

Knowledge Network in Rural and Remote Dementia Care

Second Annual Summit: October 29th & 30th, 2009

Planning News



A message from Debra Morgan

Welcome to the first newsletter of the Knowledge Network in Rural and Remote Dementia Care. At the First Annual Summit last November the group agreed that in addition to an annual Summit where we can meet face-to-face, there was a need for some other forms of communication. A short newsletter was identified as one possible strategy. We look forward to having your input into what kind of information is most useful to you as the Chair research program unfolds, and in what format. Funding for this 5-year Applied Chair in Health Services and Policy Research, titled "Healthcare Delivery Across the Continuum for Rural and Remote Seniors with Dementia" commenced in March, 2009. We are just two months into the program, but we wanted to update you on some of the team's activities and plans.



The summit will return on **October 29th and 30th** to the Sheraton Cavalier in downtown Saskatoon. Feedback from last year's attendees included a desire for all summit meetings to take place at the hotel, and we've been able to arrange to do so. Watch for reservation information in your mailbox soon.



Updates from participants

- Margaret Crossley and Megan O'Connell, who lead the Rural and Remote Memory Clinic neuropsychology team, have recently implemented a telehealth pilot intervention project. The project is a support group for spouses of clinic patients diagnosed with atypical dementias, such as the early-onset frontotemporal variants. The group meets monthly for 90 minutes via telehealth videoconferencing. Drs. Crossley and O'Connell are collaborating with their caregiver partners to develop a novel intervention that increases their sense of coping and reduces caregiver distress.

- A proposal for potential funding of the Rural and Remote Memory Clinic was submitted to Saskatchewan Health in April. The funding would ensure sustainability of the clinic beyond the research evaluation project funding that will expire this fall.

- As part of her sabbatical activities, Debra Morgan was in the UK in January and February to meet with research colleagues at Oxford University (England), the University of Bangor (Wales), and the University of Stirling (Scotland).

Debra spent a week at the *Dementia Services Development Centre* (DSDC) at the University of Stirling. The visit was facilitated by **Dr. Anthea Innes**, a researcher at the Centre who has expertise in rural dementia care issues. We are thrilled that Dr. Innes has agreed to join the Decision Maker Advisory Council as an international member, and will attend the Summit in Saskatoon in October.

In addition to conducting dementia care research, the DSDC [link on next page] provides a broad range of services, including training and information for families and health professionals, and design consultancy for long-term care facilities to ensure that new and renovated buildings are dementia-friendly.

- We are currently recruiting trainees interested in conducting research linked to the Chair program. One of the aims of the Chair program is capacity development in the area of rural and remote dementia care, including training and mentoring of undergraduate and graduate students, and postdoctoral fellows.

Planning for Summit 2009:

- *This annual meeting of the network of researchers and Decision-Makers associated with the Applied Chair program is an important opportunity for identifying research priorities, reviewing progress towards objectives, evaluating research findings, exchanging ideas, and developing policy implications.*
- *Last year, there was discussion among some summit members about the variety of programs for staff training and enhancing resident care that are available. This led to more questions about the similarities and differences between the programs. Is this a topic that interests you? If you have thoughts about including a session on these programs at the summit, please let us know.*
- *What aspects of last year's summit did you find most interesting and useful? Do you have any suggestions for a topic that you would like to see on the agenda for this year?*

We welcome your ideas for 2009 and appreciate the help with planning, please contact **Debra Morgan:**
debra.morgan@usask.ca
or phone 306-966-7905



Last year's poster session was an opportunity to network and share information. This year's summit will continue to offer ample networking opportunities.



Share your ideas!

Do you have innovations or successes to share? Do you know of others who are doing something interesting, and you'd like to know more?

Send your comments via email to debra.morgan@usask.ca or phone 966-7905

We want to hear from you.



In the news . . .

On February 3, 2009 SaskHealth announced \$152.8 million in funding to replace 13 long-term care centres in the province. Health Minister McMorris states "Making sure that our health facilities are up-to-date and meeting today's building standards is incredibly important to ensure the safety and comfort of residents and health care providers." The announcement will upgrade facilities for 547 long term care beds in the province.

The evening of November 25th, 2008 was marked by an Alzheimer's Awareness Reception at the Saskatchewan Legislature. Well attended by MLAs, speakers included: Joanne Bracken of Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan; Scott Dudgeon, CEO of Alzheimer Society of Canada, and MLA Dan D'Autremont who spoke of his personal experiences with his mother's

struggles with the disease. Don McMorris promised to meet with the Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan to further discuss the importance of funding and service provision for this health issue.

In November, 2008, the Government of Saskatchewan announced the "Patient First Review" of Saskatchewan's health care services. Lead by former head of Royal University Hospital, Tony Dagnone, the commission is reviewing the health-care system "through the patient's eyes." To complete the review yourself and participate in the process visit:

<http://www.innovativeresearch.ca/Survey/>

"Great event. Very meaningful to have front-line staff, family, managers & government all in one room"

- feedback from Summit 2008 participant

Resources and References:

Following are links to information from summit members, and more resources:

The Rural Dementia Care Website at U of S:

<http://www.cchsa-ccssma.usask.ca/ruraldementiacare/>

The Dementia Services Development Centre [DSDC] – University of Stirling, Scotland:

<http://www.dementia.stir.ac.uk/>

The DSDC's principal aim is to disseminate research and good practice about home and hospital care for people with any type of dementia.

The National Dementia Strategy – England (2009)

www.dh.gov.uk/en/SocialCare/Deliveringadultsocialcare/Olderpeople/NationalDementiaStrategy

R. Turner Goins, Associate Professor at West Virginia University and a member of the decision maker advisory council, has recently published a literature review of research on Rural Caregiving: Goins, RT, Spencer, SM, & Byrd, JC (2009). Research on rural caregiving: A literature review. *Journal of Applied Gerontology*, 28(2), 139-170.

On behalf of Ms. Goins, we would be happy to forward you either an electronic version of the article, or send you one in the post. If you would like to request a copy, please contact Duane Minish, Research Assistant at 966-4098 or duane.minish@usask.ca Duane can also provide you with copies of last year's Summit final report, or any other information you may require.