 20: Issues in Dementia Care in Rural and Indigenous Populations). Prior to her retirement from the UofS in 2012, Margaret taught in the areas of clinical and experimental neuropsychology, psychogerontology, and psychopathology and served as the Department of Psychology's Director of Clinical Psychology Training (2006-2012). She directed the Aging Research and Memory Clinic (1994-2004) and the neuropsychology team at the Rural and Remote Memory Clinic (2004-2012), a one-stop, telehealth-facilitated interprofessional assessment and consultation service initially developed through a CIHR Institute of Aging New Emerging Team (NET) grant and since supported by Saskatchewan Ministry of Health. Margaret researched cognitive indicators of normal aging and early stage dementia, and developed and evaluated interventions designed to improve quality of life for rural and remote residents with dementia and their family caregivers, including cognitive assessment protocols for Indigenous seniors.