

Awareness Campaign and Dementia Friendly Initiatives: Evaluation Report

Alzheimer Society of
Saskatchewan(Yorkton)

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Glossary

Term	Definition
Collaborating Organizations	Collaborating organizations are diverse stakeholders from different sectors and organizations who come together in a structured and coordinated way to collectively address complex social issues, pooling their resources and expertise to achieve common goals and create lasting positive change for their community.
Collective Impact	Collective impact is a structured approach to collaboration involving different stakeholders working together to address complex social issues.
Dementia	Dementia is a progressive and degenerative neurocognitive health issue characterized by a decline in cognitive functions including memory, language, reasoning, and the ability to perform daily activities.

List of Acronyms

Term	Definition
ASOS	Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan
DSRS	Dementia Supports in Rural Saskatchewan
ECNWC	The East Central Newcomer Welcome Centre
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
PAC	Public Awareness Coordinator
PLWD	Person(s) Living with Dementia
PVSCRD	Parkland Valley Sport, Culture & Recreation District
RaDAR	Rural Dementia Action Research
SIGN	Society for the Involvement of Good Neighbours
SPHERU	Saskatchewan Population Health and Evaluation Research Unit

Executive Summary

Background

This report provides an assessment of the Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan's Awareness Campaign & Dementia Friendly Initiatives, supported by the Dementia Supports in Rural Saskatchewan (DSRS) initiative. DSRS is a five-year (2019-2024) Collective Impact initiative undertaken by the Saskatchewan Population Health and Evaluation Research Unit (SPHERU), University of Regina, and funded in part by the Government of Canada's New Horizons for Seniors Program. The Dementia Supports in Rural Saskatchewan initiative seeks to improve public awareness of the stigma and social isolation experienced by people living with dementia (PLWD) and their care partners. Through DSRS, SPHERU has supported eight collaborating organizations, including Awareness Campaign & Dementia Friendly Initiatives led by the Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan. The initiative aims to engage individuals and mobilize collective action to increase the awareness of dementia as a community issue, reduce stigma, and improve the accessibility and inclusion of people living with dementia and their care partners.

The Alzheimer Society's major activities included a general awareness campaign, extensive stakeholder outreach, and engagement with local organizations to explore dementia-friendly action plans and goals. A Dementia Community Coordinator based in Yorkton collaborated with other provincial staff members including the Communication and Public Awareness Coordinators to carry out these activities. Public awareness activities included virtual and in-person ABC'S's of Dementia presentations, AdMails, the Dementia Friends Newsletter, media advisories, radio talks, and social media campaigns. Most virtual ABC'S's of Dementia presentations took place during the initial phase of the project (November 2020 - April 2021) because the project started during the COVID-19 pandemic when restrictions on physical community gatherings and engagements were still in place. The awareness campaigns highlighted dementia as an individual and community health issue, the role of the Alzheimer Society's First Link in connecting families with relevant supports in the project area, and strategies to promote dementia-friendly communities. Other project activities included dementia-friendly education sessions, facility

reviews, and community conversations within City Councils, recreation centres, public libraries, pharmacies, leisure centres, and faith groups about inclusion and accessibility for people impacted by dementia.

Evaluation

The research team at SPHERU conducted an outcome evaluation of the Awareness Campaign & Dementia Friendly Initiatives to assess the progress on objectives and outcomes of the project. The evaluation process involved the analysis of data collected through document reviews and community visits. The documents reviewed included regular meeting records, bi-annual program completion and outcome reports, and stories of change drawn from residents in target communities.

Findings

The project tailored activities to meet four primary objectives for engaging individuals and mobilizing collective action to increase the awareness of dementia as a community issue, reducing stigma, and improving the accessibility and inclusion of people living with dementia and their care partners.

Overall, the project leveraged activities to continually create awareness about dementia and identify and connect with individuals and interested community organizations to explore and develop dementia-friendly initiatives. By the end of the project, over 44 ABC'S's of Dementia presentations and approximately 20 community conversations had been held involving approximately 350 residents from Yorkton, and surrounding areas. Approximately 85,000 AdMails highlighting dementia as an individual and community health challenge were distributed in the project area. With respect to increasing the dementia capabilities of local organizations, the project connected with over 60 organizations in Yorkton and 15 surrounding communities.

Establishing these contacts led to significant community collaboration. Several organizations and groups made changes to support an inclusive and accessible environment for individuals experiencing dementia. A third objective was to expand community engagement and conduct facility assessments, especially in smaller rural communities in the project area. In this regard,

several environmental reviews were conducted for local libraries, recreation centres, and newcomers' centres while staff and leadership received training on dementia-friendly programming and planning. Lastly, a virtual knowledge hub is being developed that showcases key learnings gathered from the project, videos, toolkits, and other resources that will sustain knowledge for an ongoing community of practice in the Yorkton region and beyond.

We evaluated the impact of the Awareness Campaign and Dementia Friendly Initiatives project by assessing the key performance indicators for the short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes. With respect to short-term outcomes, we examined the target population's access to the project's services, levels of involvement, interaction, and feedback about the project. Overall, there was strong engagement from the community because of the awareness campaigns and the continued engagement and relationship-building activities with stakeholders in Yorkton and surrounding rural areas. The project team built on the strategy of repeat impressions for building awareness over time. Residents in the area were continually exposed to key messages about dementia warning signs and its challenges for individuals and communities. There were different levels of engagement as communities received information from different outlets. Beyond participating in events, individuals and organizations including the City Council, City departments, community resource centres, pharmacies, and public libraries invited the Dementia Community Coordinator for staff orientation and dementia-friendly recommendations for programming.

The intermediate impact of the project on raising awareness, reducing stigma, and improving organizations' support for patrons in the communities was apparent in the feedback received from several communities. There was a willingness to challenge assumptions about dementia as community members expressed the desire for more community conversations about the issue. Topics addressed during community events including the warning signs of dementia sparked interest and generated conversations amongst attendees, some of whom were willing to be referred to other local programs and services. Also, the Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan Dementia Community Coordinator referred several participants to two other Dementia Supports in Rural Saskatchewan projects. As a result of the extensive engagement, the Yorkton Public

Library, Saltcoats Library, Yorkton Pharmasave, and the Galagher Center implemented changes to enhance dementia inclusivity in their services.

In terms of sustainability, significant relationships were developed through the stakeholder outreach that is expected to further rural engagement efforts, especially in the context of the Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan's work. The project highlighted the potential and limitations of rural communities to implement dementia initiatives that are sustainable. There are opportunities to apply lessons learned to develop models and resources for other rural organizations as the Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan's public awareness strategy will continue to focus on dementia-friendly communities' initiatives.

Key challenges that emerged during the implementation of the project relate to the COVID-19 pandemic and staffing challenges which affected some activities. During the first year (2020-2021) the project team adopted virtual strategies because pandemic restrictions limited engagement activities with communities. However, the virtual connections could not build the sense of community that would have thrived had the team been physically present in the community for longer. Secondly, the Public Awareness Coordinator (PAC) position was vacant for a year and significantly impacted the project work plans especially delaying the development of the knowledge hub until the very end of project activities.

Notwithstanding these challenges, the Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan's public awareness campaign and dementia-friendly initiatives project cooperated with local communities to carry out dementia awareness activities that were impactful and well-received by residents and local organizations. It is evident that many rural communities are open to having conversations about dementia and exploring avenues to make their communities more accessible and inclusive for people living with dementia. Lessons learned from the program emphasize the need for appropriate support for community-based dementia-friendly initiatives. Beyond funding, continued awareness raising is essential for broad community support and utilizing local resources for practical changes that enhance dementia friendliness in the social and physical environment.

Introduction

Saskatchewan has approximately 1.2 million residents, with about 33% living in rural areas. In 2020, the province also had approximately 17,500 individuals living with dementia with this projected to increase to 42,300 by 2050 (Alzheimer Society of Canada, 2022). It is projected that 62% of Canadians with dementia will be living in their own homes (Alzheimer Society of Canada, 2010).

Older adults residing in small cities and rural areas often face unique barriers to accessing dementia care and services, including accessible facilities. The absence of sufficient services supporting persons living with dementia in rural Saskatchewan may decrease social inclusion and affect the well-being of older adults with dementia and their care partners. Dementia Supports in Rural Saskatchewan (DSRS) is a five-year collective impact initiative undertaken by the Saskatchewan Population Health Evaluation and Research Unit (SPHERU) and funded in part by the Government of Canada's New Horizons for Seniors Program. The project focuses on improving the public's awareness of the stigma and social isolation experienced by persons living with dementia and their care partners. SPHERU collaborated with provincial and local organizations to design and implement individual, community, and organizational level interventions to enhance the social inclusion of older adults with dementia living in small towns and rural communities in Saskatchewan.

The project aimed to achieve the following objectives:

1. To improve the feeling of social inclusion of older adults with dementia and their care partners residing in Yorkton and surrounding rural areas (individual programs)
2. To improve public awareness about dementia (community programs)
3. To reduce the level of public stigma about dementia (community programs)
4. To improve support for customers, clients, and employees who are living with dementia or their care partners residing in Yorkton and surrounding areas (organizational programs)

The DSRS has funded eight collaborating organizations to design and deliver interventions to address these objectives. The Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan's Awareness Campaign &

Dementia Friendly Initiatives is one of the projects supported by the DSRS collective impact initiative. The program objectives are to:

- Build public awareness of dementia as a health care and community issue with a focus on reducing stigma and increasing the awareness of individuals and organizations about the overall project.
- Engage and encourage local organizations to identify dementia as an organizational issue and priority and to work as a facilitator with those organizations to increase their dementia capabilities to meaningfully engage persons living with dementia and their care partners.
- Conduct facility assessments and community engagements led by the Alzheimer Society Dementia Community Coordinator with the cooperation of Parkland Valley Sport, Culture & Recreation District (PVSCRD).
- Create, enrich, and maintain resources and knowledge that will sustain an ongoing community of practice in the project region and be provincialized through ASOS's dementia-friendly initiatives.

Project Activities

The project was executed in three phases. There was a general awareness campaign followed by extensive stakeholder outreach, and collaboration with several institutions and organizations to develop dementia-friendly initiatives. The project team included a Dementia Community Coordinator based in Yorkton who collaborated with other provincial staff members including the Communication and Public Awareness Coordinators to carry out these activities.

Most activities that took place during the start of the project (November 2020 - April 2021) were virtual because the project started during the COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions on community gatherings and engagements were still in place. Key awareness activities started during this period were virtual ABC'S's of Dementia presentations, which focused on the warning signs of dementia. When the pandemic situation improved, the Dementia Community Coordinator

organized more in-person ABC'S's of Dementia presentations for residents in Yorkton and surrounding rural areas.

Other public awareness activities included the use of AdMails, the Dementia Friends Newsletter, radio talks, and social media campaigns. These campaigns highlighted dementia as an individual and community health issue, the role of the First Link Coordinator in connecting families with relevant supports, and strategies to promote dementia-friendly communities. The coordinator also conducted outreach with organizations and other community groups to explore more supportive, inclusive, and accessible environments for individuals affected by dementia. These included City Council, City departments, recreation centres, public libraries, pharmacies, leisure centres, and faith-based groups.

The Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan also collaborated with Parkland Valley Sport, Culture & Recreation District (PVSCRD) to launch the Friendly Communities Healthier People Initiative. This phase of the project aimed to engage rural recreational facilities and community centres in Yorkton, Melville, and surrounding communities centered around dementia-friendly programming. The coordinator conducted dementia awareness-raising visits which included a physical review of facilities and training with different leadership and staff on meaningful engagement of people living with dementia. Through these engagements, several stakeholders had the opportunity to explore dementia-friendly insights for programming and planning within their physical and social environments.

The Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan's Dementia Community Coordinator also supported other dementia initiatives implemented by other Dementia Supports in Rural Saskatchewan collaborating organizations in the area. This involved referring families with lived experience of dementia to relevant supports and facilitating mobilization for dementia-friendly public events including community outings and an art exhibition.

Evaluation

The SPHERU team is conducting two distinct types of evaluation during the collective impact initiative. The **process** evaluation examines the socio-cultural, organizational, and external

factors that have shaped and influenced the design and implementation of the Dementia Supports in Rural Saskatchewan collective impact project in Yorkton and surrounding rural areas. The **outcome** evaluation examines the short-term, intermediate, and long-term impact of single CO projects. This report presents the findings of the **outcome evaluation** for the Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan’s Awareness Campaign & Dementia Friendly Initiatives.

Methods

The outcome evaluation, conducted from April 2023 – March 2024, was designed to assess the short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes of the project. We collected data through document reviews, and observations through community visits. Documents reviewed included regular meeting records, bi-annual program completion and outcome reports, and stories of change drawn from residents in target communities. We examined the key performance indicators that reflected the achievement of short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes. The subsequent sections present key findings from the evaluation related to progress made in achieving the project’s objectives and outcomes.

Findings

Project Objectives

The Awareness Campaign and Dementia Friendly Initiatives project aimed to build general awareness about dementia, reduce stigma, and facilitate the involvement of local organizations in dementia-friendly community programming. To meet these objectives, the project adopted a multifaceted approach, integrating dementia knowledge dissemination and training components at the individual, organizational, and community levels. The information analyzed demonstrates that the Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan’s Awareness Campaign & Dementia Friendly Initiatives project achieved three of its three primary objectives.

Objective 1: Enhancing Awareness of Dementia

The first objective of the Awareness Campaign & Dementia Friendly Initiatives was to build public awareness of dementia as a health care and community issue with a focus on reducing stigma and increasing the awareness of individuals and organizations about the overall project.

The project team utilized different mediums including community presentations, AdMails, and social media to disseminate dementia awareness packages. They used the existing eTapestry database of contacts located in the former Sunrise Health Region to correspond with residents and disseminate dementia awareness events in Yorkton and surrounding rural areas. Over 422 contacts (249 in Yorkton and 173 in surrounding rural communities) were invited to participate in the virtual ABC'S's of Dementia presentations. Over 35 personalized ABC'S's of Dementia invitations were sent to municipal, faith-based, and healthcare professional contacts. Other awareness-raising activities included radio and social media campaigns and the distribution of AdMails and mass emails to individuals and organizations in the project area. The eight-week radio and social media campaigns focused on the warning signs of dementia and the programs and services of the Alzheimer Society. Over 85,000 AdMails highlighting dementia as an individual and community health challenge were distributed in the project area. The Communications Coordinator generated and distributed approximately 26 mass emails (e-connects) to over 1,600 recipients (individuals and organizations) in the target area. These e-connects provided information on ABC'S's of Dementia dates, other learning opportunities available in the project area, and links to Dementia Supports in Rural Saskatchewan blog posts with information about the Dementia Friendly Communities initiatives.



Objective 2: Stakeholder Outreach and Enhancing Organizational Engagement

The second objective was to engage and encourage local organizations to identify dementia as an organizational issue and support these organizations to increase their dementia capabilities to meaningfully engage persons living with dementia and their care partners. The Dementia Community Coordinator connected with over 60 organizations (see Appendix A) in Yorkton and 15 surrounding communities. Establishing these contacts led to significant community engagement and collaboration. Some of these organizations included local libraries, pharmacies, and recreation centres. The leadership of some of these institutions made different adjustments in their programming and physical environment to facilitate accessibility for persons living with dementia. Details of some of these measures taken and their impact are discussed in the outcome sections of this report.

Figure 1: Communities (15) reached within the Project Area Map

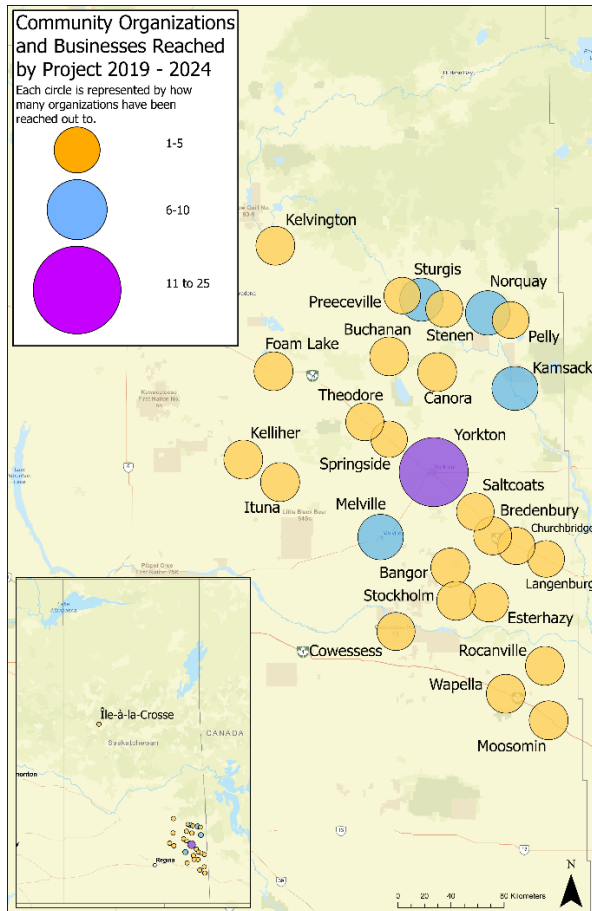


Figure 2: Type of organization/ community group reached

- Fitness Centres
- Communication
- First Nations Communities
- Pharmacies
- Recreational Centres
- Financial Institutions
- Libraries
- First Responders
- Retirement/Long Term Care Homes
- Faith Communities
- Museums
- Municipal Offices

Objective 3: Small Community Facility Reviews and Engagement

A third objective was to collaborate with Parkland Valley Sport, Culture & Recreation District (PVSCRD) to expand community engagement and conduct facility assessments, especially in smaller rural communities in the project area. Through this initiative, the coordinator conducted a physical review of some local libraries, fitness centres, and newcomers’ centres and oriented staff and leadership on dementia-friendly programming and planning. In addition, the directors of recreation facilities from the Parkland Valley District received copies of the new Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan Dementia Friendly Community Recreational Guide “Friendly Communities Health People” to support dementia-friendly planning for their programs.

The Coordinator and the Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan's First Link Coordinator for the region facilitated community conversations upon request from community organizations including retirement homes. Some topics covered during these engagements included reducing the risk of developing dementia, warning signs of disorientation, and de-escalation strategies. Participants received hardcopies and electronic resources on dementia-friendly interactions and other ongoing programs of interest especially the other Dementia Supports in Rural Saskatchewan projects being implemented in the area. These included the Rural Dementia Action Research (RaDAR) Memory Clinics, Cognitive Kitchen, SaskAbilities' `Dementia Friendly Life Enrichment Program', and Godfrey Dean Art Gallery's `Belong Where You Find Yourself' projects. Reports from these other DSRS projects indicated that some of their participants heard about their services through the Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan ABC's of Dementia presentations, and community conversations or were referred by the Dementia Community Coordinator.

Objective 4: Building a Community of Practice

The Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan's awareness campaign project aimed to create a knowledge hub for local organizations, businesses, and individuals to learn practical information about dementia. However, there were delays with this key activity that was designed to meet the objective of enriching and maintaining resources and knowledge that will sustain an ongoing community of practice in the project region. The knowledge hub was in the development stages when the project ended in March 2024. The content will include lessons from the Dementia Supports in Rural Saskatchewan Project and accessible learning resources on dementia.

Project Outcomes

We evaluated the impact of the project using the key performance indicators (KPIs). The KPIs (see Appendix B) were co-developed with the Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan's awareness campaign project team and were reviewed during the planning and implementation phases of the project. We assessed the extent to which project activities matched the indicators for the short-term (reach and engagement), intermediate (effectiveness), and long-term (sustainability and transferability) outcomes.

Short-Term Outcomes: Reach and Engagement

In the context of this project, reach and engagement relate to the target population that accessed the project's services and their level of interaction with the project. Over the project period (November 2020 – March 2024), there were several sessions of community engagement activities including virtual and in-person ABC's of Dementia presentations, public forums, and training with staff of different organizations. By the end of the project, approximately 350 residents in Yorkton and surrounding areas had participated in these forums that raised awareness about dementia. The social media campaign generated over 80 social media posts on warning signs of dementia which was viewed by approximately 135,000 people. Cumulatively, the AdMails, mass email e-connects, and social media campaign made over 200,000 impressions between November 2020 and April 2023. The impressions refer to the number of times dementia content from the project was delivered or displayed to the target audience. By implication, residents in the area were continually exposed to key messages about dementia warning signs and its challenges for individuals and communities. The project team built on this strategy of repeat impressions for building awareness over time.

There were different levels of engagement as communities received information from different outlets. Beyond participating in events, individuals and organizations invited the Dementia Community Coordinator to share more dementia-friendly recommendations. For instance, project news published in local media - *Yorkton This Week* and *The Preeceville Progress* led to requests for dementia-friendly training by a pharmacy and a faith-based group. In another instance, the Good Spirit Housing Authority and Foam Lake Credit Union invited the Dementia Community Coordinator to provide guidance on creating a dementia-friendly environment. The Good Spirit Housing Authority also specifically requested a presentation for their staff. These invites were a direct result of the coordinator's engagement with attendees during another presentation that had taken place at another community resource center. The Yorkton Family Resource center requested recommendations on space alterations and orientation for six staff so that they could provide a supporting environment for grandparents accompanying families to participate in the center's activities and programming.

Overall, there was strong engagement from the community due to the awareness campaigns and the continued engagement and relationship-building activities with stakeholders in Yorkton and surrounding rural areas. This strategy had a snowball effect, individuals and organizations responded by requesting support to learn more and make dementia-friendly adjustments within their social and physical environment. This led to significant changes within some of the organizations and communities. This was also a cue for the Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan project team to continue the next phase of the project which built on the relationships that had already been established with stakeholders interested in dementia-friendly initiatives.

Intermediate Outcomes: Effectiveness

For the purpose of this project, effectiveness as an outcome highlights the impact of the project on enhancing knowledge, behaviour, and practice. We examined the extent to which the project contributed to raising awareness, reducing stigma about dementia, and improving organizations' support for patrons in the communities.

Increased awareness and reducing stigma

With respect to raising awareness and reducing stigma, it was observed that organizations and groups increasingly demonstrated interest in discussions about dementia as an individual and community issue. The Canadian Federation of University Women Yorkton requested a second meeting to discuss reducing risk after a previous meeting with the coordinator. Some of the topics addressed during these presentations including warning signs of dementia, sparked interest and generated conversations amongst attendees, some of whom were willing to be referred to other supports. Several participants of two other Dementia Supports in Rural Saskatchewan projects were referred by the Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan Dementia Community Coordinator.

Other organizations requested more information to increase their knowledge and awareness about dementia-friendly considerations with respect to local community programming. It was observed that there was a willingness to challenge assumptions about dementia. The enthusiasm

to have open conversations about dementia shows a growing community understanding that a majority of people living with dementia reside in communities and need collective support.

Organizations that contacted the Dementia Community Coordinator to increase knowledge of dementia-friendly considerations:



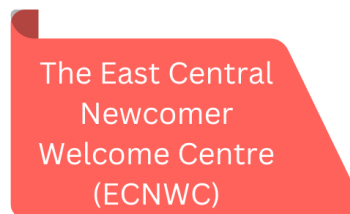
Goal: To explore dementia-friendly considerations for local programs and service

Actions:

- Requested and hosted dementia-friendly community presentations for City departments including maintenance support staff for rinks and public works.
- Reviewed Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan guides and examples of measures adopted by other organizations to support people living with dementia.

Result:

- Staff familiar with gaps and required dementia-friendly factors for their services



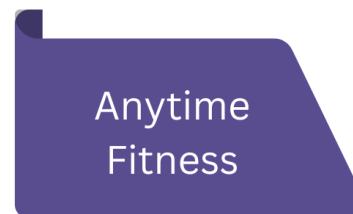
Goal: To learn about supports for their clients

Actions:

- Hosted staff orientation about dementia with dementia community coordinator; escalation strategies examined, and Alzheimer Society toolkits for program planning and dementia in culturally diverse populations

Result:

- Staff is familiar with the basics of interacting with clients so that they feel supported



Goal: To become more dementia-friendly in their space and programming

Actions:

- The team reviewed the Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan's "Friendly Communities Healthy People" guide and identified several areas to enhance accessibility in their facility
- Invited a Dementia Community Coordinator to tour the facility in Yorkton and share recommendations for patrons living with dementia and their care partners

Result:

- There are prospects to incorporate dementia-friendly considerations for the new facility in Moosomin

"Thanks to the Alzheimer Society presentation, I now feel better able and confident in approaching someone who may seem lost or confused if I see them in our arena."

Community Service Staff Member, City of Melville

Improved organizations' supports for patrons

As a result of the extensive engagement, some local organizations engaged the services of the Dementia Community Coordinator of the Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan and implemented changes recommended to enhance dementia inclusivity.

Table: Changes made by local organizations to be more dementia inclusive

Organization	Connection with Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan (ASOS)	Project Intervention	Changes Made
Yorkton Public Library Initiative led by the Branch Manager	The branch connected with the ASOS about making meaningful changes to their space	<p>Coordinator conducted an environmental scan and staff orientation</p> <p>Recommended simple changes for the library to be more inclusive and accessible for people living with dementia and their care partners</p>	<p>Quiet space designated for patrons</p> <p>A larger print keyboard is provided for guests.</p> <p>Upgraded visual signs</p>
Saltcoats Library Initiated by Community Member and Head Librarian	<p>They witnessed positive changes at Yorkton Regional Library and requested their ABC's of Dementia presentation.</p> <p>A Community Member advocated for a letter to be drafted to the Town Council to explore feasible dementia-friendly changes in facilities.</p>	Coordinator reviewed town spaces -library, town office, and curling rink with a community representative and provided recommendations	<p>Increased the number of larger print and adaptive books in the library.</p> <p>A labeled accessible parking spot outside the building, and</p> <p>Modification of physical aspects such as signage and flooring</p> <p>Head Librarian remains engaged with the Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan including participation in a Community</p>

			Conversation around dementia-friendly libraries
Yorkton Pharmasave	Connected with the Dementia Community Coordinator for a dementia-friendly session with staff and owner	Hosted a dementia-friendly education event for staff with the coordinator. Completed environmental scan of the store to determine feasible physical adjustments for added dementia friendliness.	Confirmed staff read the dementia-friendly Communities Toolkit. Adapted fonts to be more visually accessible on medication sheets provided with dementia care prescriptions
Galagher Centre Initiated by Facilities Manager	Collaboration with Alzheimer Society Saskatchewan to implement some recommendations from the City of Yorkton Public Indoor Facility Audit (DSRS-supported project) report	Facilities manager and Dementia Community Coordinator reviewed the Alzheimer Society Saskatchewan Dementia Friendly Recreational Guide/Toolkit. Orientation for facility maintenance, pool, and customer service-welcoming staff on dementia-friendly programming	Alzheimer Society Saskatchewan tip sheets have been added to the electronic bulletin boards used by staff of the Gallagher Centre



A new large-print, high-contrast keyboard at the Yorkton Public Library

*“Learning more about what it means to be dementia friendly has broadened our perspective so that we can improve our facility and our service in hopes of being more accessible to those patrons who face the challenges of dementia. We want them, as well as their care partners, to know that our Library is a safe and welcoming place.” – **Amber Harvey, Branch Manager Yorkton Public Library***

Success Stories - Individual Agency and Community Capacity

At the individual level, some community members were emboldened and adopted an advocacy role in their communities. They challenged the stigma about dementia by mobilizing community conversation and engaging with others about their personal experience with dementia.

Excerpts from Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan Public Awareness Campaign & Dementia Initiatives Outcomes Report:

“An example from the project is [community member] from Saltcoats. Her individual actions rippled through the community. Merle’s leadership and commitment within her community increased the accessibility and inclusion of people living with dementia and addressed the issue of stigma in her rural community. Merle Wiley connected to the Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan in 2022 after attending a presentation on the ABC’S Warning Signs in Saltcoats. Merle is a care partner for her husband Dean, a board member for the Saltcoats Library, and now a dementia friendly community advocate. The community of Saltcoats, due to Merle’s efforts and the support of her sister Joan Michael, the head librarian in Saltcoats, has become a precedent for rural communities coming together to be more inclusive and accessible for people living with dementia and their care partners. It was Merle who initiated the action by the Saltcoats Town Council through the presentation of a letter to the Council. Merle has become a spokesperson for the Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan through her support on multiple educational events and media interviews throughout the year to share her story and empower others to act in their communities.”



“A Director at the Society for the Involvement of Good Neighbours (SIGN) in Kamsack organized a community meeting. Andrea has a personal connection to dementia and saw the need to make Kamsack more dementia friendly. Andrea collaborated with the Kamsack Public Library to host a community conversation, where many local groups and businesses were invited to learn about dementia. The event was attended by a varied audience from many sectors including the mayor, a couple with lived experience, and many community groups including the nursing home, library staff, local manager of a financial institution and town recreation departments.”

Long-Term Outcomes: Sustainability and Transferability

The key factors examined under sustainability and transferability relate to measures taken to establish local partnerships that facilitate the continuity of dementia-friendly conversations and initiatives in Yorkton, surrounding rural areas, and beyond.

Measures for sustainability involve collaboration with community advocates and local institution like the Yorkton Public Library. Significant relationships were developed through the stakeholder outreach that is expected to further rural engagement efforts for the Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan. The cooperation with Parkland Valley Sport, Culture & Recreation District (PVSCRD) facilitated the creation of new community contacts which enabled rural residents to

be familiar with the services of Alzheimer Society beyond the awareness project. These relationships would be vital for the engagement of other rural communities throughout Saskatchewan.

In terms of transferability, the awareness campaign and dementia-friendly initiatives highlighted the potential and limitations of rural communities to implement dementia initiatives that are sustainable. There are prospects for the organization to apply lessons learned to develop models and resources for other rural organizations. Resources and tool kits including the Building Dementia Friendly Communities Guide will be provided on the virtual knowledge hub that is currently being developed. The Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan's public awareness will continue to focus on dementia-friendly community initiatives.

Challenges

Four key challenges emerged during the implementation and delivery of this program.

COVID-19 pandemic

Firstly, the initial stages of the Awareness Campaign & Dementia Friendly Initiatives commenced during the COVID-19 pandemic. Consequently, many communities were not open for the engagement. The project had anticipated the local staff in Yorkton to have a constant presence and be an available in-person resource for individuals and communities. However, this was not feasible during the first year of the project and it was challenging to build a sense of community as anticipated. The project team adapted virtual strategies to initiate connections and built on these later to increase their community presence.

Staffing Challenges

Secondly, staffing challenges at the Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan provincial level delayed the commencement of some activities. The Public Awareness Coordinator (PAC) position was vacant for a year. This position was designed to support the Dementia Community Coordinator based in Yorkton in the second and third years of the project to integrate project work into the organization's processes and strategic objectives. The prolonged vacancy impacted the project work plans including the development of the knowledge hub.

The development of the knowledge hub was a key activity designed to meet the objective of enriching and maintaining resources and knowledge to sustain an ongoing community of practice in the project region. However, due to the staffing challenges, work that had commenced on the knowledge hub was halted. Consequently, the content for the knowledge hub was still in the development stages when the Awareness Campaign and Dementia Initiatives project ended in March 2024.

Limited organizational capacity

Several recreational facilities and faith-based institutions were enthusiastic about dementia-friendly communities. However, they had limited fiscal and organizational capacity to develop initiatives. Some facilities were experiencing multifaceted pressures to remain operative and thus adding a dementia-friendly lens to their programming was more challenging.

Low interest and support for Community Tables

The Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan project planned to bring together a wide range of community representatives from Yorkton and surrounding communities to establish a community table where they would facilitate conversations. The community tables, a powerful tool to stir community agency, might have served as a forum for more engagement of the rural communities beyond the project timeline and area. However, there was no progress with this plan because some key communities showed little interest in the community tables, and there was limited capacity at the local project and provincial levels to sustain support for the community table. Nonetheless, the Alzheimer Society plans to continue supporting community tables.

Lessons Learned

Many rural communities are open to having conversations about dementia and exploring avenues to make their communities more accessible and inclusive for people living with dementia. The cohesion within smaller cities and rural communities offers possibilities to support individual agency and mobilize local capacity to initiate dementia-friendly changes that might be more complex in an urban setting. Community members were influential in effecting changes

through the Parkland Regional Library network, the recreational department of the City of Yorkton, and Saltcoats Library.

Fiscal and organizational capacity challenges may hinder sustained dementia initiatives in rural communities.

Conclusion

The Awareness Campaign and Dementia Friendly Communities Initiatives engaged individuals and mobilized collective action to increase the awareness of dementia as a community issue, reduce stigma, and improve accessibility and inclusion of people living with dementia and their care partners. The greater part of the Awareness Campaign and Dementia Initiatives project strategy focused on engagement including education sessions, environmental reviews, community conversations, and providing resources. Feedback about the ABC's of Dementia presentations stressed the importance of these activities in contrast to self-learning online. The public presentations and community conversations promoted the Alzheimer's Society of Saskatchewan's Resource Centre in Yorkton and increased the profile of the organization's programs and services. The Alzheimer Society also actively supported other Dementia Supports in Rural Saskatchewan Projects in the area. Overall, the comments received indicate that the array of projects were impactful and well received by residents in the target areas. The project team employed extensive outreach and continual engagement to develop significant relationships that would serve as a basis for further rural engagement efforts by the organization. The lessons learned from the program emphasize the need for applicable support for community-based dementia-friendly initiatives. Beyond funding, continued awareness raising is essential for broad community support and utilizing local resources for practical changes that enhance dementia friendliness in the social and physical environment.

References

Alzheimer Society of Canada (2022). *Navigating the path forward for Canada: The landmark study*. Toronto, Ontario.

Alzheimer Society of Canada (2010). *Rising tide: The impact of dementia on Canadian Society*. Toronto, Ontario.

Appendix A: List of Organizations and Individuals Reached

Organizations and Key Individuals Engaged
Access Communications TV Yorkton
Anytime Fitness Esterhazy
BMO Bank of Montreal
Burton Jones, RCMP Yorkton
Caleb Village
Canadian Federation of University Women
Canora Public Library
Carlton Trail Victory Church
City of Melville
City of Yorkton
Dean and Merle Wiley
Deer Park Villa
Eaglestone Lodge Personal Care Home Inc.
East Central Newcomer Welcome Centre
Edna Parrot
Esterhazy Golden Jets
Esterhazy Public Library
Fisher Court
Gallagher Centre
Hearn's Westview Pharmacy
Heather Miazga

Kamsack Family Resource Center
Kamsack Public Library
Good Spirit Housing Authority
Dream Center Church Yorkton
Yorkton Regional Health Centre
Melville Baptist Church
Melville Community Works
Melville Pentecostal Church
Melville Public Library
Melville Yorkton Housing Authority
Norquay Health Centre
Pharmasave #405
Pharmasave #431
Pharmasave Yorkton 443
Rexall Pharmacy
Medical Social Work Department Yorkton Regional Health Centre
Royal Canadian Legion Branch #24
Rural Development Network
Saltcoats Public Library
Sapara's Drug Mart
SaskAbilities - Yorkton Branch
SIGN Housing Authority
Springside Community Resource Center
St. Andrew's United Church

St. Henry's Roman Catholic Church
St. Patrick Roman Catholic church
Sturgis Metis Local
Theodore Village Office
Town of Canora
Town of Kamsack
Town of Kelliher
Town of Langenburg
Town of Saltcoats
Yorkton Chamber of Commerce
Yorkton Crossing Retirement Community
Yorkton Family Resource Centre
Yorkton Hearing Services
Yorkton Public Library

Appendix B: SaskAbilities Dementia Friendly Life Enrichment Program Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Short-Term Outcomes

Reach: Number of target population who access the program.

Engagement (use, participation, acceptability, or uptake): Level of population interactions with the program or the content of the program such as feedback and comments received.

Intermediate Outcomes

Effectiveness (or usefulness): Impact of the program on knowledge (e.g. enhancing public awareness), behaviour (e.g. reducing stigma), and practice (e.g. improving supports for customers and clients).

Long-Term Outcomes

Sustainability: The degree to which the program is continuously used, normalized, and incorporated/integrated into public behaviour and/or organizational activities (institutionalized)

Transferability: The extent to which the program could be effectively implemented in another setting/context.

Activity 1: Enhancing Awareness of Dementia

Activity Objectives: Building public awareness of dementia as a health care and community issue with a focus on reducing stigma and increasing the awareness of individuals and organizations about the overall project.

Tools used:

1. Community presentations (ABC’S’s of Dementia)
2. Awareness Campaign through 1) AdMails campaign and a focus on local newspapers advertising in the smaller centers outside of Yorkton, and 2) Radio, TV, and other social media campaigns promoting the warning signs campaign.

Collective Impact Project Objectives to Achieve:

1. To enhance public awareness about dementia in Yorkton and surrounding areas
2. To reduce the level of public stigma about dementia in Yorkton and surrounding areas

Outcome Measures		Indicators	Data Collection Method	Frequency
Short-Term Outcomes	Reach	1) # of ABC’S’s of Dementia presentation invitations sent to Yorkton-centric contacts	Tracking by PAC & DCC manually using eTapestry data and Excel file	Tracked on an ongoing basis, reported 2x/year via project Activity Report
		2) # of ABC’S’s of Dementia presentations facilitated (indicating presentation dates) by PAC & DCC in the region	Tracking by PAC & DCC using eTapestry data	Tracked on an ongoing basis, reported 2x/year via project Activity Report
		3) #/% of virtual ABC’S’s of Dementia presentations registrants from locations within the former Sunrise Health Region	Tracking by PAC & DCC manually using eTapestry data and Excel file	Tracked on an ongoing basis, reported 2x/year via project Activity Report
		4) #/% of virtual ABC’S’s of Dementia presentations registrants from locations within the former Sunrise Health Region that are new contacts	Tracking by PAC & DCC manually using eTapestry data and Excel file	Tracked on an ongoing basis, reported 2x/year via project Activity Report
		5) # of ads/posts published in local newspapers or other social media	Tracked by DPAC and/or Communications Coordinator	Tracked on an ongoing basis, reported 2x/year via project Activity Report
		6) # of AdMails recipients		
		7) # of media interviews completed by staff (PAC,	Tracking by PAC & DCC using eTapestry data	Tracked on an ongoing basis, reported 2x/year via project Activity Report

		DCC, and/or FLC) in the region		
		Communities reached		
	Engagement	1) # of ABC'S's of Dementia presentations hosted by organizations/businesses in the Yorkton area (and # of attendees)	Tracking by PAC & DCC using eTapestry data	Tracked on an ongoing basis, reported 2x/year via project Activity Report
		2) # of Yes responses to Q7 on the post-presentation Survey (immediately after a presentation), and # of Yes responses to Q6 on the 3–4-month post-presentation follow-up survey which indicates a request for contact	ABC'S's of Dementia post-presentation Surveys; Tracked by PAC & DCC manually	Tracked on an ongoing basis, reported 2x/year via project Activity Report
		3) # of PLWD and/or care partners engaged as co-presenters in community presentations	Tracked by PAC & DCC manually	Tracked on an ongoing basis, reported on in a narrative component of the 2x/year Activity Report
		4) % of responses on follow-up presentation self-assessment	ABC'S's of Dementia post-presentation Surveys; Tracked by PAC & DCC manually	Tracked on an ongoing basis, reported 2x/year via project Activity Report
		5) Type and nature (content) of feedback or comments received to ad-mail or social media	No specific data collection method is available, which would have to either be narrative based when PAC & DCC are aware of notable correspondence OR may not be possible to identify at all	
Intermediate Outcomes	Effectiveness	1) Number (#)and percentage(%) of new self-referrals or direct referrals to FLC in the region	Tracking by local FLC through regular eTapestry database input protocols	Tracked on an ongoing basis, reported on 2x/year via project Activity Report OR 1x/year to coincide with the P&S team's existing Ministry reporting processes
		2) # of new clients in the region	Tracking by local FLC through regular eTapestry database input protocols	Tracked on an ongoing basis, reported on 2x/year via project Activity Report OR 1x/year to coincide with the P&S team's existing Ministry reporting processes
		3)# of presentation attendees reporting knowledge applied and/or increase in perceived confidence for doing so at the time of self-assessment	ABC'S's of Dementia Presentation Survey: 3–4-month follow-up (responses to Q2-5)	Tracked on an ongoing basis, reported on 2x/year via project Activity Report OR 1x/year to coincide with the P&S team's existing Ministry reporting processes
		4)# and % of participants reporting knowledge increased at the time of self-assessment	"Strongly Agree" or "Agree" to Q1-5 of ABC'S's of Dementia Post-Presentation Participant Survey	Tracked on an ongoing basis, reported on 2x/year via project Activity Report OR 1x/year to coincide with the P&S team's existing Ministry reporting processes
		5) Gauging intent to use the learning through:	Post-Presentation follow-up surveys	Tracked on an ongoing basis, reported on 2x/year via project Activity Report OR 1x/year to coincide with the P&S team's existing Ministry reporting processes

		<p>1. #/% of respondents that indicated they have taken steps following the presentation around the 5 key areas in response to Q1 on the 3-4 month Post-Presentation follow-up survey</p> <p>2. #/% of respondents indicated responses on Q 6 of the Post-Presentation Participant survey immediately after a presentation (virtual or in-person)</p>		

Activity 2: Stakeholder Outreach and Enhancing Organizational Engagement

Activity Objectives: Engaging and encouraging local organizations to identify dementia as an organizational issue and priority and to work as a facilitator with those organizations to increase their dementia capabilities to meaningfully engage PLWD and their care partners.

Tools Used:

1. Dementia Community Coordinator position in Yorkton
2. Dementia Friends Newsletter

Collective Impact Project Objectives to Achieve:

To improve support for customers, clients, and employees living with dementia or their care partners in Yorkton and surrounding areas.

Outcome Measures		Indicators	Data Collection Method	Frequency
Short-Term Outcomes	Reach	1) # of Dementia Friends sign-ups received & % indicating location in former Sunrise Health Region	Tracking by PAC in the eTapestry database	Currently report is pulled Quarterly for other ASOS reporting purposes, could be provided to SPHERU 2x/year via project Activity Report
		2) # of business/organization contacts on the former Sunrise Health Region eTapestry stakeholder contact list to identify growth in the number of contacts in ASOS database over time	Tracking by DCC & PAC in the eTapestry database	Tracked on an ongoing basis, reported on 2x/year via project Activity Report OR 1x/year to coincide with P&S team's existing Ministry reporting processes
	Engagement		Will likely need to be captured in a narrative component (if possible) which emphasizes organizational relationship building.	Narrative component could be included in Activity Report 2x/year
		2) # of inquiries and correspondence/conversations shared with Yorkton & area organizations and businesses that inquire about awareness or dementia-friendly information (including # and type of toolkits/resources shared, etc.).	Correspondence & outreach with contacts will be logged by DCC & PAC in the eTapestry database	Narrative component in project Activity Report which could describe the engagement with key contacts/stakeholders
Intermediate Outcomes	Effectiveness	1) Actions or plans local organizations undertake or commit to be more dementia inclusive	Correspondence & outreach with contacts will be logged by DCC & PAC in the eTapestry database; ongoing relationship building with contacts	Narrative component in project Activity Report which could describe the engagement with key contacts/stakeholders
Long-Term Outcomes	Sustainability	1) # of contacts on the eTapestry list in the Sunrise region as contacts included on that list would be able to receive ongoing communication and contact by ASOS staff		
	Transferability	TBD Later		

Activity 3: Building a Community of Practice

Activity Objectives: Creating, enriching, and maintaining resources and knowledge that will sustain an ongoing community of practice in the project region and be provincialized through ASOS's dementia-friendly initiatives.

Tools Used:

1. Creation of a knowledge hub
2. Dementia Friendly Canada modules and toolkits
3. ASOS resources

Collective Impact Project Objectives to Achieve:

1. To improve public awareness about dementia in Yorkton and surrounding areas
2. To reduce the level of public stigma about dementia in Yorkton and surrounding areas
3. To improve support for customers, clients, and employees living with dementia or their care partners in Yorkton and surrounding areas

Outcome Measures	Indicators	Data Collection Method	Frequency	
Short-Term Outcomes	Reach	1) # of DFC module presentation invitations sent to Yorkton-centric contacts	Tracking by PAC & DCC manually using eTapestry data and Excel file	tracked on an ongoing basis, reported 2x/year via project Activity Report
		2) # of Yorkton COs and local businesses contacted for promotion of knowledge hub?		
	Engagement	1) # of Sask. & Yorkton-based contacts participating in the DFC pilot phase of module development	PAC is currently tracking this manually via Excel	tracked on an ongoing basis, reported 2x/year via project Activity Report
		2) # of DFC presentations hosted by organizations/businesses in the Yorkton area (and # of attendees)	Tracking by PAC & DCC manually using eTapestry data and Excel file	tracked on an ongoing basis, reported 2x/year via project Activity Report
		3) # of Yorkton & area participants in Zoom-based conversations about DFC module content	Zoom-based conversation plans are still pending; if information from such is going to be reported, it may be captured in a narrative component by ASOS OR could EC observe conversations to take down notes on anecdotal/self-declared use by participating contacts	
4) # of Saskatchewan contacts that have completed the Dementia Friendly Canada modules	Note: Currently, I can only confirm that Dementia Friendly Canada module data will indicate the # of SK-based individuals that have completed the modules.	tracked on an ongoing basis, reported 2x/year via project Activity Report		
Effectiveness	1) What organizations or businesses have reached out for conversations about awareness or DFC and any follow-ups	Correspondence & outreach with contacts will be logged by DCC & PAC in the eTapestry database; ongoing relationship building with contacts	Narrative component in the project Activity Report could describe the engagement with key contacts/stakeholders	
	2) # of partners and COs who report/indicate they are incorporating changes to become more aware and/or dementia-friendly in the future	Correspondence & outreach with contacts will be logged by DCC & PAC in the eTapestry database; ongoing relationship building with contacts	Narrative component in the project Activity Report could describe the engagement with key contacts/stakeholders	
Sustainability	1) # of businesses/organizations that indicate they have incorporated	ASOS may be able to report on correspondence & outreach efforts with	EC in collaboration with all COs and members of CT	

		information about dementia and/or DFC into a staff PD opportunity or onboarding process	contacts/stakeholders, but uptake/use may not be fully known unless that organization self-declares such.	
		2) # of businesses/orgs that indicate they have incorporated changes to environment, policies, or programs because of their increased awareness	ASOS may be able to report on correspondence & outreach efforts with contacts/stakeholders, but uptake/use may not be fully known unless that organization self-declares such.	EC in collaboration with all COs and members of CT
	Transferability	TBD Later		