

THE SASKATCHEWAN EPIDEMIOLOGY ASSOCIATION PRESENTS
THE 24th ANNUAL FALL SYMPOSIUM & WORKSHOP | Saskatoon, SK

Symposium, September 25th: Western Development Museum, 7:30 am – 3:45 pm

Workshop, September 26th: RM 130B Health Sciences Building, University of Saskatchewan, 9 am – 4:00 pm

“Balancing Innovative Data Science and Sociology in Chronic Disease Epidemiology”

SPEAKER LINE UP



Dr. Kaylee Byers (Keynote), PhD, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Health Sciences, Simon Fraser University; Deputy Regional Director, British Columbia Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative; Senior Scientist, Pacific Institute on Pathogens, Pandemics, and Society

Dr. Kaylee Byers is an Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Health Sciences at Simon Fraser University, the Deputy Director of British Columbia's node of the Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative, a Senior Scientist with the Pacific Institute on Pathogens, Pandemics and Society, and a Michael Smith Health Research BC Scholar. Dr. Byers is of Scottish, French, and German descent, with roots in Canada's maritime and prairie provinces. She has over a decade of experience working in the field of One Health, which recognizes the interconnected health of people, animals, and the environment. Today, she leads the One Health, Human dimensions and Implementation (OH-HI) Science CoLab, which aims to enhance local, national, and global capacity to better detect, manage, and mitigate health threats at the nexus of human, animal, and environmental health. To ensure that research findings are relevant and actionable, she collaborates closely with agricultural communities, healthcare practitioners, First Nations, municipal and provincial governments, and international partners. Outside of research she hosts Genome BC's genomics podcast Nice Genes! and Nerd Nite Vancouver, a science seminar series which she co-founded in 2014.



Dr. Nazeem Muhajarine (Keynote), B.A., MSc, PhD, FCAHS, Distinguished Professor, College of Medicine, Department of Community Health and Epidemiology, University of Saskatchewan

Nazeem Muhajarine, PhD, FCAHS, is a leading expert in public health and epidemiology, currently serving as a Distinguished Professor in the Department of Community Health and Epidemiology, College of Medicine, University of Saskatchewan. He also serves as Director, Saskatchewan Population Health and Evaluation Research Unit (SPHERU). Professor Muhajarine's research specialization lies in population health, with a focus on evaluating interventions, urban and place-based health, maternal and child health including in global contexts. Though trained in epidemiology and statistics, he is a 'method-pluralist,' meaning he is comfortable with epidemiological as well as social science-based methods. His work is deeply interdisciplinary and often engages communities and multiple human-service sectors. He has led, partnered on projects implemented on local, national and international scale—always with a keen attention to informing policy and programs changes. Professor Muhajarine's contributions have been widely recognized. His recent awards include being named Distinguished Professor at the University of Saskatchewan (2025), a life-time designation, Fellowship in the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences (2023), Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Award (2023), and Best Supervisor Award, College of Medicine (2024), to name a few. Professor Muhajarine is a prominent scholar whose impactful research and leadership continue to shape public health practice and policy, community programming in Canada and overseas.

Register online at: <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/balancing-innovative-data-science-sociology-in-disease-epidemiology-tickets-1482052842949>

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Dr. Veronica McKinney, BSc, MD, CCFP, LMCC, Director, Northern Medical Services, College of Medicine, University of Saskatchewan

Dr. Veronica McKinney, of Cree/Métis descent, is Director of Northern Medical Services, a department within the University of Saskatchewan's College of Medicine. She provides leadership in health development for rural and remote northern Indigenous communities, collaborating with the Saskatchewan Health Authority, tribal councils, bands, and health organizations to promote healthier communities. As an Assistant Professor in the College of Medicine, Dr. McKinney teaches and advocates for Indigenous Health, serving on numerous boards and committees at local, provincial, and federal levels. She practices clinical medicine at Saskatoon's Westside

Community Clinic and has worked as a Family Practitioner, ER Physician, Nurse, and Lab Technologist over her 30-year career. Her approach to medicine is deeply rooted in traditional cultural teachings, and she is a passionate advocate for Indigenous health equity, shaped by lived experience. Dr. McKinney is also a key member of the Research Leadership Team of the Saskatchewan Network Environments for Indigenous Health Research (SK-NEIHR), part of a national Indigenous health research initiative funded by CIHR. With over \$100 million in support, it represents the federal government's largest investment in Indigenous health research in Canadian history.



Dr. Scott Napper, BSc, PhD, Professor, College of Medicine, Department of Biochemistry, Microbiology & Immunology, Research Scientist, Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization (VIDO), University of Saskatchewan

Dr. Scott Napper holds a joint position at the University of Saskatchewan, serving as a Professor within the Department of Biochemistry, Microbiology, and Immunology as well as a Research Scientist with the Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization (VIDO). This hybrid position enables pursuit of the shared professional passions of teaching and research. Utilizing his training as a protein biochemist, partnered with the expertise of VIDO in vaccine development, Dr. Napper's

research activities focus on the development of vaccines for protein misfolding diseases including ALS, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, and prion diseases. Vaccines generated for each of these diseases by the Napper lab are currently in pre-clinical trials. During the pandemic, Dr. Napper served as the Director of Research for VIDO. In this capacity he helped guide the organization to critical firsts for Canada as well as to position the organization as Canada's Pandemic Research Center. Dr. Napper devotes considerable time to speaking at high schools and public forums to promote science interest and literacy. This passion for science communication is also evident within the classroom; Dr. Napper is a four-time winner of the University of Saskatchewan Teaching Excellence Award as well as the Provost's Teaching Award.

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Brian Quinn, BSc, BSN, RN, MSc, Senior Epidemiologist, Population Health Unit, Saskatchewan Health Authority & Athabasca Health Authority

Brian is a seasoned public health professional with a rich interdisciplinary background, holding bachelor's degrees in Nutrition and Nursing, along with a Master of Science. Since beginning his career in 2007 as a Nurse Epidemiologist with the Northern Population Health Unit (NPHU) in northern Saskatchewan, he has applied his expertise across a wide range of areas including communicable and chronic diseases, injury surveillance, maternal and child health, environmental health, applied research, and health service utilization. A hallmark of Brian's early

work was his leadership in health status reporting and community needs assessments, carried out through strong partnerships with the three former northern regional health authorities, northern municipalities, First Nations, and the Northern Intertribal Health Authority (NITHA), as well as several provincial organizations. Following the creation of the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) in 2017, Brian transitioned into the role of Senior Epidemiologist with the Population Health team. His generalist approach has continued, serving as co-lead in key specialty areas such as tuberculosis, immunization, communicable disease, environmental health, and health service utilization. More recently, he has played an important role in the development of SHA geographies, supporting evidence-based planning and decision-making across the province.

WORKSHOP



Dr. Erfanul Hoque, MSc, PhD, Assistant Professor of Biostatistics and Data Science, Department of Community Health & Epidemiology, College of Medicine, University of Saskatchewan.

Erfan Hoque is an Assistant Professor of Biostatistics and Data Science in the Department of Community Health & Epidemiology at the University of Saskatchewan. He holds a PhD in Statistics from the University of Manitoba, where he received the Outstanding Academic Performance by a Ph.D. Student award for his research contributions. He specializes in biostatistics, with expertise in longitudinal data analysis, time series analysis, statistical machine learning, dynamic data science, copulas and missing data analysis. His research

interests focus on methodological developments in dependence modeling for multivariate data, with an emphasis on developing innovative statistical/biostatistical models and methods for complex and correlated data to address health issues related to communicable and non-communicable diseases. He is also engaged in interdisciplinary areas such as public health and medicine, genomics, computational finance, transportation, electricity demand, and supply chain management. In his spare time, he enjoys playing cricket and football and spending time with family and friends.