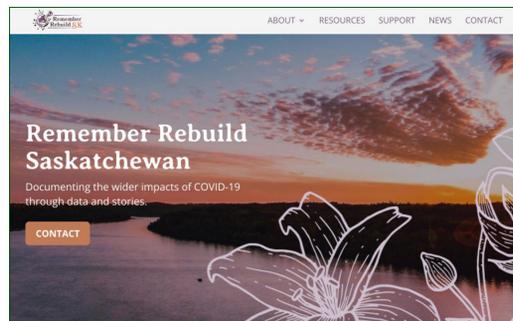


Objectives

The COVID-19 Community Archive uses oral history methodologies to create a digital repository that includes interviews with Saskatchewan residents about their experience with Covid-19.



Background on the Community Archive

Oral history is a crucial historical methodology that allows researchers to capture valuable qualitative information about a specific moment in time. This information is gathered via interviews.

The goal was to preserve diverse perspectives on the pandemic and offer context and insight into the experience of Covid-19 in Saskatchewan. Interviews for the community archive are still ongoing.

This research poster focuses on the interviews conducted with members of The Saskatoon Interagency Response to Covid-19 (SIRC) from May 2022 and August 2022.



An Archive for the People

Share your story with the Saskatchewan's COVID-19 Community Archive.

Materials and Methods

Fifteen interviews were conducted over a four-month period on Zoom. The focus of the interviews thus far has been on SIRC and the experience of the individuals involved with the organization.



Interviewees included employees from:

- The Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA)
- Various Non-Profit Organizations
 - Saskatoon Community Foundation
 - Saskatoon Library
 - Prairie Harm Reduction
- The City of Saskatoon.

The interviewees had:

- Diverse educational and occupational backgrounds.
- Varying degrees of engagement in and duration of involvement with SIRC.



Interviewees were given seven standard questions about the pandemic along with unique questions to facilitate reflection on their professional roles and how these were impacted by Covid-19.

Discussion

The interviews uncovered a wide range of perspectives on the Covid-19 pandemic.

The interviewees shared insight into

- Professional & personal experiences of Covid-19
- Understanding & awareness of the pandemic
- Challenges experienced during the pandemic
- Pivotal moments that marked the past two years.

Many of the interviewees identified the same key health and social issues that have been exacerbated by the pandemic.

Interviewees had specific concerns about:

- Housing
- Food security
- Harm reduction
- Access to essential facilities
- (bathrooms, warm-up stations)
- Access to testing and vaccines



Several interviewees identified concerns with the provincial response to Covid-19, including the communication and implementation of public health strategies.

Other interviewees identified strengths in the pandemic response at the municipal or home organizational level while declining to comment on the province as a whole.

The interviewees all identified SIRC as a unique and timely response that filled a gap during the pandemic.

Conclusion

COVID-19 Community Archive

There is great importance in remembering pandemics. The COVID-19 Community Archive allows individuals to explore the pandemic and its impact on Saskatchewan residents.

Oral history interviews allow researchers to:

- Assess the impact on individuals and organizations
- Gathering information about effects on larger systems like health, social and economics.

Digital archives allow researchers to gather digital materials and house them in an online repository. This allows the public and researchers access to materials.

Acknowledgements

This project is being funded by Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) via a Partnership Development Grant.



It's supported by the University of Saskatchewan Archives & Special Collections and U of S Libraries.

The COVID-19 Community Archives is part of the Remember Rebuild Saskatchewan project.

Thank you to all participants who shared their experiences with us.

References

- Jaillant, Lise. "How can we make born-digital and digitized archives accessible? Identifying obstacles and solutions." *Archival Science* 22 (2022): 417-436
- Swain, Ellen. "Oral History in the Archives: Its Documentary Role in the Twenty-First Century." *The American Archivist* 66, No.1 (2003): 139-158
- Tomes, Nancy. "Oral History in the History of Medicine." *The Journal of American History*, 78 No. 2 (1991):607-617