



SHRF
SASKATCHEWAN
HEALTH RESEARCH
FOUNDATION

Brain Health

SOLUTIONS FOCUS AREA 



Fondation
Brain Canada
Foundation



LAUNCH + NETWORKING EVENT

March 26, 2025

Innovation Place, Saskatoon SK

Agenda

1:30pm	Registration and Refreshments Trade Show Open
2:30pm	Announcement from SHRF and Brain Canada
4:00pm	Trade Show Concludes

About the Brain Health Networking + Launch Event

In 2019-2020, Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation launched the Solutions Program. In this program, SHRF has worked closely with other funding partners to provide competitive, peer-reviewed research funding to interdisciplinary teams, including knowledge users, who are developing and implementing innovations to address pressing health needs in Saskatchewan.

SHRF and Brain Canada are bringing neurological conditions to the forefront by collaborating to make Brain Health the focus of SHRF's Solutions Program for the 2025-26 and 2026-27 research grant competitions.

Brain Health is essential for physical health and a fundamental pre-requisite for mental health and well-being throughout our lives. From promoting optimal brain development and cognitive health throughout the lifespan - to preventing, diagnosing and treating numerous neurological conditions, research on brain health is an exciting frontier and holds great promise for solutions that will both improve lives and reduce healthcare burden.

Our goal for this event is to provide a venue to bring together a wide scope of those working in areas of brain health – from researchers to practitioners to advocates – to find synergies and inspire collaborations ahead of the call for applications in the fall.

Friends of Brain Health Sponsors



About SHRF

Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation (SHRF) serves as the provincial agency advancing research and innovation to improve the health and well-being of Saskatchewan's citizens. Through strategic investments and partnerships, we fund high-impact, peer-reviewed research that enhances the health research ecosystem, drives nationally competitive innovation, and delivers tailored solutions that respond to Saskatchewan's unique and evolving health challenges.

Exhibitors

The Ability Hub

www.abilityhubyx.ca/

Allard-Roozen Imaging Suite

wcvm.usask.ca/research/facilities/allard-roozen-imaging-suite-pet-ct.php

Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan

alzheimer.ca/sk/

BetterLTC

www.betterltc.ca/

Brain Canada Foundation

braincanada.ca/

Centre for Health Research, Innovation and Scholarship

saskpolytech.ca/about/departments/CHRIS/

Elmwood Residences

www.elmwoodyxe.ca/

FASD Network of Saskatchewan

www.saskfasdnetwork.ca/

Health Data Research Platform – Saskatchewan

www.scpor.ca/hrdpsk

Jim Pattison Children’s Hospital Foundation

pattisonchildrens.ca/

Neuroplasticity & Neurorehabilitation Research Lab

www.urneurolab.com/

SaskAbilities

www.saskabilities.ca/

SaskAgMatters Mental Health Network

www.saskagmatters.ca/

Saskatchewan Centre for Patient-Oriented Research

www.scpor.ca/

Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation

www.shrf.ca/

Saskatchewan Pain Society

saskpain.ca/

Saskatchewan Prevention Institute

skprevention.ca/

Saskatoon Council on Aging

www.scoa.ca/

Saskatoon MS Clinic

research-groups.usask.ca/skms-office/saskatoon-ms-clinic/about-the-clinic.php

Seniors Centre Without Walls

scww.ca/scww/

Strengthening a Palliative Approach in Long-Term Care

spaltc.ca/

Sylvia Fedoruk Canadian Centre for Nuclear Innovation

fedorukcentre.ca/

Appendix

As part of the event, researchers across Saskatchewan and across disciplines were asked to create snapshots of their research, projects or capacity to print and bring to the event. A portion of these snapshots are captured in this appendix.

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ADVANCING REMYELINATION THERAPIES

THE MYNND LAB AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN



The Myelin in Neurodegenerative and Neurotoxic Disorders (MyNND) Lab, led by **Dr. Olamide Adebisi**, is pioneering research focused on developing therapies to repair damaged myelin sheaths. This work holds promise for treating demyelinating disorders such as multiple sclerosis.

RESEARCH FOCUS AREAS

Myelin Research: Investigating the role of myelin—a protective fatty substance around axons—in neural circuits and how its loss contributes to neurodegenerative and neurodevelopmental disorders.

Potential Myelinogenic Compounds: Exploring novel compounds especially phytochemicals that promote the recruitment, survival, differentiation, and maturation of oligodendrocyte precursor cells, essential for remyelination.

Glia-Glia Interactions: Studying the interplay between glial cells, particularly microglia and astrocytes, and oligodendrocytes during myelin sheath degradation and repair.

Neurotoxicity and Demyelination: Examining how exposure to potentially toxic elements and environmental contaminants may increase the risk of developing demyelinating disorders.

Myelin and cognition: Understanding the molecular mechanisms of myelin's role in cognitive processes and how its loss impacts behaviour.

🔍 SEEKING COLLABORATORS & KNOWLEDGE USERS!

We are looking to collaborate with pharmaceutical companies, and biotech firms interested in developing novel myelin repair therapies. Additionally, we seek partnerships with clinicians, policymakers, and patient advocacy groups to translate our research into real-world applications. If you work in these areas or have complementary expertise, let's connect!

JOIN OUR TEAM!

We welcome passionate researchers and students to join our cutting-edge research focused on developing cognitive-enhancing therapies for myelin loss, aiming to promote functional recovery.

CONTACT US 📍

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🌐 For more details about our research and team, visit the

MyNND Lab website



Aging, Residents, and Caregivers (ARC) Research Unit

At the Aging, Residents, and Caregivers (ARC) Research Unit, we aim to improve the well-being of individuals who are aging with acute illness, chronic disease, and/or serious mental illness with a focus on people living with dementia and/or residing in long-term care homes. Some of our current projects include the following:

- Loneliness and social isolation among people living with dementia
- Time perception and temporalities among people living with dementia
- Long-term care residents living with serious mental illness
- Acceptance and commitment therapy for caregivers of long-term care residents



Are you living with dementia or are you a caregiver for someone living with dementia? Are you a long-term care resident or are you a caregiver for a long-term care resident? If so, feel free to reach out to us about opportunities to join one of our advisory councils! We are always looking to hear about your experiences and what you think needs to change to improve your experiences.

Are you a researcher in the area of dementia and/or long-term care? Reach out to us about potential research collaborations!

Are you a policymaker or decision-maker in a related area? Reach out to us to see how we can better align our research projects to your current priorities!



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Website
www.arcresearch.ca

Social Media
@ARCResearchUnit





**You make your brain,
then your brain makes you.**

Dr. Holly Bardutz

Holly@BardutzBrainHealth.com

Join my brain health community.

BetterLTC

Transforming the health and well-being with older adults

We strive to optimize the health and well-being with older adults, close ones, and carers. We envision long-term care not as a place, rather a continuum of care unique to each individual.

Roslyn M. Compton PhD RN GNC(c)
Director

Not-for-profit Charitable Organization

✉ betterltcsask@gmail.com



www.betterltc.ca

Centre for Health Research, Innovation and Scholarship (CHRIS)



CHRIS is a hub for excellence in applied research for nursing, health sciences, education and community services. The vision of CHRIS is to conduct research that will support patients, families, and healthy communities. The culture of CHRIS is innovative, creative and collaborative. CHRIS engages in applied research partnerships with regional, national and international partners.



Contact: CHRIS@saskpolytech.ca



Learn more at:
saskpolytech.ca/CHRIS





Centre for Health Research, Innovation and Scholarship (CHRIS)

Research Highlights:

- Transforming Health Realities Through Interactive Virtual Engagement (THRIVE): Examining the Impact of Proactive Virtual Wellness Programming for Frontline Public Safety Personnel (PSP)
- Resilient Communities: Crisis Response Framework
- The Virtual Interventions and Community Connections for Indigenous Youth (VICCIY) Initiative
- Saskatchewan Farmer and Rancher Mental Health (FARMh) Initiative
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and Reconciliation in Curriculum
- Assessing the Need for Recreation Therapy Services for Students with High and Complex Needs within the School System
- VR-WELL-T1D: Virtual Reality to Support Teens with Type 1 Diabetes



Learn more at:
saskpolytech.ca/CHRIS



DEVELOPING A
FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND TARGETED TREATMENT
 FOR
MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

michael.levin@usask.ca

**A FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND
 TARGETED TREATMENT
 FOR MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS**

Canada has one of the highest rates of multiple sclerosis (MS) in the world.

Our research team is using innovative drug design to identify first-of-their-kind molecules to directly target a neuronal protein and prevent permanent disability in patients with MS and similar conditions.



Snap the code to learn more

TARGETED ATTACK: A protein called A1 is dysfunctional in the neurons of people with MS. While current MS drug therapies target the immune response, our proposed drug therapy can work to repair A1 function.

PREVENTING DISABILITY AND DEATH: Long-term disability in MS is due to degeneration of neurons. Repairing A1 function halts this, preventing a lifetime of permanent and progressing disability.

NOT JUST FOR MS: A1 is also dysfunctional in Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) and other neurodegenerative diseases, and repairing its function may prevent neuron degeneration and disability in these diseases as well.

Innovative Methods of Pain Assessment for Older Adults with Severe Dementia



#SeePainMoreClearly

Research Project Summary

With collaborators from both within and outside Saskatchewan, our team is developing and evaluating innovative ways of assessing pain in older adults with severe dementia. Specific projects within this program of research include: a) development of an automated computer vision system to detect and monitor pain behaviours in older adults with severe dementia; b) validation of standardized approaches (including apps) for assessing pain in people with severe dementia; and c) implementation science and knowledge translation/mobilization about pain in dementia.

Researchers and Collaborators

Thomas Hadjistavropoulos

Centre on Aging and Health,
University of Regina

Website

<https://research.uregina.ca/hpl/>

<https://research.uregina.ca/cah/>

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Cognitive Neuroscience

Dr. Cordula Vesper, Ph.D.
Cognitive Science



PICASSO RESEARCH CLUSTER

*Promoting Interpersonal Connection
and Alignment for Self and Society*

The **PICASSO Research Cluster** seeks transdisciplinary approaches to practicing, understanding, and enhancing human connection and alignment for the benefit of individuals, groups, and communities.

We study connection and alignment at multiple levels:



Sensory



Physiological



Neural



Physical



Mental



Linguistic



Affective



Values



Spiritual



**discover
more**

Or write to

picasso@usask.ca

SaskAgMatters Mental Health Network Inc.



SaskAgMatters Mental Health Network Inc. is an outcome of the SHRF and SCPOR funded Saskatchewan Farmer and Rancher Mental Health (FARMh) Initiative.

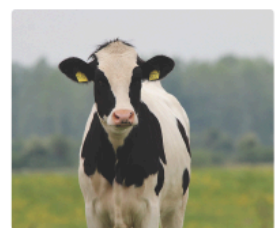
Website

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

Social Media

@saskagmatters

SaskAgMatters bridges the gap between agriculture producers and mental wellness supports for a healthy and productive Saskatchewan agriculture community. They offer free therapy services for Saskatchewan producers and their family. SaskAgMatters therapists are registered mental health professionals with a background in farm culture.



Supporting a loved one? We're here to help!

Keeping family and friends informed, connected, and supported during their loved one's care journey.



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Scan to learn about the FREE mobile app!



Team Carepal

support@teamcarepal.com

teamcarepal.com

THE VICCIY INITIATIVE

Virtual Interventions and Community Connections for Indigenous Youth



Research Project Summary:

The VICCIY Initiative partners with Indigenous youth across Saskatchewan to promote mental health and well-being. Using a community-based action research model, VICCIY combines in-person and virtual activities to improve access to culturally responsive care, preserve Indigenous cultures, and address the needs of youth in rural, remote, and northern communities. At the heart of this initiative is virtual reality (VR) technology, offering immersive, culturally relevant experiences that support youth empowerment and enhance access to mental health and wellness resources.

In its next phase, the VICCIY initiative will expand partnerships with Indigenous communities, trial using a secure VR platform for live and on-demand wellness supports, and evaluate the impact of virtual interventions. The project will explore how virtual reality can address gaps or enhance existing mental health services for Indigenous youth. By measuring the effectiveness of virtual versus in-person engagement, the VICCIY project aims to build sustainable, culturally informed mental health care for remote communities.

For more information contact:

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Website

Coming soon!!!

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Ways to Get Involved

