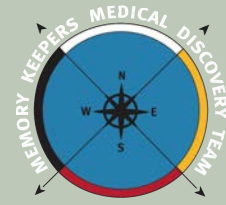


MEMORY KEEPERS MEDICAL DISCOVERY TEAM

ISSUE 05 | Spring 2024




Medical School,
Duluth Campus
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
Driven to Discover®



CERDAR

*The Center for Community Engaged Rural Dementia and Alzheimer's
Research*

A deeper look into CERDAR and what we are trying to accomplish for our community members. In this issue, you will meet more members of our team and get updates on our work, including some preliminary findings from our research.

WWW.MEMORYKEEPERSMDT.COM/CERDAR/

WWW.RURALMEMORY.COM

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DIRECTOR'S NOTE

DR. KRISTEN JACKLIN

Executive Director

The team at Memory Keepers-MDT who are dedicated to the CERDAR program have been working very hard through the winter and spring to make sure that our research studies remain on track, and we stay connected with our rural community partners. Our community engagement coordinator (Natalya Walker) and community researchers (Kirsten Cruikshank and Kelsie Larson) have been driving all over northern Minnesota visiting with community partners, interviewing participants and introducing our work to community members at community events. At the same time, our research staff back at the University have been organizing and analyzing all the stories shared in interviews while at the same time helping with grant writing so that we can continue our work to improve dementia care and services in rural Minnesota.

We have been overwhelmed with the enthusiasm we have felt for this important research and are grateful to all of you who participate in our studies and our community advisors and partners. Having rural people guiding us to understand rural data is the cornerstone of our approach. If you haven't already joined the CERDAR community, I urge you to sign up at RURALMEMORY.COM.



RESEARCH UPDATES

Sociocultural Barriers and Facilitators to Dementia Care in Rural Minnesota

CERDAR's first project consists of interviewing over 80 individuals across northern, rural Minnesota including: health care providers, caregivers, healthy older adults, persons living with dementia and mild cognitive complaints, and community members with experience working with people going through memory loss. We are nearly finished with this project and have begun analyzing the interviews. We are identifying common themes and will present the results to the Community Advisory Group members and Rural Advisor in upcoming meetings to aid with interpretation.

Optimization of a Life-Space Performance Metric for Monitoring and Early Detection of Dementia in Rural and Indigenous Communities

The aim of this research project is to understand how people living and aging in rural and Indigenous communities use their environment, or life-space, and how this impacts care for people living with dementia. The term life-space has been used to describe the physical and social environment of where a person lives and does day to day activities. Life-space has been shown to be related to cognitive health, and by measuring life-space, we can measure cognitive decline.

Traditionally, life-space has been measured using the gold-standard daily Life-Space Questionnaire (LSQ) and monthly Life-Space Assessment (LSA). These measures have been shown to have a strong predictive validity and clinical utility specific to aging and cognitive decline (Poranen-Clark et al., 2018). However, life-space research has been overwhelmingly urban in focus, with little to no attention paid to the nature of rural life-space and its relation to aging or cognitive decline. Likewise, the LSQ and LSA are also urban in orientation. Therefore, we are conducting a one-month pilot study using a modified rural version of the daily LSQ and monthly LSA with 10 rural and 10 Indigenous adults who provide care for a family member or loved one with dementia.

Data from this project will be used to obtain a life-space metric that can ultimately monitor and detect Alzheimer's disease and related dementias in rural and Indigenous communities and aid with new technology development.



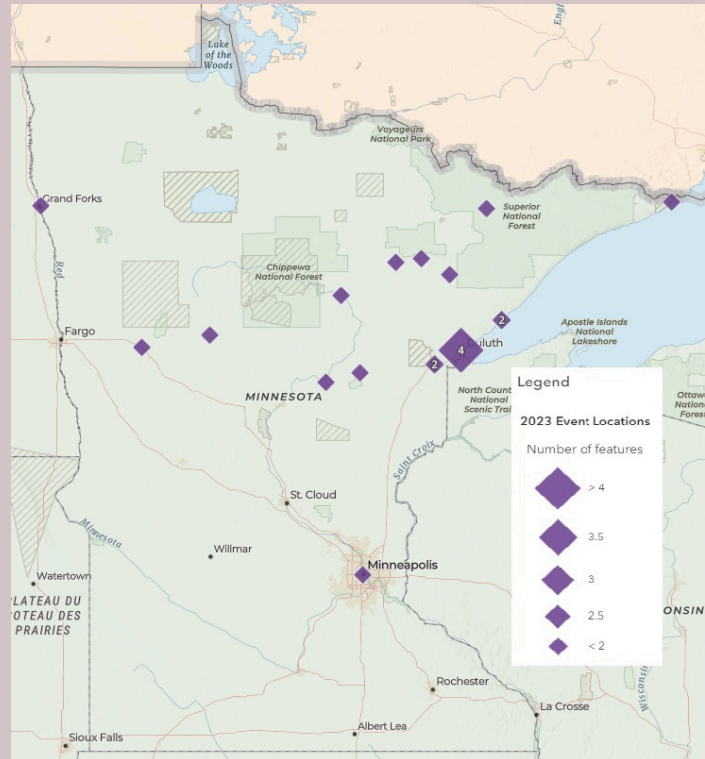
WANT TO JOIN THIS STUDY?
SIGN UP AT [RURALMEMORY.COM](https://ruralmemory.com)

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

It is our goal to continually engage with folks living in rural communities

In 2023 the CERDAR team reached over 560 rural Minnesotans at 20 different events. We attended health fairs, summits, symposiums, and community events across northern Minnesota with research participation opportunities, and to share our work.

In 2024 our goal is to reach northwestern Minnesota more, and keep our momentum going in the northeast. Our Community Researcher Kelsie Larson has already presented at 4 community meetings in the northwest region this year!



IF YOU WOULD LIKE US TO ATTEND OR PRESENT AT AN EVENT NEAR YOU, PLEASE LET US KNOW BY EMAILING US AT CERDAR@D.UMN.EDU

PARTNER HIGHLIGHT

Memory Keepers Medical Discovery Team would not be where we are without the continued support from our partners

ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION

The Alzheimer's Association is the leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer's care, support, and research. The Alzheimer's Association leads the way to end Alzheimer's and all other dementia — by accelerating global research, driving risk reduction and early detection, and maximizing quality care and support.

As the largest nonprofit funder of Alzheimer's research, the association is committed to advancing vital research toward methods of treatment, prevention and, ultimately, a cure. They are a leading voice for Alzheimer's disease advocacy, fighting for critical Alzheimer's research and care initiatives at the state and federal level. The Alzheimer's Association has been a reliable partner with members serving on CERDAR's Community Advisory Group, and partnering with us in dementia outreach and education and policy advocacy.

[HTTPS://WWW.ALZ.ORG/](https://www.alz.org/)



TEAM HIGHLIGHTS

Each issue will highlight different members of the CERDAR team.

For this issue we are pleased to introduce...



DR. SHAWN MCMAHON

Rural Advisor

Shawn McMahon is a family physician with over 30 years of serving rural community health needs. His practice included ambulatory care, hospital-based care, and long-term care with special interest in long term care and prehospital/emergency medicine.

Shawn collaborates with the Memory Keepers research team, providing guidance and medical knowledge to support the research on dementia and Alzheimer's-related diseases.

DR. ABIGAIL JOHNSON

Affiliated Faculty- Assistant Professor, Division of Epidemiology & Community Health

Dr. Johnson was awarded the C. Fester Diabetes, Memory, and Aging Scholar award. She is collaborating with CERDAR's research team exploring the relationship between diet and the human gut microbiome. The microbiome is the communities of bacteria, fungi, and other microorganisms that live within our bodies that are thought to affect health and disease.

Dr. Johnson uses computational approaches to understand how diet can shape and change these communities. Dr. Johnson's research focuses on understanding how diet and microbiome impact prediabetes, diabetes, and cancer.



JODY PETERSON

Community Advisory Group Member

Jody has lived in the small community of Lancaster, MN, all her life. She has been married to her husband for over 51 years with 5 children, 17 grandchildren, and 1 great-grandchild! Jody had a busy daycare in her home for about 35 years, retired, and soon was a full-time caregiver for her husband, who was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease.

Jody is a fan for all the sports and rarely misses a game. She directed the senior high school plays for the drama department for 25 years, and is active in her church and American Legion Auxiliary. She enjoys reading and studying all types of things. Her passion now is learning all she can about the types of dementia and helping others find joy as they go through their journey.

YOUR RESEARCH TEAM

Memory Keepers Medical

Discovery Team

Principal Investigators:

Dr. Kristen Jacklin

Dr. Wayne Warry

UMN Medical School, Duluth

Campus:

Dr. Amy Greminger

Dr. Catherine McCarty

Dr. Peter Nalin

Dr. Sandra Stover

UMN School of Public Health:

Dr. Joseph E. Gaugler

Dr. Carrie Henning-Smith

UMN School of Nursing:

Dr. Dereck Salisbury

Collaborators:

Dr. Stephen Waring, Principal

Scientist, Essentia Institute of

Rural Health

Dr. Abigail Johnson, Guest Scholar

Rural Advisor in Residence:

Dr. Shawn McMahon

Staff:

Patrick Bright, MA

Josyaah Budreau, MA

Kirsten Cruikshank, MSW, LGSW

Melinda Dertinger, MA

Dr. Josh Fergen

Kelsie Larson, MPH, RDN

Brooke Metz (Lees), MA, MS

Margaret Noun, MSW, LGSW

Dr. Amy Otto

Dr. Lysie Radovich

Dr. Sung Han Rhew

Dr. Patricia Soderlund

Natalya Walker, BA

Rural Research Advisory Group:

- Terry J. Hill, MPA- Executive Director, Rural Health Innovations, Senior Advisor for Rural Health Leadership and Policy, National Rural Health Resource Center, Duluth
- Kristi Kane- Director, Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging (AAA). Aging and Disability Resource Center (ARDC)
- Kasey Kapella, MD- Gerontologist, Fairview Virginia Clinic
- Emily Onello, MD- Assistant Professor, Department of Family Medicine and Biobehavioral Health, UMN Medical School, Duluth Campus
- Megan O'Connell, PhD- Department of Psychology, Rural Dementia Action Research (RADAR) Centre, Rural and Remote Memory Clinic, University of Saskatchewan College of Arts and Science
- Heather Pender- Aging Program Director, Dancing Sky AAA

Community Advisory Group:

Northwest

- Karen Bedeau- Dementia Outreach Advocate, Northwoods Caregivers
- Lora Bertelsen- Counseling Psychologist
- Val Mattison- Program Developer, Dancing Sky AAA
- Jody Peterson- Informal supporter for caregivers

Northeast

- Kelly Campbell- Community Health Coordinator, Grand Itasca Clinic and Hospital
- Marcia Grahek- Retired RN Supervisor, community volunteer
- Jenna Pogorels- Senior Program Manager, Minnesota-North Dakota Chapter, Alzheimer's Association
- David Popilek- Caregiver and Performer
- Rebecca Sash- Grants Manager/Aging Services Planner, Arrowhead AAA

CONTACT US

WEB: [HTTPS://MEMORYKEEPERSMDT.COM](https://memorykeepersmdt.com)

X (TWITTER): @CERDAR_MKMDT

FACEBOOK: @CERDAR.MKMDT

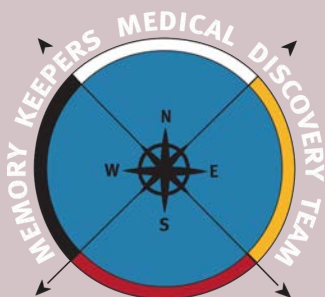
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Join the CERDAR Community
for newsletters and to
participate in our research!

[WWW.RURALMEMORY.COM](http://www.ruralmemory.com)

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