



SSM CONFERENCE
May 21-22, 2025
VIA ZOOM



2025 CONFERENCE BOOK

Strength in Community: We Have What It Takes



Greetings

FROM SSM



Shan Landry
President

Much of SSM's current work is focused on communities as places where people of all ages and abilities can live and thrive. While our focus is on older adults, and we approach our work from that perspective, we know that communities that ensure older adults can live and thrive in their own homes and communities with access to activities, services and the supports they need, are places where all people are healthier and happier.

So often communities focus on what they don't have or don't seem to have enough of. This conference seeks to shift that focus to looking at the unrecognized strengths found in Saskatchewan communities both large and small. We hope that the sharing of information and stories of community realities will provide templates for other communities to move forward in the future.



Holly Schick
Executive Director

We will hear about the development of some exciting programs in British Columbia that may provide ideas for initiatives here in Saskatchewan. We will explore the magic of age-friendly communities and how age-friendly community development can help communities thrive. Various individuals and groups will share the creative and exciting things they are doing to help them and their communities stay healthy and strong.

On behalf of the SSM Board of Directors, our organizational members, partners and staff we welcome you to our annual conference and thank you for your interest and support.



CONFERENCE AGENDA

Wednesday May 21, 2025

10:00 **Welcome, instructions, land acknowledgement**

Community Development Enables Community Strength

10:15 **Introduce Speaker**
– *Kari Dean, Saskatchewan Blue Cross*

Community Development within BC's Better at Home Initiative
– *Bobbi Symes, Director, Healthy Aging at United Way, BC*

11:30 **Door Prizes and Messages from Sponsors and Community Groups**

11:40 **Strength in Community**
– *Don Johnson, Kipling Age-Friendly Committee*

12:15 **Lunch**

Practical Community Initiatives

1:00 **Thrive at Home**
– *Jennifer Wright, Senior Improvement Lead, Saskatchewan Health Quality Council*

Candle Lake: Implementing Social Prescribing Builds Strength
– *Marianne and Terry Kostyna, Candle Lake Health Services Committee*

Data Collection is Exciting
– *Beliz Açan Osman and Suelen Meira Góes, Researchers, Saskatchewan Health Quality Council*

Service 55+
– *Éric Lefol, General Manager, Vitalité 55+*

Messages from Sponsors and Community Groups

Transportation

- Research on Current Transportation in Saskatchewan
– *Jacob Alhassan, Assistant Professor, Department of Community Health, U of S*
- Hudson Bay Bus Project
– *Audrey Harsh, Volunteer Board Chair*

3:15 **Door Prizes
Closing**

CONFERENCE AGENDA

Thursday May 22, 2025

9:00 **Welcome**

How Older Adults and Communities Stay Healthy and Strong

9:10 **Working/Volunteering-Rewards and Challenges**

– *Jayne Whyte; Randy Dove; Kerrie Strathy*

Contributing to Community after ‘Retirement’

– *Lorne Calvert, former Premier of Saskatchewan*

The Magic of Age-Friendly Communities

– *Doug Still, Linda Pratt, Wendy Thienes, Ashley Scholefield*

Age-Friendly Businesses

– *Wendy Thienes, SSM Age-Friendly Staff*

Moose Jaw Older Adult Employment Matching

– *Barry Watson, Senior MooseJobs Program Coordinator*

11:45 **Door prizes
Closing**





COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ENABLES **COMMUNITY STRENGTH**



Community Development within BC's Better at Home Initiative

Bobbi Symes, MA, CPG
United Way, British Columbia

Bobbi Symes is the Director of Healthy Aging at United Way British Columbia. Bobbi is a dedicated professional Gerontologist, with a passion for improving the quality of life for older adults. In her role at UWBC, she oversees the implementation, and evaluation, of programs to help seniors remain independent at home and stay connected with their community. She has extensive experience in research and program management, specializing in the areas of population health, injury prevention, and older adults.



Strength in Community

Don Johnson
Kipling Age-Friendly Committee

A lifelong resident of Kipling and area, Don was a grain farmer for 31 years followed by a 15 year career in Ag Equipment sales followed by 10 years of retirement and, happily, still counting. Don is a past Vice-President of the SSM Board of Directors as well as a past Chair of the Age-Friendly Saskatchewan Committee. Don was a founding member of the Kipling and District Age-Friendly Committee and remains an active member of the organization.



PRACTICAL COMMUNITY INITIATIVES



Candle Lake: Implementing Social Prescribing Builds Strength

Marianne Kostyna

Chairperson, Candle Lake Health Service Committee

Marianne Kostyna, current Chairperson for the Candle Lake Health Service Committee and author of the 2024 Community Project “Candle Lake - Alive and Well”, setting a path to identify ways for our community, (and possibly other communities), to support and grow local health services, and promote healthy living for all our residents.



Terry Kostyna

Member, Candle Lake Health Services Committee

Terry Kostyna, recently retired Mayor of Candle Lake, continues as a member of the Candle Lake Health Services Committee, with particular focus on government and senior health agency relations. Terry also co-leads the Transportation section of Thrive at Home. He finds his 20 years of experience in the transportation business extremely helpful in a logistical approach to helping seniors get around and remain active outside their homes.



PRACTICAL COMMUNITY INITIATIVES



Thrive at Home

Jennifer Wright

Senior Improvement Lead with the Saskatchewan Health Quality Council

Jennifer supports a variety of strategic improvement projects, including Thrive at Home, an initiative aimed at strengthening community-based care and supports for older adults. She values any opportunity to collaborate, and make meaningful connections, with partners across Saskatchewan to drive improvements in health and well-being for everyone.



Data Collection is Exciting

Beliz Açan Osman

Researcher, Saskatchewan Health Quality Council

Beliz Açan Osman - As Senior Researcher at the Saskatchewan Health Quality Council, Beliz supports informed decision-making grounded in evidence and real-world needs. Using health and health services data, she helps us better understand the strengths and gaps in our health system, an integral part of driving change and accelerating improvement in health and healthcare throughout Saskatchewan.



Suelen Meira Góes

Researcher, Saskatchewan Health Quality Council

Suelen Meira Góes - As a valued researcher with the Saskatchewan Health Quality Council, Suelen plays a key role in planning, implementing, and evaluating community-driven initiatives using participatory methodologies, equity-focused approaches, and innovative measurement and knowledge translation strategies. Applying her esteemed skills and expertise, she leads the evaluation of the Social Prescribing pilot in Saskatchewan, in collaboration with the Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism, the provincial lead for this initiative.



PRACTICAL COMMUNITY INITIATIVES



Service 55+

Éric Lefol
General Manager

Born in France, Éric moved to Saskatchewan in 1993. Holding a PhD in Agriculture and a MBA, he had a first career in agricultural research until 2005, followed by a second career as a consultant, working with the French communities across the country. Eric was hired in 2019 as the Executive Director of Vitalité 55+, a not-for-profit organization providing programs and services for French-speaking seniors in Saskatchewan.



Research on Current Transportation in Saskatchewan

Jacob Alhassan, *Assistant Professor,*
Department of Community Health, U of S

Dr Jacob Alhassan is an Assistant Professor, Dept of Community Health and Epidemiology, College of Medicine, U of S. Jacob has worked with community organizations and governments on improving transportation access. Using the closure of the STC as a case study, Jacob is conducting research on the ways government transport policy influences health outcomes.



Hudson Bay Bus Project

Audrey Harsh, *Volunteer Board Chair*

Audrey worked in Alberta for many years, earning a B.Ed and then teaching at Fairview College in Peace River country. She also taught at Kelsey Institute in Saskatoon and taught adult upgrading for Northlands College. Her experience of living in the north at Pelican Narrows, Sandy Bay, Pinehouse Lake, Creighton, Wollaston, Fond du Lac, Hay River and Fort Simpson give her much information and wide perspectives. Audrey also served for 14 years as Justice of the Peace as well as on several committees and boards.



HOW OLDER ADULTS & COMMUNITIES STAY HEALTHY & STRONG



Working/Volunteering Rewards and Challenges

Jayne Whyte

Jayne Whyte, born in 1947, celebrates 50 years as educator and advocate with Canadian Mental Health Association. “Retirement” in March opened more time to volunteer her lived experience as an active older adult.



Randy Dove

Randy Dove is the Past President of SSM, part of his ten-year commitment to volunteerism in advancing issues related to older adults. He has a varied background, in cooperatives, the public sector and organizing larger, national sporting events in the Regina region. He brings energy, ideas and enthusiasm to every issue and activity that he has encountered during his life journey.



Kerrie Strathy

Kerrie Strathy’s first job after graduating from university was to recruit and prepare volunteers to work in the Global South. This led to further studies in adult education and subsequently to working with more volunteers to make the world a better place for all, including older adults.



HOW OLDER ADULTS & COMMUNITIES STAY HEALTHY & STRONG



Contributing to Community after 'Retirement'

Lorne Calvert
former Premier of Saskatchewan

Former Premier Lorne Calvert and his wife Betty now make their home at Buffalo Pound Lake and are active in their local resort village. Close to Moose Jaw, Lorne currently serves as President of the Rotary Club of Moose Jaw Wakamow, remains active in Zion United Church and United Churches in the Moose Jaw area, and engages with a variety of community based organizations. On a provincial level Lorne deeply appreciates his role on the Regional Board of the Nature Conservancy of Canada.





HOW OLDER ADULTS & COMMUNITIES STAY HEALTHY & STRONG



Magic of Age-Friendly Communities

Doug Still

Doug taught at Humboldt Collegiate for 31 years. His community involvement in Humboldt included Town Council for 22 years and Mayor for 9. He extended his service to the province as a member of SUMA. Doug was President of the Superannuated Teachers of Saskatchewan from 2022-2024. SSM has benefitted greatly from his service on the SSM Board and as Chair of the Age-Friendly Saskatchewan Committee for 5 years.



Linda Pratt

Linda experienced community early in her life being raised on a farm outside of Regina. She has been a volunteer ever since. She served as liaison between Age-Friendly Regina and Age-Friendly Saskatchewan for the last 8 years moving to the position of Chair of Age-Friendly Saskatchewan in February. She strongly believes in the “magic” of Age-Friendly.



Ashley Scholefield

Ashley was born in Duval SK, and moved to Strasbourg in 2001, and later to a nearby acreage in 2021, where, along with her husband, she is raising two daughters.

She has been a Critical Care RN in Regina since 2017. In 2023 she took a job with the Strasbourg Age-Friendly Recreation Board as their Senior Communication Officer. Ashley feels honored to have found work that brings her back in touch with her community, where she can serve its residents.



HOW OLDER ADULTS & COMMUNITIES STAY HEALTHY & STRONG



Wendy Thienes

Wendy Thienes is the Age-Friendly Saskatchewan Committee staff person with SSM, supporting current and potential Age-Friendly Communities across the province. She lives in Shaunavon where she is a member of a Steering Committee of the Town of Shaunavon, overseeing the implementation of the Social Prescribing pilot initiative in that community. She previously chaired an Aging in Place task force whose work led to the development of Age-Friendly Shaunavon.



Moose Jaw Older Adult Employment Matching

Barry Watson

Senior MooseJobs Program Coordinator

Barry was selected as the Senior MooseJobs Program Coordinator in March 2024, tasked with the development and launch of a one-year pilot program aimed at addressing the employment demand with experienced / skilled retirees. His various employment experiences combined with local business connections have proven key to the success of the pilot program resulting in an extension of the program for another year.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

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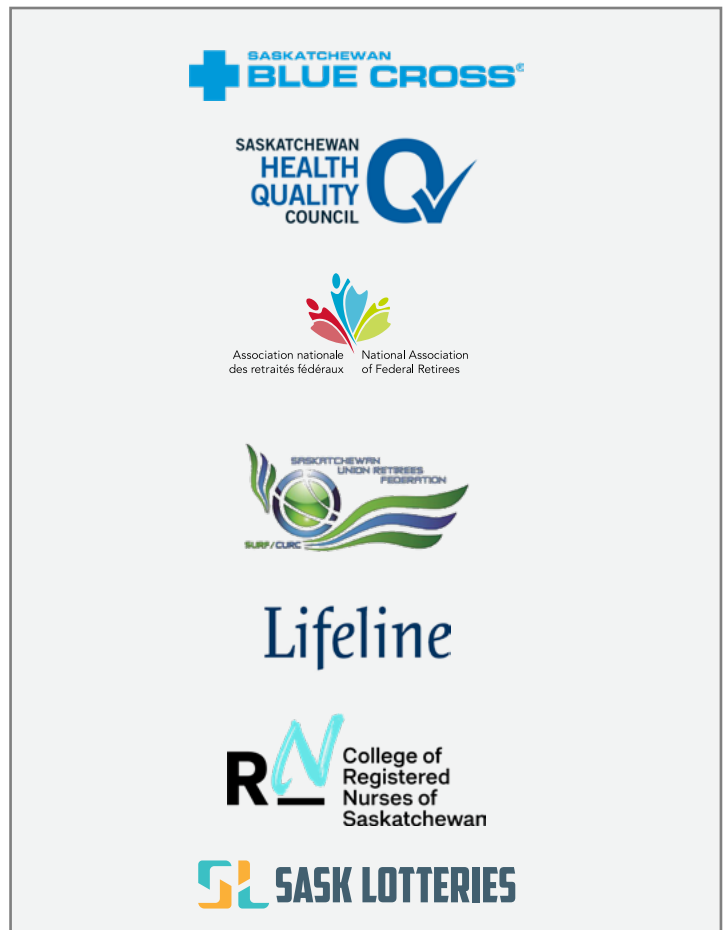
Rod McKendrick

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SSM

Winecraft



The **Saskatchewan Union Retirees Federation (SURF)**: is a provincial group representing retired public, private & trade union members; offers a united voice to lobby all levels of government on issues affecting retirees & seniors; is an affiliated supporter of the Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism (SSM); is a chartered affiliate of the Congress of Union Retirees of Canada (CURC).



SURF provides: retirees with access to prescription drug, health, dental, vision, residential, funeral and travel insurance benefits through the Canadian Benefits Consulting Group; access to Pre-Retirement Planning workshops; assistance to unions forming retiree groups/clubs; retiree members to participate at local Labour Councils; liaison with other retiree groups across the province; newsletters to keep members informed about activities.

For membership or benefits information, contact SURF at
#112 – 2001 Cornwall Street, Regina, Sask. S4P 3X9
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National Association of Federal Retirees / Association nationale des retraités fédéraux

PROMOTING RETIREES' FINANCIAL SECURITY, HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

The National Association of Federal Retirees (Federal Retirees) is the largest national advocacy organization representing active and retired members of the federal public service, Canadian Armed Forces, Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and retired federally appointed judges, as well as their partners and survivors.

With close to 170,000 members, including more than 60,000 veterans and their families, the Association has been advocating for improvements to the financial security, health and well-being of our members and all Canadians since 1963.

Federal Retirees is committed to building an Association that values diversity, equity, and inclusion by encouraging and supporting respect for the dignity, beliefs and values outlined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and all applicable provincial Human Rights Codes.

We believe every Canadian, today and in the future, should benefit from better retirement income security and a strong, sustainable health-care system.

Saskatchewan is the home of six branches in North Battleford, Saskatoon, Prince Albert, Swift Current, Moose Jaw and Regina.

For more information please refer to: www.federalretirees.ca



Thrive at Home

Enhancing community-based care and supports for older adults

ABOUT THRIVE AT HOME

The population of seniors aged 65 years and older is projected to increase as much as 57% by 2043. As the fastest-growing segment of the population in Canada, it's more important than ever to ensure older adults have access to the supports they need for healthy aging.

That's why we're bringing together key partners from community, social, and health sectors to explore opportunities for better alignment, accelerated learning, and improvement in care.

Together, **Thrive at Home** aims to strengthen community-based care and supports for older adults so they can thrive wherever they call home.

ACTION COMMUNITY

When it comes to transforming our health and social care systems, change at this scale won't happen overnight – nor can it be done in isolation.

The work of Thrive at Home is guided by a diverse network called the **Action Community**.

This community is comprised of partners involved in supporting older adults, including those with lived experience, the Saskatchewan Ministry of Health, the Saskatchewan Health Authority, academia, and community-based organizations.

United, we're co-creating a future where everyone can grow older with dignity, choice, safety, and a true sense of belonging.

TURNING IDEAS INTO ACTION

Since the launch of Thrive at Home, we've heard loud and clear the need for action.

Inspired by the energy behind this collective, the Action Community is coming together in focused working groups, called **Action Hubs**, to address challenges impacting older adults.

As a community, we've identified several opportunities for collective action, including:

- **Navigation** — navigating our health and social systems to promote health and well-being
- **Transportation** — getting from place to place safely for health, social, and business needs
- **Home supports** — accessing services and assistance that enable aging in place

Together, we're demonstrating the power of community-led collaboration, data-driven strategies, and scalable outcomes in delivering meaningful change for those who call Saskatchewan home.

COLLABORATE WITH US

If you're interested in learning more about how you can partner with us to improve the health and well-being of older adults, visit our website:

saskhealthquality.ca/thrive-at-home





Celebrating Seniors Provincial Volunteer Awards

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2025 • CONEXUS ARTS CENTRE, REGINA, SK

DO YOU KNOW AN OLDER ADULT VOLUNTEER WHO IS A SUPERHERO IN YOUR COMMUNITY?

REVEAL THEIR TRUE IDENTITY BY NOMINATING THEM FOR A PROVINCIAL VOLUNTEER AWARD!

10 AWARD CATEGORIES:

- COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP (URBAN)
- COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP (RURAL)
- COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP (FIRST NATIONS OR METIS)
- ADVOCACY
- ARTS + CULTURE
- BLOOMING PERENNIAL (90+)
- INTERGENERATIONAL AWARD
- WELL-BEING
- EDUCATION
- OLDER ADULT FRIENDLY BUSINESS

Nominees must be a 55+ volunteer, reside in Saskatchewan, and actively contribute to their community.



Deadline for Nominations is Friday, June 13, 2025

How and to whom do I submit my nomination:

1. Email to: ssm@skseniorsmechanism.ca.
2. If unable to email, send to Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism, 112-2001 Cornwall Street, Regina, SK S4P 3X9



www.skseiorsmechanism.ca/celebrating-seniors-2025/