



## Spring 2020 Newsletter



### Update from the Board Chairs

Living in Saskatchewan, we rarely face threats to our collective health that capture the attention as acutely as the global spread of COVID-19. The impact of the pandemic has had giant repercussions on how we work, study, connect with each other, and stay healthy. People living with chronic pain now face further restrictions in access to healthcare appointments, exercise and leisure activities, and social engagement through religious gatherings and visiting with family or friends. This adds to the already enormous burden of living with pain.

During these unsettling times, it is important to be creative in how we support each other. Many healthcare providers offer appointments over the phone or videoconferencing. Meetings, events, and even fitness instruction are being offered online. **Share your story at [info@saskpain.ca](mailto:info@saskpain.ca)** about how you've been able to manage pain or keep your mind and body active. Join the Canadian Pain Society **#Tweetchat #CovidPain** on Wednesday, March 25 at 5 pm (7 pm EDT) for a national discussion on managing pain during the pandemic.

The focus of this newsletter is on **Saskatchewan programs to improve medication management** for people living with chronic pain. On pages 2-4 we

profile RxFiles academic detailing service and patient information materials, medSask information service for patients and healthcare providers, and the newly funded Medication Assessment Centre Inter-professional Opioid Pain Service in Saskatoon. These three programs, along with the Opioid Stewardship Program and Regina Chronic Pain Clinic can help patients and healthcare providers get evidence-based support for medication management of pain.

**SaskPain's website is undergoing renovations.** We look forward to unveiling our improved website in April. **SaskPain is partnering with researchers** from the Saskatchewan Health Authority and University of Saskatchewan on a community-based research project to improve pain management. An overview of this and other recently funded pain research is provided on page 5.

The Canadian Pain Task Force continues to engage with stakeholders across the country through an **online survey** about ways to improve how Canada prevents, manages, and learns about pain. Information on how to share your views is on page 4.

We hope you enjoy reading the Spring 2020 issue of the SaskPain newsletter in good health.

*Susan Tupper and Glen-mary Christopher,*

SaskPain Board Chairs

# Saskatchewan Supports for Medication Management of Chronic Pain

## Medication Assessment Centre (MAC)

The Medication Assessment Centre (MAC) is a pharmacist-led, patient-centered service located at the College of Pharmacy and Nutrition, University of Saskatchewan. People who are taking a large number of medications, or who are having problems or questions about their medications, can make an appointment to meet with a MAC pharmacist. The pharmacist will take the time to answer any questions and will work with the patient's primary prescriber if adjustments are needed to improve the safety or effectiveness of their medications. The MAC accepts referrals from all health professionals and patients can also self-refer.

**The MAC iOPS (inter-professional opioid and pain service)** is a new initiative at the MAC, which combines two trusted medication-related resources, medSask and the MAC, to deliver individualized, patient-centered access to chronic pain management. Our team consists of pharmacists with training and experience in chronic pain management, who consult with a physician who has an established practice in a chronic pain clinic. In partnership with another great home-grown resource, RxFiles, we provide up-to-date, evidence-based pain medication management and educational services for primary care providers and their patients. Any patient in Saskatchewan who takes opioids, has chronic pain, or has opioid use disorder, can be referred to the MAC iOPS. For more information go to: <https://pharmacy-nutrition.usask.ca/mac/>



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## Upcoming FREE Pain Education in SK

### Project ECHO © Chronic Pain for Healthcare Providers

A series of 10 case-based learning modules for healthcare providers will be offered in January to May, 2020. Two CME credits are available for each class. Contact Cathy at [echo@cps.sk.ca](mailto:echo@cps.sk.ca) to register. All healthcare disciplines are welcome.

## Upcoming Pain Conferences

**Canadian Pain Society (CPS) 41st Annual Scientific Meeting** **CANCELLED**. The planning committee is exploring online options for delivering planned program sessions. For more information: [www.canadianpainsociety.ca/](http://www.canadianpainsociety.ca/)

**Pain Society of Alberta Annual Meeting**. Lake Louise, AB. October 16-18, 2020. For early-bird registration and conference information: [www.painab.ca/](http://www.painab.ca/)

# Saskatchewan Supports for Medication Management of Chronic Pain (continued)

## RxFiles Resources for Pain Management

RxFiles Academic Detailing is a service that provides independent, balanced drug information and education for Saskatchewan clinicians. It is hosted by the University of Saskatchewan, College of Pharmacy and Nutrition and funded by an annual grant from the Saskatchewan Ministry of Health.

While “academic detailing” may not be a common term heard throughout the health care system, “RxFiles” has become a household name to many Saskatchewan practitioners, and academic detailing (AD) is precisely what the RxFiles team excels at. A brief explanation for those unfamiliar with the terminology, academic detailing is a service provided to front line clinicians, that provides evidence-based, unbiased, interactive education on topics that are important to both the clinician and their patients.

**Pain and Opioid Resource Links:** The RxFiles has resources that address a variety of pain management topics. With growing concerns about opioids, several documents address this area specifically.

[www.rxfiles.ca/rxfiles/uploads/documents/RxFiles-Pain-and-Opioid-Resource-Links.pdf](http://www.rxfiles.ca/rxfiles/uploads/documents/RxFiles-Pain-and-Opioid-Resource-Links.pdf) .

**PainLinks: Resources for Those Living with Pain (for SK Residents):**

This document will help clinicians and patients identify local, national and international non-pharmacological resources to help patients with pain. Those that can be accessed at no cost are designated as “free”. <http://www.rxfiles.ca/PainLinks>

For more information visit: [www.RxFiles.ca](http://www.RxFiles.ca), or email [info@RxFiles.ca](mailto:info@RxFiles.ca).

**Getting back on the road of life:** this 1 page document is intended to assist conversations between patients and clinicians. It compares trying to manage chronic pain with just medication to trying to drive a car with just one tire that isn’t flat. Following the analogy, it supports exploring the role of psychological therapies, self-management strategies, and physical interventions.

[www.rxfiles.ca/RxFiles/uploads/documents/Car-4%20Flat-Tires-4-patient-RxFiles-CEP.pdf](http://www.rxfiles.ca/RxFiles/uploads/documents/Car-4%20Flat-Tires-4-patient-RxFiles-CEP.pdf)

**Activity/Exercise Prescription:** this modifiable template can be useful to help turn good intentions for exercise into action. [www.rxfiles.ca/rxfiles/uploads/documents/Exercise-RxFiles-Rx.pdf](http://www.rxfiles.ca/rxfiles/uploads/documents/Exercise-RxFiles-Rx.pdf)



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# Saskatchewan Supports for Medication Management of Chronic Pain (continued)



## medSask

### Patients, Clients, and Caregivers:

- Are you looking for more information about your prescription medications?
- Are you worried about interactions with your medications or supplements?
- Are you experiencing a side effect and wondering how to manage it?
- **medSask can help you find answers to your questions about prescriptions, over-the-counter medications, and herbal products.**

### Healthcare Providers:

- Do you have a question about off-label use of a medication?
- Are you looking for information about the safe use of medications in a pregnant or breastfeeding patient?
- Do you have a question about an herbal product or supplement for pain?
- **medSask supports appropriate prescribing and medication safety in Saskatchewan by providing accurate, evidence-based information on medications.**

Based out of the College of Pharmacy and Nutrition at the University of Saskatchewan, medSask is a team of licensed pharmacists that responds to medication questions. We provide drug information for patients, clients, pharmacists, physicians, nurses, and other health care providers of Saskatchewan at no charge. We are available 365 days a year from 8 am-midnight on weekdays and 5pm-midnight on weekends and holidays. Our pharmacists have access to reliable, current information and are another important resource for pain management in our province. Call us for expert answers to your medication questions!

Consumers (patients/caregivers): 1-800-665-3784

Healthcare professionals: 1-800-667-3425

[www.medsask.usask.ca](http://www.medsask.usask.ca)

## Canadian Pain Task Force (CPTF)—Share your ideas on improving pain management

- Find out more about the CPTF consultation on ways to improve how we understand, prevent and manage pain in Canada, go to: [Engaging Canadians to better understand, prevent, and manage pain](http://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/programs/consultation-understand-prevent-manage-pain.html) or cut and past the following url in your browser:

[www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/programs/consultation-understand-prevent-manage-pain.html](http://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/programs/consultation-understand-prevent-manage-pain.html)

- Questions or comments? Contact the CPTF Secretariat at [cptfsecretariatsecretariatgtcsld@canada.ca](mailto:cptfsecretariatsecretariatgtcsld@canada.ca)

# Research Updates



**Two Saskatchewan research teams** received funding from the Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation (SHRF) and Saskatchewan Centre for Patient Oriented Research (SCPOR) for two-year projects aimed at improving pain management in Saskatchewan.

- Dr. Susan Tupper (Saskatchewan Health Authority) and Karen Jukes (University of Saskatchewan, Nursing) are principal investigators on a project entitled, ***Improving pain care through emerging Saskatchewan health networks: a community-based participatory approach***. **SaskPain** is a community partner on this project that will build capacity for patient family advisors, health care providers, community-based organizations, and healthcare decision makers to identify, implement and evaluate solutions for improved chronic pain management in health networks in Saskatchewan.
- Dr. Thomas Hadjistavropoulos and Louise Castillo (University of Regina) were funded for, ***Development, Implementation and Evaluation of a Large Scale Social Media Campaign to Mobilize Evidence-Based Knowledge About Pain in Dementia***. Their project aims to foster a science-media partnership using established social media platforms to increase awareness, accessibility, and uptake of evidence-based information among health professionals, caregivers of people with dementia, policy makers, and the public at large. During the 2-year project, they will collaborate with provincial and national organizations, patient/caregiver partners, health authority decision makers, health professionals and digital marketing experts to build their social media campaign. By mobilizing and disseminating cutting edge knowledge and solutions, the ultimate goal of our **#SeePainMoreClearly** initiative is to improve the quality of life of people with severe dementia who often suffer from under-recognized and undertreated pain.

## Pediatric Chronic Pain Research Studies—Participate in Research

Looking for youth and young adults aged 12-25 who live with chronic pain and their parents to sign up to learn about future research studies. For more information or to sign up go to:

<https://is.gd/permissiontocontact> or email [cj.mcmahon@usask.ca](mailto:cj.mcmahon@usask.ca)

### Include your announcements in upcoming newsletters

SaskPain distributes quarterly newsletters to over 300 healthcare providers, healthcare administrators, and people living with pain in the province— and we continue to grow. Share your news or announcements about upcoming pain-related events in the next newsletter. Email your announcement to [info@saskpain.ca](mailto:info@saskpain.ca).

### Join our Newsletter or Social Media Teams

Interested in helping build SaskPain through Social Media and the newsletter? Email [info@saskpain.ca](mailto:info@saskpain.ca) for more information.



**DID YOU KNOW... 1 in 5 Canadians suffer from chronic pain?**



**Online Therapy Unit**

SERVICE, EDUCATION AND RESEARCH



If you experience symptoms of depression and anxiety resulting from **chronic pain** and want help at your fingertips. The Online Therapy Unit for Service, Education, and Research is offering a **FREE eight-week course** to improve coping with chronic pain.

- Our five online modules are based on cognitive behavior therapy, and designed to improve chronic pain management.
- During the course, you will receive weekly support and guidance via secure email.

### You may be eligible if you:

- Are over 18 years of age and residing in Saskatchewan
- Have experienced pain for at least three months
- Have access to a computer with Internet
- Are willing to take part in a research study and are willing to provide feedback
- Are not at risk of suicide



**Online Therapy Unit**

SERVICE, EDUCATION AND RESEARCH



 306-337-3331

 [online.therapy.user@uregina.ca](mailto:online.therapy.user@uregina.ca)

 [www.onlinetherapyuser.ca](http://www.onlinetherapyuser.ca)

The Online Therapy Unit is funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Rx & D Foundation, and the Saskatchewan Health Research foundation and has received ethics approval from the University of Regina Research Ethics Board.

