View this email in your browser


# The Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA) Conference

CPHA 2025 is the national conference where public health professionals, researchers, policy-makers, academics, students and trainees come together to strengthen efforts to improve health and well-being, to share the latest research and information, to promote best practices, and to advocate for public health issues and policies grounded in research.

**The CPHA conference takes place in Winnipeg, Manitoba from April 29 - May 1, 2025**. Anyone who is interested in improving the health and well-being of the entire population should attend this conference. Public Health 2025 is the meeting place for a wide range of disciplines and sectors, at various career stages, all striving for a common goal. The conference may be of particular interest to: academics and researchers; students/trainees; policy-makers, administrators and managers; health promotion workers; front-line public health workers; media; people working in urban, rural, remote and small communities and anyone with an interest in public health.

**IMPORTANT DATES**

- Registration Launch: January 2025
- Preliminary Program Launch: 6 February 2025
- Final Program Launch: 5 March 2025

- Early-bird registration deadline: 13 March 2025

Visit the CPHA website to sign up for important conference updates.

---

## A Panel on Public Health Systems Across the Prairies

The Canadian Public Health Association has provided the three prairie province public health associations the opportunity to hold a dedicated session at this year's Public Health 2025 conference in Winnipeg.

Through some brainstorming between the associations, one common theme emerged: ***The diminished role public health has had before, during and after the pandemic.*** If you are at this year's conference, look out for what will be an eye-opening session on the recent history of the respective public health systems in the prairies, and what kinds of reforms we need to advocate for as a system to help strengthen public health infrastructure. We are eager to hear from you where our systems have been hit the hardest, where you see solutions and how we can work best together to bring about positive system-level change.

See you there!


---

## European Climate Resilient Health Systems Course

The Columbia Global Consortium on Climate and Health is offering a free certificate-based course! The goal of this 10-week course is to equip health professionals with the knowledge and tools needed to prepare health systems for climate change. This includes how to apply best practices to assess health system vulnerabilities and adaptation options, measure and monitor the climate resilience and environmental sustainability of health systems, and undertake health system greening.

The course will run from January 28th, 2025 to April 8th, 2025 with sessions held every Tuesday from 6:00am-7:30am EST.

To register, click here.

Check out these resources to complement your learning from the European Climate Resilient Health Systems Course

- Practical Guide for Building Climate-Resilient Health Systems
- Environmental Stewardship in the Intensive Care Unit: A roadmap for a more sustainable practice


---

## Saskatchewan Poverty Reduction Strategy Approaches its 10th Anniversary

In 2016, after the Poverty Costs! Campaign called for the provincial government to develop and implement a comprehensive poverty reduction strategy for Saskatchewan, this document was released: Government Releases Poverty Reduction Strategy | News and Media | Government of Saskatchewan

**The overarching goal in the provincial strategy aimed to reduce the number of residents who experience poverty for two years or more by 50 per cent by the end of 2025.**

As we start the 2025 year off, the Saskatoon Poverty Reduction Partnership will be hosting numerous events and calls for reporting on this strategy. Watch for provincial dialogue and collective action about income assistance, guaranteed basic income, minimum wage, market basket measure, cost of living (particularly food and housing), health and wellbeing, economic growth, job creation and social enterprise, safety and community benefits, education and child care.

As the strategy approaches its 10 year anniversary, the residents of Saskatchewan need a comprehensive report on the achievements, shortcomings and next steps for this strategy.

To get involved, contact the Coordinator at SPRPCoordinator@gmail.com and check out the SPRP publications and data dashboards here:

---

## Board Member News and Updates

Board members **Thilina Bandara** and **Chuk Plante** have been actively advancing public health research. Earlier this year, they co-authored a paper examining the challenges faced by local public health units across Canada during the COVID-19 pandemic:

- **Bandara, Thilina,** Navi Sandhu, Khatira Mehdiyeva, Sarbjeet Singh, **Charles Plante,** and Cory Neudorf. 2025. *Enablers and Barriers to Public Health Practice during COVID-19: Perspectives from Local Public Leadership from across Canada. Canadian Journal of Public Health. Revue Canadienne de Sante Publique,* 1–9.

Thilina and Chuk also collaborated on a working paper that proposes a protocol for addressing income-related health inequalities in urban Canada using multilevel estimation techniques:

- **Plante, Charles,** Suvadra Datta Gupta, **Thilina Bandara,** Daniel Beland, Olivier Bellefleur, Christine Blaser, Cheryl Camillo, Eileen de Villa, Daniel Dutton, Daniel Fuller, Jasmine Hasselback, Lisa Marie Lix, Anousheh Marouzi, Nazeem Muhajarine, Geranda Notten, Bill Reimer, Michael Wolfson, Marisa Young, Daniel Yupanqui Concha, and Cory Neudorf. 2025. *Multilevel*

*Estimation of the Relative Impacts of Social Determinants on Income-Related Health Inequalities in Urban Canada: Protocol for the Canadian Social Determinants Urban Laboratory.*

In addition, **Chuk Plante** co-authored a separate paper focused on creating a longitudinal substance use harm cohort to analyze social drivers of health:

- Marouzi, Anousheh, **Charles Plante,** and Barbara Fornssler. 2024. *Creating an 11-Year Longitudinal Substance Use Harm Cohort from Linked Health and Census Data to Analyse Social Drivers of Health. International Journal of Population Data Science,* 9(1). doi: 10.23889/ijpds.v9i1.2412.

---

## Beat the Winter Blues

*"I go to work when it's still dark outside, and when I leave work it's already dark outside!"* Sound familiar? For many of us living in Saskatchewan, this is the reality through the winter months. The dark, cold days can leave our emotions feeling frosty. Winter blues is a general term (not a medical term) that people often use to describe the low emotions they experience on cold, dark winter days. This differs from Seasonal Affective Disorder which is a clinical diagnosis characterized by regularly occurring depression that happens in the winter months and interferes with daily functioning. According to the Canadian Mental Health Association, 15% of Canadians experience the winter blues, while about 2-3% of people experience Seasonal Affective Disorder.

***Can't shake the Winter Blues? If a low mood is impacting your daily functioning, talk to your doctor and mental health professional for support.***

For more information, check out the following resources:

- Winter Blues 101
- Time to Get Active
- Seven Ways to Cope with the Winter Blues


## Mind-Boosting Tips

- **Let the sunshine in** – Keep your curtains open and spend as much time as you can near the natural light from windows. Better yet, bundle up and go outside to enjoy the sunshine.
- **Maintain a regular sleep schedule** – With so many hours of darkness, it can be difficult to keep a regular sleep/wake schedule. Over-sleeping can make the winter blues worse. Try to sleep and wake up at the same time every day.
- **Get active** – Physical activity is important for overall health. Exercise releases mood-boosting chemicals like serotonin, dopamine, and endorphins. Consider taking a walk outside or check out YouTube (P.E. with Joe has something for all ages) and ParticipACTION for ideas to get moving.
- **Stay social** – As tempting as it can be to hibernate on cold winter days, socializing with others can help boost mood. Get involved in the community, meet a friend for hot chocolate, or host a games night.
- **Go play outside!** – Whether skating, skiing, tobogganing, building a fort, or taking a winter walk around the block, try finding some enjoyable winter activities to look forward to.

## Public Health News

Photo radar and public health implications. *Edmonton Journal.*
Upcoming events for Epidemiologists. *The Epidemiology Monitor.*
Public Health Perspectives on Psychedelics. A white paper from the *Canadian Public Health Association.*
Tuberculosis Rates: A National Update. Tuberculosis rates are a concern, especially in our province. *Government of Canada*
Avian influenza. Something to keep an eye on from the *National Collaborating Centre for Environmental Health.*

---

## New resources from Fall 2024 to Support Immunization Programs

Realizing the Future of Vaccination for Public Health
Vaccine Uptake Among First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Populations
Best and Promising Practices in Promoting Vaccine Uptake and Confidence Among First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Populations

---

SPHA
SASKATCHEWAN
Public Health Association

---

- *The SPHA believes in collective action for the health and well-being of all peoples in Saskatchewan, today and tomorrow.*
- *We value health equity, and we want to contribute to a future where everyone has the opportunity to reach their fullest potential.*
- *We know that type of change is complex, and will require evidence-based approaches and systems-thinking.*