

improving pain in sk

+ COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH TEAM

welcome to

BETTER NEWS

National Pain Awareness Week is Nov 1 – 8



our goal

Our team is dedicated to coming together to give pain a voice, because right now there is a lack of integrated services and support for those living with chronic pain. We believe if we can hear the stories of those living with pain, and then co-design services and programs, that we will close the gap between what is needed and what exists, reducing existing barriers currently faced by those living with pain, and ultimately improving well being.

We are bringing together people who live with pain, community-based organizations, healthcare providers, and healthcare decision-makers in three communities that include:

- **Regina: adolescents and young adults**
- **Saskatoon's core neighborhoods**
- **Yorkton: adults**

we are here!



4 phase project

- 1 Interviewing stakeholders in each community to learn about gaps and opportunities for pain management.
 - 49 interviews have been completed so far in Phase 1, including 23 interviews of People with Lived Experience with pain.
- 2 Working groups will be formed in each community to plan one pain management improvement.
- 3 Support implementation and evaluation of the work identified in Phase 2 in each community.
- 4 Develop tools to support ongoing quality improvement work.

What have we found so far?

Preliminary findings reveal the high burden of care on People with Lived Experience (PwLE), gaps in fundamental pain management knowledge, low awareness of existing resources, and lack of community-based options for ongoing management of chronic pain.

- Stigma & discrimination are common. Culturally insensitive remarks, systemic racism, & dismissal of concerns.
- Delays in accessing a diagnosis and care plan are common. PwLE wait years for referrals, sometimes with no answer to why they have pain.
- PwLE have to self-navigate the system, look for their own solutions, & request referrals.
- Children living with chronic pain have unique needs, and lack equitable service.
- Pain is isolating & can have a devastating impact on all aspects of life for the person with pain and their family.

meet the team

(each newsletter we will profile a different team member)



SHARON OKEEWEEHOW

is an Indigenous woman from the Muscowpetung First Nation in southern Saskatchewan, currently living in Saskatoon. She has a Masters of Social Work, is a counsellor, an engaging story teller and writer, and is now semi-retired from being a patient family advisor with the SHA and in private loss and grief counselling. She brings an Indigenous perspective and connections to many Indigenous networks. Sharon is an active member of the research team assisting with patient engagement, data collection, and knowledge sharing.

let's connect+
share our research

@improvingpainsk

Improving Pain In SK