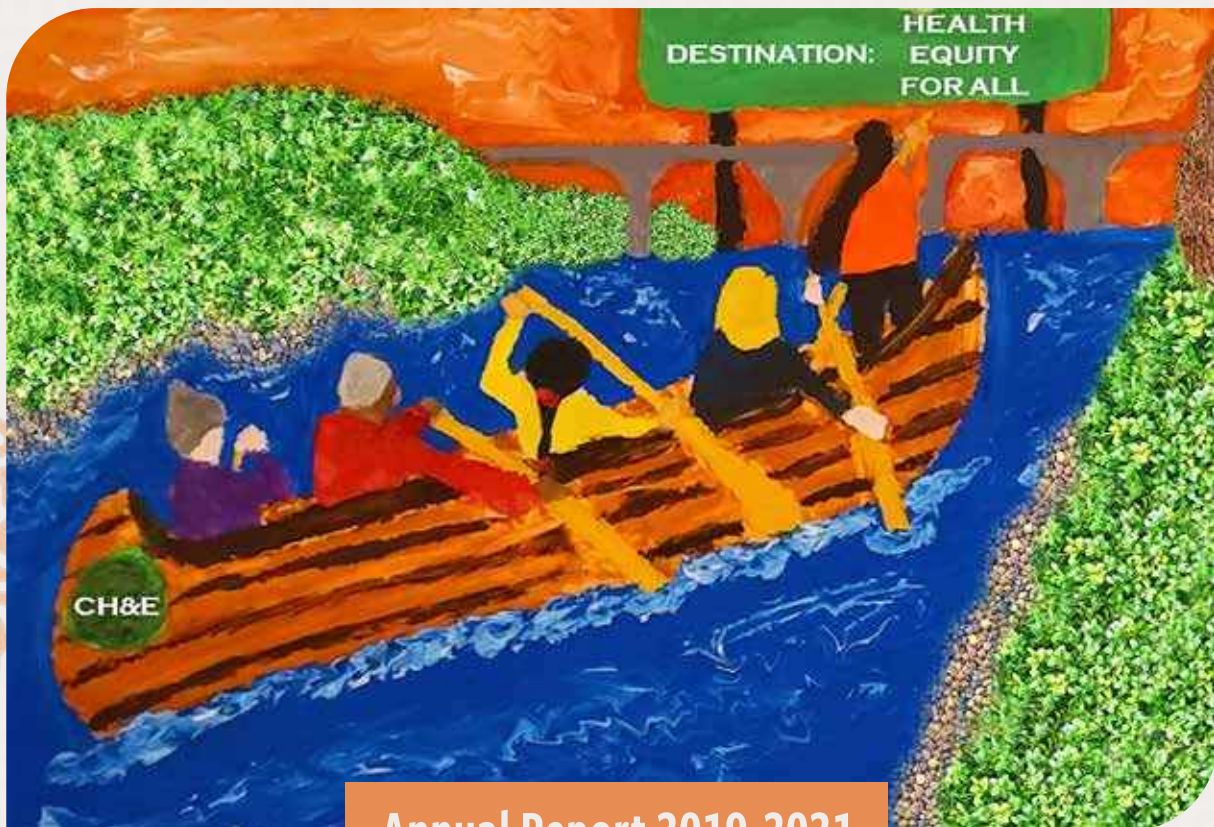


CREATING, PROTECTING AND PROMOTING HEALTH EQUITY

Artist credit: Amanda Gannon, CH&E MSc student



Annual Report 2019-2021



UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN
College of Medicine
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY
HEALTH AND EPIDEMIOLOGY
MEDICINE.USASK.CA

We learn, teach, work, and live on traditional Indigenous territories that in Canada include treaty lands, unceded lands, and Métis homelands. We pay our respects to First Nation, Métis, and Inuit ancestors. The University of Saskatchewan is on the Homeland of the Métis and Treaty 6 territory. In our commitment to this place, we value respectful relationships with the people around us – past, present, and future – and the animals, lands, waters, and skies that nurture us all. We strive to live these values in our programs, activities, and interactions: relationships grounded in safety and humility, respect for all peoples and their world views, reciprocity in all relationships, relevance to wholistic wellness, and responsibility for informed pedagogy and practice.

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MESSAGE

FROM THE

DEPARTMENT

HEAD



During the past two years, the department of Community Health & Epidemiology went from a big gathering and celebration of 60 years of existence in October 2019 to a total lockdown starting in March 2020 due to the worldwide pandemic. These years were high in emotions and brought the values of the department to the forefront: solidarity, students' support, advocacy and research intensity.

What a heartwarming 60th anniversary celebration we experienced with many alumni, current students, former faculty and staff, CH&E personnel and friends! The fall weather was beautiful. This fun-filled and very interactive event provided the opportunity to mingle, reminisce individual and collective memories as well as discuss wicked problems and some very concrete, doable actions. I wish to profusely thank the organizing committee for all their work and especially recognize and thank Kathy Evans who was the mastermind behind the success of this reunion.

Throughout the pandemic, all activities pivoted overnight to virtual delivery that required flexibility and adjustments. During this time, our utmost concern was the safety and the continuous connection with our students and staff; touch base sessions were organized as well as individual help as required.

In a time of uncertainty about the COVID-19 virus, finding the best available evidence was paramount in order to inform decision-makers. Our faculty rose to the occasion and worked tirelessly as part of a team to explore all biopsychosocial aspects of the pandemic and the individual and community consequences of social distancing and associated sanitary measures. Faculty roles were spread around with some of us searching daily the ever-changing evidence while others provided the best available information to the public and in the media.

Despite this challenging context, I am proud that we were able to pursue our academic mission with 26 new graduate students, 30 graduates and 49 M in new research dollars.

This annual report illustrates the way we all came together to face the on-going uncertainty and how we concretely lived our values day after day during this unprecedented period. A big thank you to all!

Enjoy the stories and discoveries...

Anne Leis

Anne Leis, PhD
Professor and Department Head



MESSAGE

FROM THE DEAN

Between 2019 and 2021, the world faced significant challenges. Our province faced those challenges along with everyone else, and the members of the Department of Community Health and Epidemiology stepped up to help. I am proud to look back on these two years and see the important work that the department has done to provide relevant data and extensive knowledge to the people of Saskatchewan during such trying times.

I am grateful that members of the department were deeply involved in the education of the public during the pandemic. Their role has been crucial in linking important information and awareness with the vital work being done within the health care system. The best evidence-based material has been and continues to be shared through the media by department spokespersons.

The 60th anniversary was an important milestone for the department. I was honoured to have had

the opportunity to speak at several events and be a part of the celebration. It was wonderful to see so many alumni, current graduate students, faculty, and staff come together to celebrate all the amazing achievements that have occurred within the department over the past 60 years.

The Department of Community Health & Epidemiology is thriving. Faculty members, staff, and students all work together to form a cohesive team providing education and conducting research while modeling our values in an equitable environment. I look forward to the future of CH&E and the significant work yet to be accomplished.

Preston Smith

Preston Smith, MD, MEd, CCFP, FCFP, CCPE
Dean

TWO YEARS IN REVIEW

We have seen unprecedented attention on public health over the past few years, and the values of social justice cannot be overstated when it comes to responding to a global pandemic. As a department, we have not only been responding to COVID-19, but we have been tackling important equity challenges throughout 2019-2021, such as inclusivity, truth and reconciliation, and intergenerational and transgenerational health across the life course.



“

When those initial restrictions were in place, I remember friends and chatter even on social media saying, *‘Well, I guess this is OK if we have to do this for a few weeks’*...It’s a sobering thing. It makes you take a big sigh, and realize this is what you’re going to be spending the next few years on.

”



Much has changed about the world, and our lives, in two years. There is much to celebrate from the last two years when it comes to all we have built, all we have started, all those we’ve supported and who have supported us along the way. In the midst of overlapping social and health issues, we have been a strong voice for equity at the local and provincial levels.

Timeline

1

60TH ANNIVERSARY FALL 2019

This great event featured alumni, faculty, staff, and students reflecting on our past and our future as a department.

2

ADAPTING TO COVID SPRING 2020

When the pandemic hit, we shifted gears to online learning, fostering caring connections, and adapting to social distancing.

3

RECONCILIATION IN ACTION

The Reconciliation Sub-Committee acted on several projects, including developing a Land Acknowledgement and an Indigenous Peoples Day celebration.

4

BLACK HISTORY MONTH WINTER 2021

We acted on our social justice values by engaging in Black History Month, taking a stronger role in advocacy with students at the helm.

5

INITIATING PANDEMIC PROJECTS 2020-21

We provided expertise and leadership in many ways throughout the pandemic, without ignoring ongoing health challenges (eg. the opioid crisis).

Who we are

Community Health and Epidemiology (CH&E) is a department of the College of Medicine with programming for graduate and post-graduate students in Population Health Sciences, as well as undergraduate medical students and Public Health and Preventive Medicine residents. As a department, CH&E is a leader in teaching, research and community engagement focused on population health, with a lens on social justice and equity for all.

Key features of our department



We focus on health at
the level of community
and population



We are committed to
the values of equity
and justice



We are champions of
community engaged
research



We engage in research
that has an impact and
makes a difference

A LOOK AT OUR 60TH



While it feels like ancient history, it was only two short years ago that we celebrated our 60th anniversary as a department. This event was held in person and online, October 24-26, 2019, in Saskatoon. More than 100 people attended the celebration, which included alumni from our graduate programs and from the Public Health and Preventive Medicine residency program.

The event activities included a seminar, reception, conference and banquet, campus tours, and lunch at the Remai Modern. In 10 break-out sessions during the afternoon important current topics such as mental health and reconciliation were discussed with a goal of drawing out department level opportunities for action. Many are being integrated in department activities.



The anniversary event created a strong sense of momentum for the department. Just before the pandemic, we were dreaming and reflecting, talking about our past and future. Department alumni sent in [videos](#) and spoke about the impact of CH&E on their lives and careers. It was a great opportunity to hear from so many amazing students from over the years.

The event offered insight into the various ways that our training prepares students for careers in a variety of fields, including public health, research, communications, public service, and beyond. New students were really excited about it, and our network of alumni were left feeling energized. This was the last large in-person event we hosted before the pandemic.





“

**A great way to celebrate faculty, alumni,
and the history of the program!**

”



COMING TOGETHER AS A COMMUNITY

“I love this department!”

– DR. ANNE LEIS

“I’m sure this feels like a
strange year for all of us.”

– DR. MAUREEN ANDERSON

“I’m looking forward
to meeting our new
students in this most
interesting of terms.”

– DR. SYLVIA ABONYI

“I look forward to
seeing you online on
Zoom and Webex and
interacting with you.”

– DR. NAZEEM MUHAHARINE

MARCH 2020: ADAPTING TO COVID

The Anniversary and Reunion Celebration in Fall 2019 left us with a positive feeling. It was difficult to experience the crashing halt of that momentum when Spring 2020 came around, as we joined the world in switching gears to manage the pandemic. The challenges that resulted, including the change to remote research and learning, required us to adapt in the midst of ongoing anxiety about the virus. However, these challenges were also opportunities to make our department more accessible and more caring.

Extra effort went into prioritizing student engagement and deepening community connections. As a field devoted to appreciating the interconnectedness of our lives, we took it upon ourselves to practice community-building in a time of increased threats to our collective well-being. Teaching and supervision continued as we shifted to virtual teaching, learning, research, and engagement. We are immensely grateful for the patience, diligence, care, and solidarity expressed by our faculty, staff, and student body.

Within our immediate sphere of influence and responsibility, we initiated community-building through additional efforts to connect with students. In the Fall of 2020, our virtual student orientation included video introductions to the department as well as from individual faculty, staff, and students. This set a welcoming tone and helped everyone feel a greater sense of belonging to our department family.

RECONCILIATION IN ACTION



CH&E is committed to supporting Indigenous people to achieve a more equitable position in our community and society. Our reconciliation approach is built around the three pillars of academia: teaching and learning, research, and community engagement. Our reconciliation working group includes students, staff, and faculty from within and outside the department, committed to advancing our responses to the Truth & Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action.

The reconciliation working group guided the development of a new Land Acknowledgement for the Department. This new statement, at the beginning of this report, aims to capture the broader history of relationships on these lands, and our commitment to learning from a web of human and non-human relationships to create ecosystems of change.

The working group led the drafting of public statements on racism in society and in the healthcare system.

Indigenous History Month was celebrated with virtual learning opportunities organized by the department or through promotion of events organized by others.

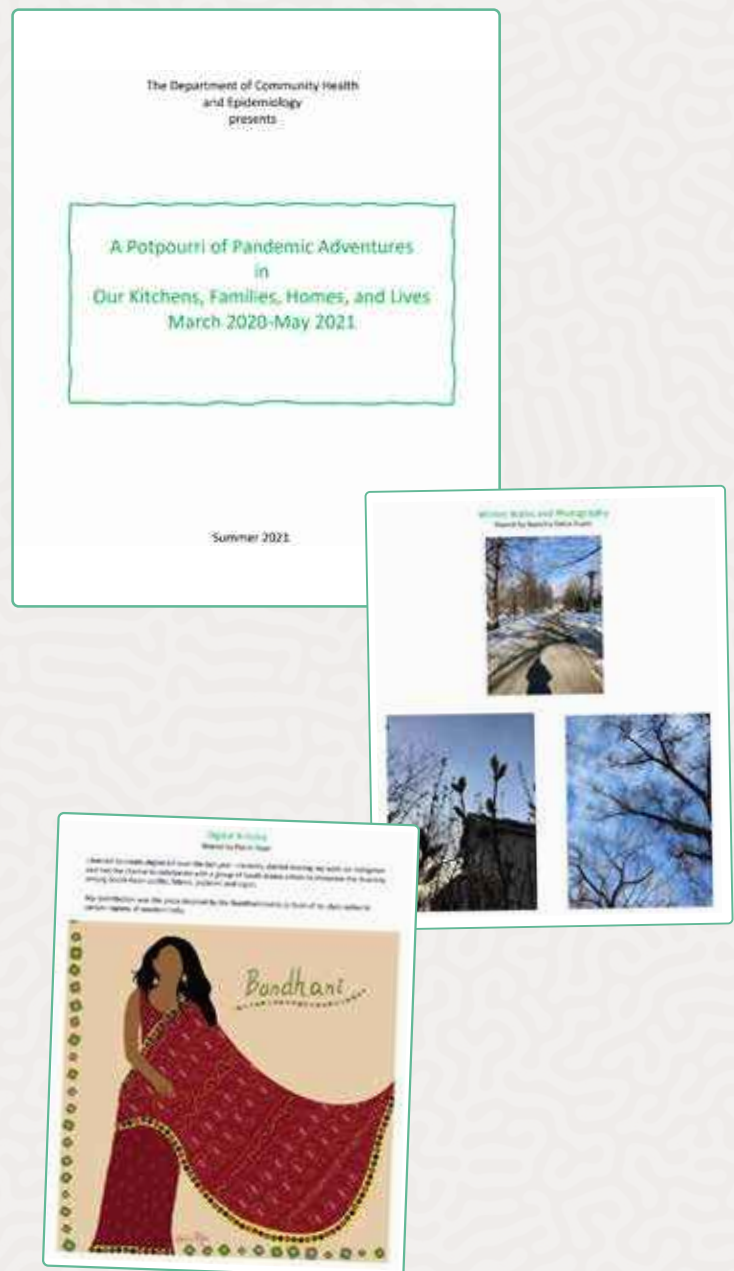
RESPONDING TO COVID WITH COMPASSION

As new students, many international, began to arrive in Saskatoon throughout the Fall and Winter of 2020-21, the department provided a food basket and essential start-up items to bridge quarantine. Afterwards, staff and faculty continued to offer rides for groceries and vaccine appointments.

Throughout the academic year, biweekly informal Friday check-ins were held for students, with faculty and staff rotating through as hosts. Virtual weekly Yoga drop ins organized by faculty member Punam Pahwa, gave us another space to meet each other and support our wellbeing. Online accessibility opened doors to global collaboration, and we were able to pull resources and expertise from all over the world.

One of the things we missed tremendously were our Potlucks and hallway 'catch-up' chats. In Spring/Summer 2021, we put together a Pandemic Yearbook. Everyone was invited to share either a favorite recipe (and a story of why it is a favorite), or a short anecdote from the pandemic year. We also invited people to share photos from their pandemic days or of new hobbies they may have picked up since Spring 2020.

As a community, we are maintaining a steady course toward our long-term goal of health equity regardless of the scale of health challenges we face as a population. CH&E is actively working to integrate our values and our practices each day to produce more impactful research and practice over time.



Sometimes support looks like groceries on your doorstep!



New covid initiatives for students



Check ins with faculty
throughout the pandemic



Student groups to
maintain ongoing support



Yoga with Punam to
foster mental health

ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES

Since its inception over 60 years ago, CH&E has always been committed to the values of social justice. Recently, however, we have stepped more confidently into the role of advocate. This is a natural evolution of our role in the community, as we leverage the trust and partnerships we have developed over the years into clear calls to action and impactful opportunities to engage. Over the past two years, the Department has celebrated cultural events, hosted social justice programs and gatherings, and we have spoken out on key issues affecting our partners and communities.

A few highlights from our activities in 2019-2021 include programming for National Indigenous History Month, sharing resources for Pride Month to celebrate and learn how to support LGBTQ+ people, and [speaking out about racism in the healthcare system](#) and [pandemic response concerns](#). We also continued to work on ongoing critical health issues that impact our communities alongside the pandemic, such as HIV, and food insecurity, the opioid crisis, and maternal health.

“
**Most of all,
thank you for
letting us be SEEN
and HEARD!**

— ISABELLE DENA, PHD STUDENT
ON BLACK HISTORY MONTH
ORGANIZED EVENTS

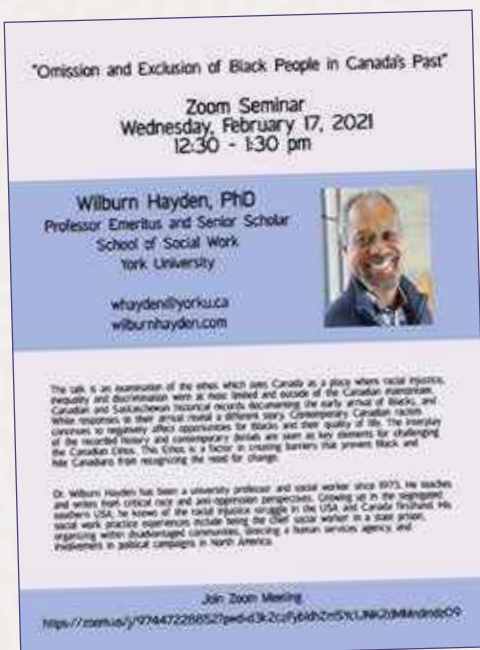


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BLACK HISTORY MONTH, WINTER 2021

We learned a great deal during our first student-led Black History Month, February 2021, thanks to the efforts of Isabelle Dena, Tracey-Ann Stitchell, Monique Reboe- Benjamin, Fernanda Andre, and others. Their creative planning supported several different events, from workshops and presentations to a trivia night. There was also a panel of students and alumni who shared their stories. This was a wonderful chance to celebrate Black History Month and discuss some of the issues facing Black Canadians and other racialized people living in Saskatoon.



STEPPING UP AS PUBLIC HEALTH LEADERS

PANDEMIC ERA ADVOCACY AND RESEARCH

Public health stays in the background when things are working, and then suddenly in crisis, there is so much attention on how our collective decisions impact the health of populations. We focused this attention not only on the equity issues related to COVID, but also health problems that were already going on at the time of the pandemic, such as the opioid crisis and barriers to Indigenous Health. We modeled a humanizing and caring space, while keeping community values intact.

Because we are experts in public and population health, several department faculty involved themselves early on in supporting the Ministry of Health and the Saskatchewan Health Authority. In the first few months, some members of our department worked around the clock as Canada was trying to figure out how COVID-19 could be controlled. Many efforts are made to keep up morale and to encourage each other across our ecosystem of staff, faculty, and students.

Important contributions to the evidence-base for COVID response practices occurred through SPHERU (Saskatchewan Population Health and Evaluation Research Unit), a bi-university health research unit between the University of Saskatchewan and



the University of Regina. SPHERU researchers, several of whom are department faculty and research staff, have been collecting data about how we act, think, interact, and move throughout the COVID pandemic. Nazeem Muhajarine led the publication of a series of reports on the social contours of the pandemic called "Taking the pulse of COVID-19 in Saskatchewan".

Taking the Pulse provides the latest results from the Social Contours and COVID-19 Research Team, exploring 1) behavioural, perceptual, social, and place-based data 2) risk level to people and places, over time; 3) lower- and higher-risk places in our province; and 4) communication to public health officials and the general public.



Saskatchewan Population Health and Evaluation Research Unit

Covid community contributions



Research services
to support
evidence base



Advice and consultation
from a population
health lens



Media presence with
clear messages and
calls to action

Contextualizing COVID modeling in the media provided an opportunity to frame how the public understands evidence, data, and policy responses. Comments on topics range from changes to restrictions, to vaccine confidence, social attitudes on public health measures, and more. Link if appropriate - https://spheru.ca/images/covid19-images/takingthecovidpulse_sk_07062021.pdf

Other members of our department have also contributed to COVID-19 evidence base. The COVID-19 Evidence Support Team (CEST) was a provincial initiative led by Dr. Gary Groot and Professor Emeritus Dr. Bruce Reeder that combined the support of COVID-19 response partners, policymakers, researchers, and

clinical practitioners to generate Evidence Search Reports (ESR) and Rapid Review Reports (RRR). An electronic dashboard, database, and a repository were designed to present ESRs, RRRs, and the status of the questions to create a common platform for clinicians, academics, leaders, and policymakers to find COVID-19 evidence.

We want to recognize Dr. Nazeem Muhajarine and Dr. Cory Neudorf for speaking regularly with the Saskatchewan press about how the province is actually responding to modeling and evidence, always putting things in scientific context and looking at impacts through the lens of equity.



DR. NAZEEM MUHAJARIN



DR. CORY NEUDORF



DR. GARY GROOT

Dr. Gary Groot was the recipient of the 2020 College of Medicine Research Award (CoMRAD) for his project entitled, "COVID-19 Evidence Response Team: A Realist Evaluation". Rapid reviews were an essential component of the local public health landscape early on in the pandemic.

We want to thank Dr. Bruce Reeder, an emeritus professor with expertise in Global health and the One Health approaches. Bruce spent a large part of 2020-2021 providing support to the COVID-19 Evidence Support Team (CEST). He spent a whole year doing this work voluntarily, and the project is indebted to his dedication and commitment.



We want to highlight the work of CH&E faculty and students who have continued to prioritize the opioid crisis throughout the pandemic. In November 2020, we hosted Dr. Gabor Maté, who spoke about trauma and mind/body health. We also congratulated James Dixon on his SSHRC award for his research on the opioid crisis.



We are grateful for the work of Maureen Anderson, who joined us as an Assistant Professor in September 2019. Maureen has been instrumental in supporting modeling for COVID-19 response research. Her expertise in epidemiology and experience as a field epidemiologist across Canada was immediately engaged to capture the impact of the pandemic and inform Saskatchewan's response.



Congratulations to Jacob Alhassan, CH&E PhD candidate, and Professor Lori Hanson, for their collaboration with the Saskatoon Inter-Agency Coalition on COVID-19. Their work on the ["Report on COVID-19 Vulnerable Sector Response"](#) in 2020 provided invaluable insights into the unique challenges for agencies serving vulnerable residents.

THANK YOU

CELEBRATING — OUR — ACCOMPLISHMENTS

STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS

Even in a season of unprecedented changes and challenges, our department celebrated many notable achievements in 2019-2021. Despite hurdles with research, and delayed ethics approvals, our faculty supported 51 Masters students and 24 PhD students and celebrated 22 MSc convocations and 8 PhD convocations. 12 post-docs joined our team, and our department grew to 18 faculty members and 25-30 associates and staff members.

Student Project Highlights



CARE PERCEPTIONS OF REFUGEES ACCESSING SERVICES AT THE REACH CLINIC AND THEIR EXPERIENCES TRANSITIONING TO MAINSTREAM HEALTHCARE AFTER ONE YEAR

By Monique Reboe-Benjamin, MSc. Program Graduate

The Saskatoon Refugee Engagement and Community Health (REACH) clinic responds to the early arrival needs of a growing refugee population. This mixed-methods study sought to understand refugees' perceptions of access and care at REACH, its influence on perceived health, and experiences of transition to a family physician. A significant positive relationship was found between their perceived health status and "doctors' advice about how to stay healthy". Further, a linguistically and culturally competent and comprehensive service delivery model built on strong partnerships between REACH, settlement agencies, and decision makers is key. A more robust transition component needs attention. Although current clinic services are highly rated, an urgent need for additional training, resources, and policies was identified to facilitate refugee health care access and transition to mainstream care.

IMPROVING NUTRITIONAL INTAKE THROUGH ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE SCHOOL FOOD PROGRAMS

By Tracy Everitt, Ph.D. Program Graduate

Food insecurity and overweight are concerns in school-aged children, with food literacy skills declining. Canadian schools can promote healthy eating, yet there is no national school food program. This 3-manuscript dissertation includes: (1) a scoping review of promising practices for school food programs in Canada concluding that programs should encompass social determinants of health, food systems, and environmental and economic sustainability; (2) a cross-sectional assessment of foods that grades 4-8 children in and around Saskatoon had in their lunches, finding that the diet quality of all students needs improvement; and (3) a multi-case study of two Community schools that found they are in a strong position to be leaders in school food if they prioritize sustainable food systems, develop supportive policies, and include community members.



INTEREST IN AND UPTAKE OF HIV PRE-EXPOSURE PROPHYLAXIS (PREP): A CROSS-SECTIONAL ANALYSIS OF HIGH-RISK PATIENTS IN WESTERN CANADA

By Stanley Enebeli, Public Health and Preventive Medicine Residency Program Graduate

Despite disproportionately high rates of HIV in Saskatchewan, there is a gap in knowledge on awareness and acceptance of pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) for prevention. We examined factors associated with interest in PrEP among 141 of 382 HIV-negative at-risk individuals in Saskatoon who attended the sexual health clinic during the study. Data were collected through self-report questionnaire. Respondents were mostly employed males in their 20s or 30s, had high school to college education, with 25% reporting MSM. Fewer than half perceived risk of contracting HIV, with 66% having no prior awareness of PrEP. More than half indicated no interest in PrEP with those having prior awareness 2.5 times more likely to be interested. The study reveals a need for PrEP promotion among at-risk populations.



Student Prizes and Awards

A full list of graduates can be found in the Appendix.



Robyn Reist

University of Saskatchewan
Graduate Thesis Award in the
Life Sciences Category - Fall 2019



James Dixon

SSHRC Doctoral
Scholarship - July 2019



Mikaela Vancoughnett

CIHR Master Award
June 2020



Valerie Umaefulam

CH&E 50th Anniversary Legacy
Award (\$500) - 2020



Samantha Bird

Vince Matthews Award
2020

STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

Nothing would have been possible with the wonderful support of staff!



Kathy Evans Received INSKIP Award

Kathy Evans, Department Head Secretary, received the Sydney Inskip Service Award in Fall 2019. The award honors individuals who have enhanced the work environment by providing extraordinary service to the College of Medicine, who have inspired, supported and respected endeavors of others and have achieved this distinction through dedication and commitment.

Kathy welcomed students into her home and had everyone cook a meal together. With a number of international students in the department, cooking and sharing a meal in someone's home transcends cultures.

It's one of many things that Kathy did to establish a welcoming community environment and make an impact on faculty, student and staff lives in the department.



Thank You to Stephanie Kehrig

Before the pandemic hit and during the pandemic, Stephanie Kehrig touched our students and the department as a whole, working beyond the call of duty. Stephanie has the utmost professionalism and is a generous and modest human being who makes the department shine.

"I arrived in Jan 2021 when 14 days quarantine was in place. Stephanie dropped me a whole bunch of groceries (most of them donated by the department), pillows, bed covers & blankets (made by her mom), and much more. Whenever I felt down, she would come with her dog – Lobo (she knows I love dogs) and we would walk the dog and chat." Sahana, MSc student

"There is not one occasion that can define Stephanie's warmth and authentic quality to help students. Stephanie has always demonstrated prompt support with admission processes, accommodation, scholarships, and with any other information one may be looking for such as grocery stores around your area. I am touched with her genuine interest to learn about me." Vaidehi, 3rd year PhD student

FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

The department is currently managing close to 28 M including new grants awarded in 2019-2021 and faculty are co-PI or Co-I in research projects amounting to an additional 21 M awarded in this period. Members of our department published 123 articles. Our team has also completed 11 book chapters as well as 81 paper and 34 poster presentations in this time frame.

We celebrated several awards across the department in 2019-2021, including:

- SMA Physician Leader of the Year 2019 – Dr. Julie Kryzanowski, University of Saskatchewan
- Distinguished Researcher Award Received by Dr. Nazeem Muhajarine, Professor at Convocation on November 13, 2019
- Advising Excellence Award presented by the GSA Executive to Dr. Punam Pahwa, Professor in the Department of Community Health and Epidemiology on April 4, 2020
- Lilian Thorpe, Professor in the Department of Community Health and Epidemiology and in the Department of Psychiatry has been chosen as the 2019 – 20 Department of Psychiatry Faculty Teacher of the Year.
- The Inflammatory Bowel Disease among Indigenous Peoples Research Team received an Excellence Award (2019 Top Sprout Grant-SHRF), Juan-Nicolás Peña-Sánchez and Derek Jennings, co-PI, Dept. of CH&E
- The best supervisor award in the Health Sciences, a nomination put forward by several of her students was received by Dr. Anne Leis on May 6, 2021.

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHT

Advancing Global Health Equity

There were many barriers to international collaboration introduced by the pandemic, but the Mozambique-Canada Maternal Health Project sustained its work. Thanks to the strong relationships, established 20 years ago and nurtured to this day, we are proud to report that this project continues to make a difference. As Don Kossick, a Project partner, described back in 2019, “The basis of solidarity was formed early in this partnership and has been maintained through on the ground linkages and recognition of the struggles that Mozambique has gone through and continues to face, working side by side over the years with Mozambican communities.”

The pandemic provided an opportunity to pull resources and expertise from all over the world, and as the research world went fully virtual, new opportunities emerged that hadn't previously been dreamt of.



- Construction of all new health infrastructure was completed - four rural maternities and three maternity waiting homes in district capitals.
- Communities began establishing youth committees as part of a strategy for increasing youth involvement.
- Seven new microprojects (all flour-grinders) were established.
- Teaching tools were developed from the Maternal Experience Study and used effectively in continuing education sessions for health workers working with adolescents.
- Community-based maternal and sexual health sessions were ongoing, although in smaller numbers than in previous years. Each education session incorporated content on COVID-19 prevention and impact mitigation, especially in relation to maternal and newborn health.
- Continuing education for health system practitioners was ongoing, although adapted for COVID-19. All sessions incorporated education on COVID-19 prevention and response.
- 16 youth committees in partner communities were created. Topics included COVID-19 prevention and care, sanitation and hygiene; the importance of institutional deliveries, and the specifics of good prenatal and postnatal care; and avoiding early and unwanted pregnancy, addressing early and forced marriage and sexual and reproductive rights.
- We worked on strengthening the network of support for pregnant and delivering women. Caregivers and community leaders were engaged in identifying how to support pregnant women. Sessions to strengthen referral systems were held, including the preparation of a protocol to be disseminated to facilities with maternity wards.
- We initiated a strategy for turning the four maternity clinics and three maternal waiting homes into model sites of humanized, community-engaged care.



2019-2021 ACHIEVEMENTS



The CH&E 60th anniversary celebration attracted more than 110 alumni, students, staff, faculty and friends. This was a great success and fun-filled event.



We are so proud to see a strong number of students and residents graduate from our programs. Over 2019-2021, we congratulated 30 graduates.



We hosted several events over the past two years, both online and in person before the pandemic.

The 60th anniversary brought together alumni, students, faculty, and staff in a celebration of the department. Research days highlighted both students' and faculty members' work. We recognized Black History Month and Indigenous History Month with knowledgeable and interesting speakers. And the CHEP 990 seminars continued to inform and educate students on a variety of topics.



CH&E experienced a lot of growth over the last few years, including both staff and faculty. Our team has grown to a total of 70. We are thrilled with the diverse expertise represented.



We are proud of the advocacy the department has done throughout the pandemic, with hundreds of media appearances by faculty members.



Despite the challenges of the pandemic, CH&E won a variety of grants for projects focused on pandemic impacts, experiences, and responses; the opioid crisis; achieving healing and wellness through cultural continuity approaches; healthy lunch intervention research; and exploring the use of virtual care in Saskatchewan in individuals with inflammatory bowel disease and gastroenterologist care providers.



There are many projects currently underway within the Department. We are excited to see the development of Dr. Gary Groot's work with caregivers of people with dementia in rural and remote Indigenous locations; Dr. Rachel Engler Stringer's food reclamation project with the City of Saskatoon and the Saskatoon Food Council; and research by Drs. Cory Neudorf (MD) and Thilina Bandara (PhD), working to eliminate cervical cancer in Canada by 2040.

WELCOME TO NEW FACULTY AND STAFF

We are proud to welcome new faculty, Maureen Anderson and Lalita Bharadwaj. New staff members include:

2019

Isa (Denise) Wolf – IIPH Programs Manager
Shannon Klatt – IIPH Administrative Liaison
Tracey Prentice – Science Advisor for CIHR-IIPH

2020

Dr. Oluwafemi Oluwole – Urban Public Health Network
Dr. Thilina Bandara – Research Officer, Urban Public Health Network
Briana Bowes – IIPH Administrative Liaison
Amanda Willms – PHPM Program Support
Nicole Szajcz-Keller – IIPH Special Projects Coordinator
Tracey Proverbs – Projects Coordinator for CIHR-IIPH
Robin Smith – Programs Manager for CIHR-IIPH
Catherine Leviton-Reid – Adjunct Faculty
Kinsuk Sarker – Research Assistant with Dr. Groot
Maryam Yasinian – Research Assistant with Dr. Groot

2021

Yvonne Hanson – Provincial Network Manager - Primary and Integrated Healthcare Innovations (PIHCI) Network SK
Dr. Wendie Marks – Research Officer, CoVaRRnet

THANK YOU TO FACULTY AND STAFF WHO HAVE MOVED ON

We're also bidding farewell to a few people from our department who have made a lasting impression on us over the years. Thank you to Dr. Derek Jennings and Dr. Marcel D'Eon. You will be missed!

There were many notable achievements made by members of CH&E. We want to extend congratulations to everyone for reaching milestones amidst the uncertainties and instabilities of the past two years. For a detailed overview of our department's publications, see the appendix.

THANK YOU

We want to say thank you to faculty, staff, students, partners, funders, and the wider community who have walked alongside CH&E over the past two years. We have a strong commitment to continue the work we are doing, responding not to trends, but long-term shifts in how we think, how we organize ourselves, how we work with and inspire others. We are driven to fulfill the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action, and particularly #18-#24 which are targeted at those in the health professions. It is essential that we each find our place in the movement to advance anti-racism, anti-oppression, and to create a healthy community.

As our Position Statement from October 2020 reads: "As the Department of Community Health and Epidemiology in a College of Medicine, we have a deep responsibility to shape health professionals under our training, now and in the future, to provide safe, humanizing, and compassionate health care, to remove systemic barriers to health careers encountered by Indigenous peoples, and to collectively advance health equity in policies and programs across all sectors and jurisdictions. We commit to doing better."

We look forward to the year ahead with the hopes of learning in person, for the potential to host activities and interactive events in-person, and to ultimately continue to pursue impactful research for health equity.

Thank you to all those who support, follow, and contribute to the great work of this Department! We are grateful for your shared leadership, focused on long-lasting and trusting relationships, excellence in research and commitment to relevant teaching, to train the next generation of leaders.

APPENDIX

LIST OF GRADUATES

Fall 2019 Convocation:

Marcus Ilesanmi; PhD; *Measles Immunization in Saskatchewan - Coverage Disparities and Challenges to Achieving Herd Immunity Threshold*

Larisa Lotoski; PhD; *A 4-season Longitudinal Study Examining the Association Between Seasonality, the Built Environment and Sedentary Time in 9-14 Year Old Children Living in a Mid-Western Canadian City*

Valerie Onyinyechi Umaefulam; PhD; *Impact of Mobile Health (mHealth) in Diabetic Retinopathy (DR) Awareness and Eye Care Behavior among Indigenous Women*

Jinnat Afsana; MSc; *Risk Factors Associated with Current Asthma and Wheeze in School Children along an Urban-Rural Gradient in Saskatchewan*

Rochelle Ferron; MSc; *Factors Associated with Job Satisfaction Among Canadian Correctional Officers*

Shatabdi Goon; MSc; *Perceived and Objective Neighbourhood Built Environment Measures and Association with Physical Activity and Sedentary Time in 9-14-Year-Old Children in Saskatoon, Canada*

Tanya Holt; MSc; *'She is in there': Connecting acutely ill Indigenous children with pediatric critical care specialists using Remote Presence Technology*

Asma Khan; MSc; *Impact of waiting time for first clinic assessment and seizure outcomes of pediatric epilepsy*

Robyn Reist; MSc; *Risk Factors for Upper Extremity Musculoskeletal Symptoms among Bovine Veterinarians*

Spring 2020 Convocation:

David Adegoke; MSc; *Factors Associated with Self-Reported Depressive Symptoms among People Living with HIV/AIDS in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan*

Tracy Everitt; PhD; *Improving Nutritional Intake Through Environmentally Sustainable School Food Programs*

Jeffrey Gu; PhD; *An Examination of Why Saskatchewan Women Choose Mastectomy Versus Breast Conservation Therapy in Early Stage Breast Cancer*

Saydi Harlton; MSc; *Association of Housing Conditions and Social Determinants of Health with Chronic Bronchitis among Seniors in Two Saskatchewan First Nation Communities*

Muhammad Owais; MSc; *Hip Fractures in Long Term Care Facilities in British Columbia: Incidence and Risk Factors*

Akeem Salawu; MSc; *Patient Wait Time at the Emergency Department of a Rural Hospital in Saskatchewan*

Fall 2020 Convocation:

Lorena Stringer; MSc; *Surveying Indigenous Cancer Support Needs: Survey Design and Development*

Daniel Adeyinka; PhD; *Social Determinants and Child Survival in Nigeria in the Era of Sustainable Development Goals: Progress, Challenges, and Opportunities*

Md. Saiful Alam; MSc; *Incidence and Longitudinal Changes in the Prevalence of Diabetes among Rural and First Nations Populations of Saskatchewan*

Sugandhi del Canto; PhD; *Personal food environments: Perceptions of retail affordability and accessibility among mothers in Saskatoon, Canada*

Lynette Epp; MSc; *Truth and Reconciliation Through Indigenous Health Research: An Instrumental Case Study in the College of Medicine, University of Saskatchewan*

Amal Khan; MSc; *Prevalence and Incidence of Hormonal-Related Cancers (HRCs) in Rural Saskatchewan: The Saskatchewan Rural Health Study*

Sharalynn Missiuna; MSc; *Inequalities in Mental Health Across Urban Canada*

Jessica Osei; MSc; *Epidemiology and Direct Health Care Cost of Inflammatory Bowel disease in Saskatchewan: A population-based study*

Lindsey Wagner; MSc; *Towards a More Ethical Global Health Research: A Case Study of Knowledge Translation within the Alert Community to Prepared Hospital Implementation Research Project*

Rebecca Zhao; MSc; *Art voice: Graphic health narratives of care providers*

Spring 2021 Convocation:

Jeremiah Acharibasam; MSc; *Using the Curriculum Densitometer to Measure the Impact of Curricular Workload on Students' Mental Health: A Pilot Study*

Adriana Angarita Fonseca; PhD; *Physical activity and chronic back disorders in Canadian adults*

Jose Diego Marques Santos; MSc; *Health Care Utilization Differences between First Nations and the General Population with Inflammatory Bowel Disease in Saskatchewan*

Paul Owusu; MSc; *The Impact of the National Health Insurance Scheme on Maternal Health Care in Ghana*

Monique Reboe Benjamin; MSc; *Care Perceptions of Refugees Accessing Services at the Reach Clinic and their Experiences Transitioning to Mainstream Healthcare after One Year*

Full thesis available at harvest.usask.ca

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY HEALTH AND EPIDEMIOLOGY – 2019-21 ANNUAL REPORT LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

Published Chapters in Books

- Engler-Stringer, R.**, Mosby, I. & Kirk, S.F.L. Meeting the Recommendations Outlined in Canada's New Food Guide Through a National School Food Program. In Koc, M., Sumner, J., Winson, A. (Ed.), *Critical Perspectives in Food Studies*: Oxford University Press
- King, M.**, & King, A. Fostering support for Indigenous adolescents facing health inequities. In Stewart M. (Ed.), *Supporting Children and Their Families Facing Health Inequities in Canada*.: University of Toronto Press (July 7, 2020).
- Kouri, L., **Engler-Stringer, R.**, Thomson, T., & Wood, M. Food Justice in the Inner City: Reflections from a Program of Public Health Nutrition Research in Saskatchewan. In Settee P., Shukla S. (Ed.), *Indigenous Food Systems: Concepts, Cases and Conversations*: Canadian Scholars Press (March 2020).
- Smith, L., **Abonyi, S.**, Durocher, L., Roy, T.J. & Oosman, S.. Mamawi-atoskewin "Working Together in Partnership" ~ Challenging Eurocentric Physical Therapy Practice Guided by Indigenous Metis Worldview and Knowledge. In D Nicholls, K Synne-Groven, EA Kinsella, RL Anjum (Ed.), *Mobilizing knowledge: Critical reflections on the foundations and practice of physiotherapy*.: Routledge Press
- Starblanket, D., Boehme, G., **Bourassa, C.**, Deiter, J., Legare, M., Jardine, M., Lefebvre, S., Billan, J., & McKenna, B. Pursuing Pathways to Care: Dementia and Aging in Indigenous Communities. *Aging People, Aging Places*. Bristol: Policy Press (April 1, 2020).
- Thorpe L**, Jokinen N, Stemp S. Aging in people with developmental disabilities. IN: Brown, I., Percy, M., Aldersey, H. M., Condillac, R. A., Fung, W. L. A., & Isaacs, B. A. (Eds.). (2020). *Developmental disabilities in Ontario* (4th ed.). Toronto, ON: Delphi Graphic Communications.

Published Papers in Refereed Journals

- Abobakar L, **Engler-Stringer R**, **Leis A**, Vatanparast H., (2021). Evaluation of the impact of the Healthy Start/Départ Santé intervention on improving menu planning practices and improving the congruence between planned menus and actual food served in Saskatchewan childcare centres. *Preventive Medicine Reports* 2021; Vol 23 (2020)101403. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pmedr.2021.101403>
- Abonyi, S.** & Downe, P. (2020). Editorial. Community Engagement and Health-Related Anthropology. *Engaged Scholar Journal: Community-Engaged Research, Teaching and Learning*, 6(1): i-iv. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.15402/esj.v6i1.70736>
- Adegboyega, L., **Groot, G.**, Goodridge, D., Scott, S., & Kinsman, L. (2019). Development of a Program Theory for Clinical Pathways in Hospitals: Protocol for a Realist Review. *Systematic Reviews*, 8(136): 1-7. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13643-019-1046-0>
- Adeyinka DA, **Muhajarine N**, Petrucka P, Warnow Isaac E. Inequities in child survival in Nigerian communities during the Sustainable Development Goal era: insights from analysis of 2016/2017 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey. *BMC Public Health* 2020(Oct); 20, 1613. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-020-09672-8>
- Adeyinka DA, **Muhajarine N**. Time series prediction of under-five mortality rates for Nigeria: comparative analysis of artificial neural networks, Holt-Winters exponential smoothing and autoregressive integrated moving average models. *BMC Med Res Methodol* 2020; 20, 292. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12874-020-01159-9>
- Adeyinka DA, Petrucka PM, Warnow Isaac E, **Muhajarine N**. Changing patterns of gender inequities in childhood mortalities during the Sustainable Development Goals era in Nigeria: findings from an artificial neural network analysis. *BMJ Open* 2021;11:e040302. doi:[10.1136/bmjopen-2020-040302](https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2020-040302)

- Adiba Ashrafi, Cindy Xin Feng, **Cory Neudorf**, Khrishna B. Alphonsus. (2020). Bullying victimization among preadolescents in a community-based sample in Canada: a latent class analysis. *BMC Research Notes*. 13(138): 1-6. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13104-020-04989-4>
- Alam, MS., Dyck, R., **Janzen, B.**, Karunanayake, C., Dosman, J. & **Pahwa, P.** (2020). Risk factors, incidence, and prevalence of diabetes among rural farm and non-farm residents of Saskatchewan, Canada; a population-based longitudinal cohort study. *J Diabetes Metab Disord*, 15: 1563-1582. doi: [10.1007/s40200-020-00693-z](https://doi.org/10.1007/s40200-020-00693-z)
- Alhassan, J. A. K., & **Hanson, L.** (2019). 'It feels like I've lost my independence... Now I just feel like I'm a prisoner trapped in my own city'- Politicizing the transportation-health nexus: Evidence from the Canadian province of Saskatchewan. *Journal of Transport and Health*, 14:100694. doi:[10.1016/j.jth.2019.100694](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jth.2019.100694)
- Alhassan, J. A. K., **Abonyi, S., Neudorf, C., & Hanson, L.** (2021). "It Feels like Somebody Cut my Legs Off": Austerity, Transportation and 'the Web of Dispossession' in Saskatchewan, Canada. *Social Science & Medicine*, 282 (114147). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2021.114147>
- Alhassan, J. A. K., Smith, C. & **Hanson, L.** (2021). Politics, transportation and the people's health: A sociopolitical autopsy of the demise of a 70-year-old bus company. *Critical Public Health*. 32:4, 556-567, doi:[10.1080/09581596.2021.1905152](https://doi.org/10.1080/09581596.2021.1905152)
- Alhassan, J.A.K., Gauvin, L., Judge, J., Fuller, D., **Engler-Stringer, R. & Muhajarine, N.** Improving health through multisectoral collaboration: enablers and barriers. *Canadian Journal of Public Health*. 2021 Dec;112(6):1059-1068. doi: [10.17269/s41997-021-00534-3](https://doi.org/10.17269/s41997-021-00534-3)
- Comment: Paper based on post-doc McRae's research on work conducted in Mozambique (NM is the PI and McRae's supervisor).
- Ali, A. **Hanson, L.** (2021) Premises and Rationale of Contraceptive Services Accessing in Southern Ethiopia: A Phenomenological Exploration. *Ethiopian journal of reproductive health* 13:2. <https://ejrh.org/index.php/ejrh/article/view/349/154>
- Anand, S, **Abonyi, S.**, Arbour, L., Balasubramanian, K., Brook, J., Castleden, H., Chrisjohn, V., Cornelius, I., Davis, AD., Desai, D., Souza, RJ., Friedrich, MG., Harris, S., Irvine, J., L'Hommecourt, J., Littlechild, R., Mayotte, L., McIntosh, S., Morrison, J., Oster, T., Picard, M., Pictou, Landing First Nation., Poirier, P., Schulze, KM. & Toth, EL. (2019). Explaining the variability in cardiovascular risk factors among First Nations communities in Canada: a population-based study. *The Lancet Planetary Health*, 3(12): E511-E520. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2542-5196\(19\)30237-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2542-5196(19)30237-2)
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- Arsenault, R., **Bourassa, C.**, Diver, S., McGregor, D., & Witham, A. (2019). Including Indigenous Knowledge Systems in Environmental Assessments: Restructuring the Process. *Global Environmental Politics*, 19(3): 120-132, https://doi.org/10.1162/glep_a_00519
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