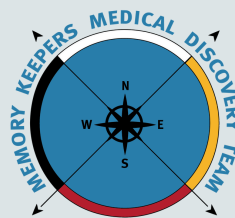


MEMORY KEEPERS MEDICAL DISCOVERY TEAM

ISSUE 06 | Winter 2025




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 working towards with our communities. In this issue, you will meet more team members and get updates on our work, including preliminary findings from our research.

WWW.MEMORYKEEPERSMDT.COM/CERDAR/

WWW.RURALMEMORY.COM

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DIRECTOR’S UPDATE

DR. KRISTEN JACKLIN

Executive Director

Hello Friends, Winter is always a busy time for our team. We continue to travel to events in rural Minnesota to meet new people and connect with organizations that share a passion for addressing memory loss in rural populations. I am continually impressed with our staff's dedication and our partners' time to help move our collaborative research agenda forward. Back at the office, we have been busy preparing a large grant we will submit to the National Institutes of Health to support our next projects studying memory loss in northern rural Minnesota. We also have a whole team that has looked at the data that many of you have provided us so far. This data is extremely valuable in making our case for federal funding for rural dementia research in MN.



As I write, we are looking forward to springtime and the transitions it brings into our lives, our environment, and, of course, some warmer temperatures. Over the next year, we have many new ideas and ways to connect with you and your communities. We can all look forward to having some fun and learning more about memory loss, strategies to prevent and slow down the symptoms, and strategies and resources to care for your loved ones who may already have memory loss.

I am grateful to our community partners, research participants, staff, and you for your dedication to our mission. Enjoy the newsletter.

RESEARCH UPDATES

Project 1- Socio-Cultural Factors in Rural ADRD Care Experiences

Interviews for project one have nearly concluded. We appreciate all participants sharing their knowledge and stories with us. Now, we are focused on analyzing all the transcribed interviews. Our team will conduct careful analysis to honor the variety of rural perspectives.

The community researchers, research staff, and Dr. Jacklin gathered for a full day to develop a codebook for the interviews with individuals living with dementia. This codebook enables the team to categorize and analyze the interview transcripts, ensuring consistent coding throughout the analysis process.



PLANNED RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS

CERDAR's Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) Model for Dementia Research in Rural Communities

The CERDAR team is working on publishing our research approach to dementia care in northern Minnesota. We created a model to guide our work and to help establish best practices for engaging rural communities. People in rural areas can be isolated and geographically spread out, making it harder to include them in studies. When rural residents are left out of research, it limits the understanding of how rural adults experience, cope with, and address their dementia care needs.

The CERDAR model relies on partnerships with local community groups, health experts, and people with direct experience in dementia care. This includes the development of advisory groups that include professionals and non-professionals who live in rural communities and understand the challenges of dementia and the region's healthcare needs. Throughout our research process, we regularly consult advisory members to gain insight and guidance on shaping and directing our work. The model also uses geographic mapping to ensure that the variety of rural regions in northern Minnesota are represented and involved. While CERDAR's research model was implemented in Minnesota, its application in other rural areas is of tremendous importance in addressing many health conditions.

Did Telehealth Usage Change During the COVID-19 Pandemic for Rural People Living with Dementia?

This study examines the patterns of telehealth use among rural people living with dementia in Minnesota, comparing usage before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. The findings highlight that individuals in larger rural cities/towns were likelier to use telehealth services, particularly those with fewer existing health conditions. At the same time, usage was less frequent in smaller or more isolated rural areas, as visualized through geographic information system (GIS) analysis.

- Sung Han Rhew, PhD, Senior Research Associate, is the lead author for this study.



TEAM HIGHLIGHTS

*Each issue will highlight different members of the CERDAR team.
For this issue we are pleased to introduce...*



KATELYN HENNINGSEN

RPAP Student

"I was raised outside Duluth, MN, and completed my undergraduate studies at Montana State University in Bozeman, MT. After returning to Minnesota, I worked as a rural EMT before beginning medical school at the University of Minnesota's Duluth Campus. Now in my third year of medical school, I am participating in clinical rotations in Bigfork, MN, as part of the Rural Physician Associate Program (RPAP). Although I have not yet determined my specialty, I am deeply committed to practicing in rural communities, a goal that closely aligns with both my professional aspirations and personal interests. Together with another student, I took part in the Duluth Medical

Student Research Symposium, working alongside Dr. Patricia Soderlund, a senior research associate at CERDAR. We conducted a secondary analysis of qualitative data from the CERDAR research team. The interview data were collected to explore healthcare providers of dementia care for adults in northern Minnesota. The findings identified both barriers and strengths in the rural healthcare landscape. Providers noted significant stigma surrounding dementia, a lack of engagement with preventative health services, and a range of perspectives on the value of early diagnosis. Our analysis underscores the complexities of delivering healthcare in rural areas, highlighting the challenges providers face and the diverse attitudes toward early intervention in dementia care." Read more about RPAP in greater Minnesota here: <https://twin-cities.umn.edu/news-events/finding-their-calling-greater-minnesota>.



BETH FALT, PHD, MED, MHA

Post Doctoral Associate

Beth received her PhD in public health from Walden University, focusing on community health. She has a background in teaching at all levels and has a Master's in Online Education from St. Scholastica. She has taught and developed many tailor-made courses and teaches inmates mental health and wellness courses at the local county jail. Beth also spent over a decade working on strategic planning, marketing, and system improvement at a regional healthcare provider after receiving her Master's in Healthcare Administration from the University of Minnesota School of Public Health. Her research interests include health equity, judicial and health systems, and how we view and care for mental/brain health within them. Better

coordination across systems has the potential to provide better brain health outcomes for marginalized individuals and improve overall health for rural communities. Beth has lived in Minnesota for most of her life, moving here as a young child with her parents, who migrated from the East Coast. She grew up in the country east of Sandstone (you drive by the exit on I-35 if you are driving between Duluth and the Twin Cities). She is excited to be working with a research group looking at improving health equity for rural and Indigenous populations right here at home.

TEAM HIGHLIGHTS

continued...

JODY PETERSON

Community Advisory Group Member

Jody has been married to her dear husband for over 51 years. After retirement, she became a full-time caregiver for him after he was diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease. Through her caretaking journey, Jody has seen the need for a structured support group in her rural community in Lancaster, MN. The can-doer she is, Jody, is in the final stages of getting a Caregiver Support Group started for those caring for loved ones with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. She hopes this group will not only offer a safe space to share stories but also provide guidance and caregiving strategies, as well as education on dementia and the resources available to rural caregivers.



KAREN BEDEAU

Community Advisory Group Member

Karen Bedeau has been with Northwoods Caregivers since February 2016. She is a dementia outreach specialist and advocate providing caregiver coaching services, dementia sessions, and classes encompassing "Powerful Tools for Caregivers," "REACH" (Resources for Enhancing Alzheimer's Caregiver Health in the Community), "Dementia Friends," "Basics and 10 Warning Signs of Alzheimer's" and serves as the chairwoman for our Giiwedining Committee which helps to support our Act on Alzheimer's Action Team and hosts an Honoring Elder Wisdom Conference.



PARTNER HIGHLIGHT

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



Northwoods Caregivers

The mission of Northwoods Caregivers is to connect, enrich, and empower the lives of Northwoods individuals and families. This mission defines all the services they provide to clients and their families. Their dedicated team comprises individuals from diverse backgrounds, united in their commitment to work closely with clients and their families. They offer essential services, including respite care, transportation, and shopping assistance. Explore how they can support you and your loved ones:

<https://northwoodscaregivers.org/>

COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHT- GOMARTI PILOT PROGRAM

In our CERDAR interviews across northern Minnesota, transportation is mentioned as both a barrier and a facilitator. As such, we wanted to highlight a pilot transportation program right in our backyard: Grand Rapids.

The goMARTI self-driving shuttle pilot results from a unique partnership of multiple groups to increase accessibility and transportation options for residents and visitors in Grand Rapids, Minnesota.

The recently extended 24-month goMARTI (Minnesota's Autonomous Rural Transit Initiative) deployment will cover nearly 17 square miles and include approximately 75 pickup and drop-off points with a fleet of five May Mobility autonomous vehicles, including three wheelchair-accessible vehicles. The free, on-demand rides can be requested through the app.



Questions?

Reach out to a goMARTI representative:

Website: <https://www.gomarti.com/>

Phone: 211 or (800) 442-8565

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

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

Throughout 2024, the CERDAR team attended health fairs, summits, symposiums, and community events across northern Minnesota to reach rural Minnesotans with research participation opportunities and share research findings.

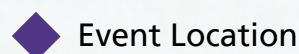
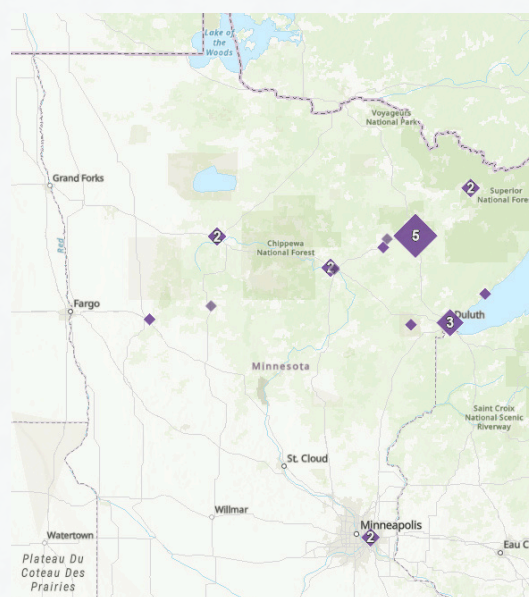
22 In-person events & meetings, including:

- Mental and Behavioral Health Listening Sessions
- Health, Aging, and Caregiver Conferences and Fairs
- Community Advisory Group Meetings
- Elected Official Outreach
- Northland Senior Care Network
- Age-Friendly Virginia and Lake County meetings
- Alzheimer's Awareness Walks

15 Virtual meetings, including:

- Age-Friendly Arrowhead and Iron Range
- Healthy Brain Initiative Community
- Supplemental Community Advisory Group
- Provider Presentations
- Gerontology Class Presentations
- AAA Community Advisory Group

Event Locations in 2024



Event Location

YOUR RESEARCH TEAM

Memory Keepers Medical Discovery Team

Principal Investigators:

Dr. Kristen Jacklin
Dr. Wayne Warry

UMN Medical School, Duluth Campus:

Amy Greminger, MD
Catherine McCarty, PhD, MPH
Peter Nalin, MD
Sandra Stover, MD

UMN School of Public Health:

Joseph E. Gaugler, PhD
Carrie Henning-Smith, PhD, MPH, MSW

UMN School of Nursing:

Dereck Salisbury, PhD

Collaborators:

Stephen Waring, DVM, PhD, FACE, Principal Scientist, Essentia Institute of Rural Health
Abigail Johnson, PhD, RDN, Guest Scholar

Rural Advisor in Residence:

Shawn McMahan, MD

Staff:

Patrick Bright, MA
Josyaah Budreau, MA
Wyatt Cheney, MS
Kirsten Cruikshank, MSW LGSW
Melinda Dertinger, MA
Beth Fait, PhD, MEd, MHA
Josh Fergen, PhD
Kelsie Larson, MPH, RDN
Brooke Metz, MA, MS
Maggie Noun, MSW, LGSW
Amy Otto, PhD
Lynsie Radovich, PhD
Sung Han Rhew, PhD
Mitchell Rigert, MA
Natalya Walker-Muller, BA
Mikaela Williams, MA

Community Advisory Group

Northwest

- Karen Bedeau- Dementia Outreach Advocate, Northwoods Caregivers
- Lora Bertelsen, PhD, LP- Counseling Psychologist
- Val Mattison- Program Developer, Dancing Sky Area Agency on Aging (AAA)
- Jody Peterson- Informal supporter for caregivers
- Rita Poulton- former Caregiver and Business Manager

Northeast

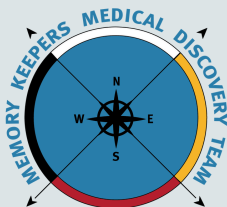
- Kelly Campbell- Community Health Coordinator, Grand Itasca Clinic and Hospital
- Marcia Grahek- Retired RN Supervisor, community volunteer
- Jenna Pogorels, MSW, LICSW- Senior Program Manager, Minnesota-North Dakota Chapter, Alzheimer's Association
- David Popilek- Caregiver and Performer
- Rebecca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

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- Executive Director, Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (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

We are sad to announce that our CERDAR Project Coordinator, Dr. Patty Soderlund, left Memory Keepers in early March. We will miss her, but we know she will do great things in her new position!

With Patty's departure, Dr. Amy Otto will take on more of CERDAR's project management tasks. Amy has been working on CERDAR for several years and is excited to enter this new role.



CERDAR IS MADE POSSIBLE BY FUNDING TO THE MK-MDT BY THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA MEDICAL SCHOOL ACADEMIC INVESTMENT RESEARCH PROGRAM

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

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