



Dr. Debra Morgan, CCHSA Professor and Chair in Rural Health Delivery, has been leading the interdisciplinary RaDAR team since 2003. The team's goal is to improve dementia care in rural and remote settings.

RURAL DEMENTIA ACTION RESEARCH (RADAR) TEAM



SUMMIT OF THE KNOWLEDGE NETWORK IN RURAL AND REMOTE DEMENTIA CARE



Dr. Irene Blackberry

The RaDAR research program is guided by The Knowledge Network in Rural and Remote Dementia Care. The Network includes front-line health care providers and managers, people with dementia and family members, health region representatives, international researchers, and individuals from governmental and community-based organizations. The Network meets at the annual Rural Dementia Care Summit, the RaDAR team's key knowledge exchange event, where Network members provide input into new and ongoing research projects. Duane Minish directs Summit organization and coordination each year.

The RaDAR team held its 13th annual summit November 9 & 10, 2020. Summit 2020 was the team's first to be held as an online only virtual event. One hundred fifty-one individuals registered for the event that included a poster session and a mix of both live and pre-recorded presentations on a variety of dementia-related topics from a diverse group of presenters. Keynote speaker Dr. Irene Blackberry, John Richards Chair of Rural Ageing and Aged Care Research and Director of the John Richards Centre at La Trobe University, Wodonga campus, joined us at Summit from Australia.

More information about the Summit, including archived full presentations from many of the sessions, can be found on the RaDAR team's website under the Previous Summit tab: www.ruraldementiacare.usask.ca

BILOKRELI FAMILY TRUST FUND

The Bilokreli family have established the Bilokreli RaDAR Trust Fund and generously committed \$25,000 per year from 2015 through to 2017, and renewed the funding for 2018 to 2020. The fund supports RaDAR's research and knowledge exchange activities, including the Student Poster Prize at the annual Summit. This year's Bilokreli Student Poster Prizes were awarded to:

FIRST PLACE:
Karl Grewal and Michaella Trites
(co-presenters)

SECOND PLACE:
Virginia Deobald, and Meghan Flath
(tied)

THIRD PLACE:
August Kortzman



RURAL AND REMOTE MEMORY CLINIC

Due to COVID-19, and the closure of the University of Saskatchewan buildings to the public, the Rural and Remote Memory Clinic (RRMC) team had to adapt its way of providing services. RRMC services have switched to being provided entirely virtually. Patients and family members meet with the interdisciplinary team for assessment on one day using secure web-conferencing, or teleconferencing, depending on the technology available to them in their home. The clinic adapted its referral process for health care practitioners as well to better meet their needs during this time. Learn more at www.remotememoryclinic.ca about the services provided virtually to the people and health care providers in our province.

The RaDAR team implemented the Rural and Remote Memory Clinic (RRMC) in 2004, to provide diagnosis and management of atypical and complex cases of suspected dementia. The one-stop interdisciplinary clinic streamlines the assessment process by coordinating a complete team assessment on one day, and uses Telehealth videoconferencing for follow-up appointments. The RRMC was started as a research project and now receives funding from the Saskatchewan Ministry of Health to provide clinical services to Saskatchewan residents. Since 2004 over 753 patients have been seen in the clinic.

Several CCHSA-affiliated RRMC team members support the RRMC including: Leslie Holfeld (nurse); Duane Minish (psychometrist); Dr. Allison Cammer (dietitian); and Dr. Chandima Karunanayake (data

analyst). Other clinic team members include Dr. Andrew Kirk (neurologist), Dr. Megan O'Connell (neuropsychologist), Dr. Ivan Panyavin (staff in psychology), Jennifer Fairbairn (physical therapist), and Julie Jensen (physical therapist).

CANADIAN CONSORTIUM ON NEURODEGENERATION IN AGING (CCNA) PHASE II (2019-2024)

The CCNA was established by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research in April 2014 to address the growing prevalence of Alzheimer Disease and other dementias in Canada. The CCNA Phase II brings together over 350 researchers across 19 teams, including CCNA Team 15 Rural led by Drs. O'Connell and Morgan. As part of Team 15, the RaDAR team continues to sustain and evaluate the impact of 4 rural memory clinics established in southeast Saskatchewan in CCNA Phase I. This work is co-led by Drs. Morgan and Kosteniuk. Twelve Phase II projects are currently in progress. Included are projects examining patient quality of life and community service needs (interviews), patient characteristics and clinic team recommendations (electronic medical record data), and care partner service/support needs and self-efficacy (interviews).

CCNA hosts an annual in-person Partners Forum and Science Day (PFSD) which is attended by all 19 CCNA teams. Due to the pandemic, PFSD 2020 was held as a virtual event.



CIHR FOUNDATION GRANT (2016-2023)

Dr. Debra Morgan holds a multi-year CIHR Foundation Grant for the research program “Design and evaluation of integrated primary health care practice for dementia in rural and remote settings”. Co-investigators include Drs. Julie Kosteniuk, Megan O’Connell, Andrew Kirk, and Norma Stewart, and other Canadian and international experts.



Rural Memory Clinic team members from partner communities at the RaDAR Summit in November, 2019

The core of the Foundation program is to sustain rural PHC memory clinics that offer initial evaluation and management of individuals with suspected dementia, and scale-up the clinics to additional communities. Monthly 1-day memory clinics have been established in the southeast Saskatchewan communities of Kipling, Weyburn, Rural West (Bengough and Coronach), and Carlyle. Clinic team members include physicians, nurse practitioners, home care nurses, social workers, occupational therapists, physical therapists, and an Alzheimer Society First Link coordinator.

For more information about the Rural PHC Memory Clinics please visit:
https://cchsa-ccssma.usask.ca/ruraldementiacare/PHC_Clinics.php#Background

Nonpharmacological Interventions

- Training caregivers or staff
- Mental health consultations
- Participation in pleasant events
- Exercise
- Music
- Sensory stimulation (e.g. touch, Snoezelen, aromatherapy)

Cohen-Mansfield, Am J Geriatr Psychiatry, 2001
Livingston, Am J Psychiatry, 2005
Seitz, JAMDA, 2012



The RaDAR team provides continuing education opportunities for rural teams, like training sessions presented by geriatric psychiatrist, Dr. Dallas Seitz -- both in-person (pre-COVID) and online

The RESPECT project team (remote specialist-to-primary care education and support through technology) **led by Dr. Megan O’Connell** has conducted a systematic review of technology-based dementia education that can be used for remote education with rural PHC teams. We explored the accuracy of computerized neuropsychological testing battery, but based on our findings we decided to not trial this method of assessment. Instead, we are exploring use of a telephone administered neuropsychological battery to be tested with PHC teams as a means of specialist cognitive support for dementia diagnoses. Problems with remote assessment models led to the newly developed **RRMC2.0** that was funded by a SHRF/SCPOR SPROUT grant. In the RRMC2.0 model centralized assessments occur over the telephone and patients are triaged to different diagnostic pathways. For the most typically presenting cases, diagnoses will be made in collaboration with the RRMC2.0 staff psychologist and primary care providers. Finally, we developed an alternate method of remote specialist support with the Rural and Remote Memory Clinic-interventions (**RRMCi**) where we provide remote psychological interventions for rural PHC providers’ patients with dementia and their caregivers who are in need of treatments related to sleep disturbance, maximizing daily function with cognitive rehabilitation, psychological consequences of driving cessation (in development), increasing social support for caregivers, and social inclusion for older adults including those with dementia during the era of COVID-19.



Ivan Panyavin

Dr. Ivan Panyavin has continued to be actively involved with running the virtual Rural and Remote Memory Clinic (vRRMC), as well as the RRMC2.0 operations, providing diagnostic neuropsychological services to residents of rural Saskatchewan. He also continued to deliver individualized empirically derived treatment for chronic sleep disturbance, as well as cognitive rehabilitation services for individuals with cognitive impairment and their care partners. Dr. Panyavin has been supervising professional development of Doctoral trainees in Clinical Psychology and has contributed to a number of peer-reviewed publications, as well as a book chapter in a forthcoming volume titled *A Handbook of Cultural Diversity in Neuropsychological Assessment: Developing Understanding through Global Case Studies*.



Amanda Froehlich Chow

Dr. Amanda Froehlich Chow, an Assistant Professor in the School of Public Health at the University of Saskatchewan, is working with RaDAR to understand the team-based approaches interdisciplinary rural primary health care teams are employing. In addition, Dr. Froehlich Chow is collaborating with rural Indigenous communities to develop resources for supporting older adults to actively age in place in their rural and remote communities.



Juanita Bacsu

Projects led by **RaDAR Postdoctoral Fellows** contribute to the Foundation project aims. **Dr. Juanita Bacsu** and a team of researchers have started a new study using Twitter data to examine stigma of dementia during the COVID-19 pandemic. This study builds on her team’s latest publication in the Journal of Medical Internet Research (JMIR) that used Twitter data to explore the COVID-19 impact on people with dementia. She is also collaborating with a working group from CCNA’s Team 18 to conduct a scoping review protocol, and a review of reviews to appraise Indigenous cultural safety within healthcare delivery and identify specific implications for dementia care. Recently, Dr. Bacsu and her colleagues completed a commentary on improving the health equity and human rights of people with dementia during the COVID-19 pandemic using a social determinants approach. Dr. Bacsu is also collaborating with the Alzheimer Society of Canada to host a knowledge exchange webinar and discuss findings from her community-based research on stigma of dementia in rural areas.



Melanie Bayly

Dr. Melanie Bayly is investigating the experiences of patients and families who are assessed for dementia by rural memory clinic teams, in order to understand their perspective of the team-based model of care and how assessment processes could be improved. Additionally, Dr. Bayly and the RaDAR team are collaborating with the Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan to assess the benefits, challenges, and outcomes associated with the inclusion of a First Link coordinator in this team-based model. Mel has also been working on a meta-analysis of early-stage interventions for caregivers of persons with MCI and dementia, to assess their impact on caregiver wellbeing and ability to provide care.



Elham Movassagh

Dr. Elham Movassagh is working on the RRMC data to evaluate the nutrition risk of patients who were diagnosed with dementia or subjective cognitive impairment (SCI), using a nutrition screening tool named SCREEN (www.olderadultnutritionscreening.com). Questions on the SCREEN focuses on the weight change, appetite, eating difficulties, food preparation and, food group and fluid intake. SCREEN is developed to be used in community-dwelling older adults. In her project, Dr. Movassagh is investigating how higher level of dependency, depression, lower quality of life, comorbidity, and higher level of caregiver burden impact nutrition risk in people with dementia or SCI. Early identification of people with high nutrition risk and detecting the associated factors can lead to interventions that maintain the quality of life and decrease risk of hospitalization. This is the first study that uses SCREEN in people with dementia and SCI and it will contribute to the knowledge of nutrition risk screening in these groups.

Another RaDAR project recently underway, led by RaDAR team member **Valerie Elliot**, is an environmental scan to explore community programs providing post-diagnostic services to clients who might include RaDAR Rural Primary Health Care Memory Clinic patients and families in southeast Saskatchewan. This project will include focus groups with health care and service providers and a review of secondary sources of information conducted at two time-points over five years. Our goal is to better understand the availability of existing local community programs, current patient and family needs, program gaps and recommendations to address these gaps, and program changes or innovations over time. Focus groups and data extraction of secondary sources for the first time-point have now been completed and a process for adding the patient-family perspective via telephone interviews is currently being developed.

RADAR INITIATIVES

- Partnership with Saskatchewan Health Quality Council: Drs. Morgan, O'Connell, and Kosteniuk and the Saskatchewan Health Quality Council are conducting a number of ongoing projects involving administrative health data. One of the projects is investigating the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on people living with dementia in 4 provinces (PI Dr. Isabelle Vedel, McGill University) with Dr. Debra Morgan leading the Saskatchewan component. A recently completed project involved examining dementia rates and health care use in Saskatchewan First Nations in partnership with the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations (PI Dr. Jennifer Walker, Laurentian University).
- Synthesis Reviews: The RaDAR team utilizes a collaborative team-based approach to map, synthesize, and identify gaps in the evidence across several dementia-related areas. Topics related to individuals living with dementia that were explored in the first round of scoping reviews included: support and education access and needs, team-based primary health care, stigma, and multiple physical care transitions. Published reviews can be found on the RaDAR website www.ruraldementiacare.usask.ca under the Publications tab. Round two is currently underway and includes scoping reviews in the following areas: use of electronic medical records among interprofessional primary care teams (led by Julie Kosteniuk; currently under review), palliative care for people with dementia in rural areas (led by Valerie Elliot, published January 2021), and a systematic review on interventions for caregivers of people with mild cognitive impairment and early dementia (led by Melanie Bayly, currently under review).

RaDAR AFFILIATED STUDENTS & TRAINEES

- **Melanie Bayly**, PhD, Postdoctoral Fellow with Dr. Morgan. Dr. Bayly is working with RaDAR on needs and supports for individuals with dementia and their caregivers living in rural areas.
- **Julie Beitel**, BSc Nutrition student with Dr. Cammer completed an examination of urban and rural Registered Dietitian practice in long-term care homes during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Virginia Deobald**, Masters student, Nursing, with Dr. Shelley Peacock. Virginia's thesis is focused on non-pharmacological interventions for persons living with dementia while in long term care facilities from the nurse perspective.
- **Meghan Flath**, Masters student, Clinical Psychology with Dr. O'Connell, is working on a pet augmented social inclusion intervention for persons with cognitive impairment and dementia.
- **Ben Gould**, PhD student, Clinical Psychology with Dr. O'Connell is exploring Mi'kmaq community Mental Wellness needs, identifying and discovering appropriate approaches to improving aging and quality of Life.
- **Karl Grewal**, PhD student, Clinical Psychology with Dr. O'Connell is working on integrating sensor technology to measure daily function as an outcome measure for cognitive rehabilitation for persons living with dementia.
- **August Kortzman**, PhD student, Clinical Psychology with Dr. O'Connell, is working on developing a social network intervention that can be remotely delivered to rural caregivers of persons living dementia.
- **Erin Leeder**, MSc student in Nutrition with Dr. Cammer is working on a project using nutrition data from the Rural and Remote Memory Clinic.
- **Elham Movassagh**, PhD, Post-doctoral Fellow with Dr. Morgan. Dr. Movassagh joined the RaDAR team in October 2020 with a background and interest in aging diseases, and is engaged in projects evaluating associations between dementia and nutrition.
- **Seshni Naidoo**, MSc student in Nutrition with Dr. Cammer is examining the nutrition related support required in urban and rural house-model long-term care homes.
- **Andrea Scerbe**, PhD student, Clinical Psychology with Dr. O'Connell, is working on technology-based methods for remotely delivering dementia education to rural primary care providers.
- **Jake Ursenbach**, PhD student, Clinical Psychology with Dr. O'Connell, is working on differences in rural and urban dwellers in cognitive function, which has implications for assessment and dementia diagnosis for rural patients.

RECENT RaDAR PUBLICATIONS

PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL ARTICLES

- Bayly, M, O'Connell, M, Kortzman, A, Peacock, S, Morgan, D, Kirk, A. (accepted March 2021). Family caregivers' narratives of the financial consequences of young onset dementia. *Dementia: the international journal of social research and practice*
- Sutherland, M., Kirk, A., Karunanayake, C., O'Connell, M.E., Morgan, D. (accepted February 2021). What happens to the worried well? – Follow-up of Subjective Cognitive Impairment? *Canadian Journal of Neurological Sciences*
- Kosteniuk, J., Morgan, D., Elliot, V., Froehlich Chow, A., Bayly, M., Watson, E., Osman, M., Osman, B., O'Connell, M.E., Kirk, A., Stewart, N., Cammer, A., & Innes, A. (accepted August 2020). A scoping review of care trajectories across multiple settings for persons with dementia. *Canadian Journal on Aging/La revue Canadienne du vieillissement*.
- Bacsu, J., Johnson, S., O'Connell, M. E., Viger, M., Muhajarine, N., Hackett. P., Jeffery, B., Novik, N., & McIntosh, T. (Forthcoming, 2022). Stigma reduction interventions of dementia: A scoping review. *Canadian Journal on Aging*, 41(2).
- St. John, P., Menec, V., Tate, R., Newall, N., O'Connell, M. E., & Cloutier, D. (online ahead of print). Functional status in rural and urban adults – the Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging. *The Journal of Rural Health*.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/jrh.12578>
- Bacsu, J., O'Connell, M. E., Lisa, L., Poole, Wighton, M., Sivananthan, S., & Webster, C. (2021). A scoping review of COVID-19 experiences of people living with dementia. *Canadian Journal of Public Health*, 112, 400-411.
<https://doi.org/10.17269/s41997-021-00500-z>.
- Bacsu, J., O'Connell, M. E., Cammer, A., Grewal, K., Green, S., Poole, L., Azizi, M., Spiteri, R. J. (2021). Using Twitter to understand the COVID-19 experiences of people living with dementia: Infodemiology study. *JMIR*, 23(1), e26254. <https://doi.org/10.2196/26254>
- Elliot, V., Morgan, D., Kosteniuk, J., Bayly, M., Froehlich Chow, A., Cammer, A., O'Connell, M.E. (2021). Palliative and end-of-life care for people living with dementia in rural areas: A scoping review. *PLOS ONE*, 16(1): e0244976.
[doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0244976](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0244976)
- St. John, P., Menec, V., Newall, N., Coutier, D., O'Connell, M. E., Tate, R. (2021). Healthcare utilization among Canadian adults in rural and urban areas – the Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging. *Canadian Journal of Rural Medicine*, 26(2), 68-79. https://www.doi.org/10.4103/CJRM.CJRM_43_20
- O'Connell, M. E., Vellani, S., O'Rourke, H. M., Robertson, S., & McGilton, K. S. (2021). Going from 0 to 100 in remote dementia research: A practical guide. *JMIR*, 23(1), e24098. <https://doi.org/10.2196/24098>
- Stewart, N., MacLeod, M.L.P., Kosteniuk, J.G., Olynick, J., Penz, K.L., Karunanayake, C.P., Kulig, J.C., Labrecque, M.E., Morgan, D.G. (2020). The importance of organizational commitment in rural nurses' intent to leave. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*. 76(12), 3398-3417. [doi:10.1111/jan.14536](https://doi.org/10.1111/jan.14536)
- Geddes, M., R., O'Connell, M. E., Fisk, J. D., Gauthier, S., Camicioli, R., & Ismail, Z. (2020). Remote Cognitive and Behavioral Assessment: Report of the Alzheimer Society of Canada Task Force on Dementia Care Best Practices for COVID-19. *Alzheimer's & Dementia: Diagnosis, Assessment & Disease Monitoring*, 12, e12111.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/dad2.12111>
- Ursenbach, J., O'Connell, M.E., Kirk, A. & Morgan, D. (2020). Evidence for measurement bias of the Short Form Health Survey based on sex and metropolitan influence zone in a secondary care population. *Health and Quality of Life Outcomes*, 18, 1-10. [doi: 10.1186/s12955-020-01318-y](https://doi.org/10.1186/s12955-020-01318-y)
- Lindenbach, J., Larocque, S., Morgan, D.G. & Jacklin, K. (2020). Practitioner empowerment, older adult mistreatment, and dementia. *Canadian Journal on Aging/La revue Canadienne du vieillissement*, 1-15.
[doi:10.1017/S0714980820000136](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0714980820000136)
- Lindenbach, J., Larocque, S., Morgan, D.G. & Jacklin, K. (2020). Practitioner experience with mistreated older adults who have dementia: Understanding contextual influences and consequences. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*.
[doi:10.1177/0886260520943717](https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260520943717)

RECENT RaDAR PUBLICATIONS

PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL ARTICLES continued

- Jacklin, K., Pitawanakwat, K., Blind, M., O'Connell, M. E., Walker, J., Lemieux, A., & Warry, W. (2020). Developing the Canadian Indigenous Cognitive Assessment for use with Indigenous older Anishnaabe adults in Ontario, Canada. *Innovation in Aging*, 4(4), igaa038. <https://doi.org/10.1093/geroni/igaa038>
- Wong, J., Kirk, A., Perlett, L. Karunanayake, C., Morgan, D. & O'Connell, M.E. (2020). Characteristics of Young-onset and Late-onset Dementia Patients at a Remote Memory Clinic. *The Canadian Journal of Neurological Sciences*. 1-8. [doi:10.1017/cjn.2020.8](https://doi.org/10.1017/cjn.2020.8)
- Gould, B., O'Connell, M. E., MacQuarrie, C., & Bourassa, C. (2020). Mental wellness needs for two Indigenous communities: Bases for culturally competent clinical services. *Canadian Psychology/Psychologie canadienne*. <https://doi.org/10.1037/cap0000247>
- Bayly, M., Morgan, D., Froehlich Chow, A., Kosteniuk, J., & Elliot, V. (published online January 24, 2020). A scoping review of dementia-related education and support services availability, accessibility and use in rural areas: Barriers and promising solutions. *Canadian Journal on Aging / La Revue Canadienne Du Vieillessement*, 1-41. [doi: 10.1017/S0714980819000564](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0714980819000564)
- Robertson, O., Kirk, A., Karunanayake, C., Morgan, D., & O'Connell, M. E. (2020). Women and Men Presenting to a Rural and Remote Memory Clinic in Saskatchewan, Canada Show Similar Cognitive Findings for Dementia. *Alzheimer Disease and Associated Disorders*, 34(2), 183-187. [doi: 10.1097/WAD.0000000000000307](https://doi.org/10.1097/WAD.0000000000000307)

BOOKS

- O'Connell, M. E., Panyavin, I., Bearskin, L., Bourassa, C., & Walker, J. (under review). Neuropsychological assessment with Indigenous Peoples in Saskatchewan: A lesson in cultural humility. In F. Irani (Ed.). *Handbook of cultural diversity in neuropsychological assessment: Developing understanding through global case studies* (pp. 1-10). Taylor & Francis/Routledge
- Innes, A., Morgan, D., Farmer, J. (2020). *Rural and remote dementia care: Implications for research, policy, and practice*. Policy Press, Bristol University. <https://policy.bristoluniversitypress.co.uk/remote-and-rural-dementia-care>

TECHNICAL REPORTS

- Elliot, V., Morgan, D., Kosteniuk, J., Seitz, D., Cameron, C., Minish, D. & Rural PHC Memory Clinic Team Members. (2021). [clinic resource]. *RaDAR Rural Primary Health Care Memory Clinic Handbook*. Version: Spring 2021. Saskatoon, Saskatchewan: University of Saskatchewan. (257 pages, distributed as print and electronic versions).
- Kosteniuk, J., Morgan, D., Froehlich Chow, A. and Bayly, M. *Rural PHC Memory Clinics*. (2020). [report]. Printed at the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, SK, Canada. (6 pages) https://cchsa-ccssma.usask.ca/ruraldementiacare/PHC_Clinics.php#Background

A complete list of publications can be accessed on the RaDAR website at:
<https://cchsa-ccssma.usask.ca/ruraldementiacare/RaDAR%20Publications.php>

Programs and Services

The Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan's programs and services help people with dementia, their care partners, families, and friends by providing information, support, education and referral to other community services. **Currently our programs and services are provided virtually.** We will share more information about adding in-person programming as we navigate the Re-opening Saskatchewan plan. Alzheimer Society Programs and Services staff continue to support people with dementia and families across Saskatchewan who are faced with the everyday challenges of living with dementia.

What can clients expect from ASOS?

Individualized connection, service, information, and support – available for both the person with dementia and caregiver. We work with each individual client and learn their stories and provide the right info/support/strategies for the person's situation. Each client is offered intentional follow-up, which means that at minimum every 6 months we will initiate a follow up to check in, see how things are going, provide new information and provide information and connection to additional society and community programs and services.

Learning Opportunities – The Learning Series helps people with dementia, their families and friends to live as well as possible with the disease. The courses offered build upon each other covering the continuum of the disease to provide participants with a comprehensive overview of dementia, coping strategies, available resources and support. Participants can learn and share with others who are affected by dementia. Evenings of Education are stand-alone topics presented by content experts.

Support Groups – Alzheimer Society support groups offer a chance to:

- Exchange information and friendship with others living with and affected by dementia
- Access the most current information
- Learn and share practical tips for coping with change
- Decrease feelings of loneliness and isolation
- Express feelings and be reassured that these feelings are normal
- Find a sense of hope

Minds in Motion – a two hour, weekly program that combines physical activity and social activity for those with early stage dementia and a friend, family member or caregiver. The physical activity portion is lead by a certified fitness instructor and the social portion is led by ASOS staff and volunteers.

Connection to other organizations that may be useful to support the journey. This includes providing information on available services provided by the Saskatchewan Health Authority, other government agencies, lists of private or community-based organizations.

First Link Referrals

First Link® is a program of the Alzheimer Society that connects people with dementia and their families to information, support services and education as early as possible and throughout the progression of the disease. During the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we are encouraging our referral partners (physician, specialist, assessor coordinators, home care and long-term care staff) to continue to refer patients/clients to the Alzheimer Society via First Link.

First Link® gets you connected early for support throughout your journey. The more you know about Alzheimer's disease or another dementia, the better you may be able to cope with your situation. You will be linked to community supports and services.

For more information about how to make a **First Link**® Referral and to obtain a referral form, **please review our website:**

- [Making a Referral to First Link](#)
- [First Link Referral Form](#)

Assistance Getting a Diagnosis

It is estimated that only 50% of people who have dementia receive a diagnosis. Timely diagnosis helps people affected by dementia to benefit from information, education and support from the Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan and other community organizations. Earlier access to care and services can help people living with dementia and their families to better understand the disease, maximize quality of life and plan for the future.

Individuals with questions about getting a diagnosis may contact our **Diagnosis and Support Coordinator** at **1-800-263-3367** (toll-free in SK) or helpline@alzheimer.sk.ca
Hours: Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Dementia Helpline/Individual Support

Our priority in response to the pandemic is to ensure that people living with dementia and their family caregivers continue to receive the lifeline of support through our Dementia Helpline and through regularly scheduled follow up calls.

Talk to our support staff on the phone or by e-mail:

Dementia Helpline 1-877-949-4141 or helpline@alzheimer.sk.ca

Hours: Monday-Friday, 8:30-4:30 p.m.

Dementia-Friendly Canada Project

Funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), the Dementia-Friendly Canada Project is a partnership between the Alzheimer Societies of Canada, British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario intended to foster the creation and expansion of dementia-friendly communities across Canada.

**Here's more information on an exciting initiative
the working group is developing!**

Online Education: 'Building Dementia-Friendly Communities'

The online education modules are tailored towards individuals who are interested in fostering dementia-friendly awareness within their organizations, in the following sectors:

- ❖ Libraries & Recreation
- ❖ Retail & Restaurants
- ❖ Public Transportation

Participants taking the learning modules will have:

- Increased knowledge of dementia and learn practical considerations to incorporate in their everyday interactions & environments
- Increased understanding of ways to encourage communities to become more supportive, inclusive & accessible for individuals affected by dementia

'Building Dementia-Friendly Communities' online education entered an initial pilot phase in Spring 2021 and it is anticipated that public release will follow later in 2021.

For those seeking more information about this project, a BrainXchange webinar recording featuring the Dementia-Friendly Canada Working Group is available [here](#) (March 31, 2021).

Upcoming Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan Programs

Coffee and Chat

For people with dementia and their care partners. Make yourself comfortable, grab a cup of coffee or tea and join some of the Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan staff and peers online to say 'hello' and let us know how you are doing during. We are online via Zoom each Friday from 10:30-11:30 am. **To register, email cjudge@alzheimer.sk.ca**

**Note: This is NOT a Support Group, but an opportunity for you to check in with each other.*

Online Support Groups

We know people miss connecting with each other, so in response to the Covid-19 pandemic we have moved some of our support groups online via Zoom. Groups are facilitated by Alzheimer Society staff and volunteer facilitators.

Visit our [Programs and Events page](#) for groups and registration information.

Minds in Motion® (MiM)

MiM is a fitness and social program for those with early-stage dementia and a friend, family member or caregiver. Enjoy physical activity conducted by a certified fitness instructor, followed by activities and social time in a relaxed atmosphere. Develop new friendships with others living similar experiences.

The **summer virtual MiM is being offered via Zoom Tuesdays and Thursdays for 5 weeks beginning July 6th, 2021 from 1:30 to 3:30 pm**. The first part of the session will be a gentle physical fitness lead by a certified fitness instructor, the second part will be a social activity time led by Alzheimer Society volunteers. There is no cost for this virtual offering of MiM. For more information and to view a video explaining MiM, click [here](#).

To register, email agermann@alzheimer.sk.ca or call 1-877-949-4141.

Learning Opportunities for People with Dementia and Families

The Learning Series helps people with dementia, their families, and friends to live as well as possible with the disease. The courses offered build upon each other to provide participants with a comprehensive overview of dementia, coping strategies, available resources and support. Participants can learn and share with others who are affected by dementia.

For more information on the courses, click [here](#).

Currently our learning series has moved online and courses are being delivered via Zoom. We are planning to add in-person sessions when the Re-opening Saskatchewan plan allows.

Keep checking our [Programs and Events page](#) for updates on fall programming and offerings! To register, contact 1-877-949-4141 or helpline@alzheimer.sk.ca

Evening of Education

Walking through grief and loss with a COVID-19 lens: Strategies for Survival

Presented by Lorraine Holtslander RN, PhD, CHPCN(c); Shelley Peacock, RN, PhD; Jill Bally, RN, PhD; and Joel Gajadharsingh.

Learning objectives:

1. Reflect on the types of loss and grief as experienced during the pandemic and beyond
2. Consider how the pandemic has affected people with dementia and caregivers
3. Learn about tools and strategies to build coping and resiliency during grief
4. Reflect on a personal journey of a family member diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease and how a spouse and daughter coped with personal losses

SAVE THE DATE  **Tuesday, Sept 28th from 7- 9 pm via Zoom**

(registration is not yet open but more information to come on our [Programs and Events page](#) in the near future).

Recorded Webinars

Safely Home: Reducing the Risk of Wandering May 2021

For people living with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias, wandering is a common behaviour. As a result, people living with dementia may not be able to find their way back home and become lost. Through presentations and stories of lived experience, learn about the risk levels and strategies to reduce the risks of getting lost, behaviours involved in wandering, how wandering can lead to getting lost and how to prepare a multi-step safety plan.

Presented by Noelannah Neubauer, PhD, Postdoctoral fellow, Faculty of Health, University of Waterloo; special guest Susan (person with lived experience); and Heather Van Starckenburg, MSW, RSW, First Link Care Navigator, Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan. **Original broadcast May 20, 2021.**

Watch on our [YouTube channel](#)

Resources

Multi-Step Safety Plan to Reduce Risk of Wandering: Checklist and Guide

Multiple strategies are encouraged to reduce the risk of wandering, because no one strategy will meet every individual need. The Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan has created two resources to help caregivers understand the importance of preparing a multi-step safety plan to help the person with dementia live in the community safely.

Download our resources here:

- [Multi-step safety plan Checklist to reduce risk of wandering](#)
- [Multi-step safety plan to reduce risk of wandering: Guide](#)

The guide was adapted with permission from the Alzheimer Society of BC's Wandering and Dementia: A guide for caregivers. The ASOS appreciates being able to adapt Dr. Noelannah Neubauer's Canadian Guidelines for Safe Wandering Community Version for use in this guide. Dr. Neubauer, Dr. Lili Liu, and Dr. Christine Daum from the Universities of Waterloo and Alberta were consulted for their expertise in dementia, wandering and wayfinding.

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