

# Get Better Together

for living better with health issues

Powerful Tools  
**FOR** Caregivers



Memory  
aging<sup>&™</sup>  
PROGRAM

## Final Report 2025-2026



Participating  
Regional Health  
Authorities



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## **Manitoba Evidence-Based Self-Management Programs**

April 1, 2025 – March 31, 2026

### **PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS & RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### Highlights

The Wellness Institute (WI) evidence-based self-management portfolio includes four programs: the mainstay, Get Better Together (GBT), is Manitoba's version of the Chronic Disease Self-Management Program (CDSMP), Powerful Tools for Caregivers (PTC) and two brain health programs; Memory and Aging Program (MAP) and Total Brain Health (TBH). This report includes data from all programming.

A total of 39 programs ran this year: seven were GBT, three were PTC programs, 12 were TBH programs, and 17 were MAP.

The programs that were offered in 2025-2026 included both in-person programs and virtual programs using Microsoft Teams online platform. Registration for virtual programs that were not onsite or organization specific were opened up province-wide to allow participants from other Regional Health Authorities (RHAs) to take part.

Three GBT programs were offered in the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA); one was virtual and the remaining two were offered in-person. Prairie Mountain Health (PMH) region ran three GBT programs, one was in-person and two offered virtually. The Northern Regional Health Authority (NRHA) offered one GBT program in-person in 2025-2026.

All three PTC programs were offered in the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority and were offered virtually.

The 12 TBH programs were offered across the province with eight offered in Interlake Eastern Regional Health Authority (IERHA), two in WRHA and two in PMH. Two of the IERHA programs were offered virtually but the rest were offered in-person.

There were 17 MAP programs offered; nine in WRHA, three in IERHA and five in PMH. All of these MAP programs were offered in-person. Two of the MAP programs in WRHA included a short sneak peak of the TBH program at the end.

In 2025-2026, a total of 565 people participated in the four programs, and 423 completed. This was down slightly from last year where we had 587 participated and 487 completed. The overall completion rate for programs offered in 2025-2026 was 75.0%, which exceeds the national average completion rate reported by the Self Management Resource Center (SMRC) for CDSMP (72%).

One training session was conducted in 2025-2026 which was a combined training that taught Memory and Aging (MAP) and Total Brain Health (TBH) programs. This training was offered virtually to leaders in the PMH Region.

## Recommendations

The following recommendations will support the self-management programs going forward:

- Continue to support RHAs in offering all programs in-person and virtually province-wide.
- Coordinate Leader Training sessions across the province for all programming and maintain program fidelity and license requirements.
- Continue to work with the Provincial Chronic Disease Self-Management Steering Committee and My Health Teams to leverage capacity and integrate programming into patient care and the broader healthcare system.

## **PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

***Get Better Together*** is a free program offered once a week for six consecutive weeks for around two and a half hours.

CDSMP, offered in-person or virtually, helps people to deal with the common issues they face and to motivate each other with solutions and techniques for:

- Dealing with frustration, fatigue, pain and isolation.
- Appropriate exercise for maintaining and improving strength, flexibility, and endurance.
- Appropriate use of medications.
- Communicating effectively with family, friends, and health professionals.
- Maintaining appropriate nutrition.
- Engaging with other community resources.

Each participant in the CDSMP workshops receives a copy of *"Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions," 5<sup>th</sup> Edition*.

It is the process in which the CDSMP is taught that makes it effective. Classes are highly participatory, where mutual support and success build the participants' confidence in their ability to manage their health and maintain active, fulfilling lives.

Three principal assumptions underlie the CDSMP: (1) participants with different chronic diseases face similar self-management issues and disease related tasks; (2) participants can learn to take responsibility for the day-to-day management of their disease; (3) confident, knowledgeable participants practicing self-management will experience improved health and wellbeing. The program model for disseminating the CDSMP has as its central principle the belief that trained lay persons with chronic diseases are the most effective leaders of the program.

***Powerful Tools for Caregivers*** is a free, best practice six-week program based on principles similar to CDSMP and provides caregivers with tools and techniques to manage their own health while they continue to care for their friend or relative. There are three different versions of the Powerful Tools for Caregivers workshops: a two-and-a-half-hour program and a condensed 90-minute program, both aimed at those caring for an adult, and a specialized version of the program offered for caregivers of children with special needs. Programming can be offered in-person or virtually.

Evidence indicates that caregivers who participate in the PTC program demonstrated improvements in:

- Self-Care Behaviours: increased exercise, use of relaxation techniques and medical checkups
- Management of Emotions: reduced guilt, anger and depression
- Self-efficacy: increased confidence in coping with caregiver demands
- Use of Community Resources: increased awareness and utilization of community resources

**Total Brain Health** is a free, social-based brain training program for people of all ages, founded by clinical psychologist, author, and brain health expert Cynthia R. Green, Ph.D. The program is offered once a week for four to six weeks.

The Total Brain Health Blueprint® is an action plan for addressing the two major goals leading to a brain-fit life: Boosting everyday performance and promoting long-term brain vitality.

Based on three decades of research evidence, the TBH Blueprint provides participants with hands-on, simple actions and tools that engage the three pillars or dimensions of well-being: body, mind and spirit.

#### Body

- Move it – the importance of physical activity in boosting the brain's physical health and performance and building a protective buffer against memory loss
- Eat smart – a healthy diet and maintaining a healthy weight are key to a healthy brain
- Live with your brain in mind – lifestyle choices like sleep, medications and how we take care of our health are important factors in future brain health

#### Mind

- Sharpen skills – cognitive training can help revive skills that diminish when we age
- Stretch your mind – staying intellectually engaged, keeping your mind active, and challenging your brain can be effective ways to shield against dementia
- Strategize – memory-boosting strategies and tools can help us better organize, remember and recall information

#### Spirit

- Socialize – spending time with others is a brain workout and contributes significantly to brain health
- Keep emotional balance – keeping emotions intact and finding ways to be mindful is beneficial for mental function and long-term brain health
- Belief in yourself – feeling confident about brain health and ability allows us to be more likely to take part in brain-boosting activities

**Memory and Aging Program** was developed in 1997 at the Baycrest Centre, in Ontario for Geriatric Care. The program includes practical exercises, educational lectures and group discussions. It is based on the scientific research on memory interventions of older adults experiencing normal age-related memory changes and incorporates the following:

- Group-based multifactorial approach providing educational information, memory skills training, self-efficacy enhancement, relaxation techniques and lifestyle modification
- Emphasis on strategies that improve memory function as opposed to increasing memory capacity
- Use of practical strategies and opportunities to practice applying them in a variety of ways so that they can be used in everyday life

As part of MAP, participants receive a *Participant Workbook* developed by the program's creators.

The benefits to the participants of the program are (Troyer, 2001; Vandermorris et al., 2017; Wiegand et al., 2013):

- Large gains in factual knowledge about memory and factors that affect memory
- Large increase in the ability to identify memory tools for everyday memory situations
- Increased satisfaction with memory, including reduced concerns about memory and increased confidence to succeed with everyday memory tasks
- Development of a sense of normalization of the experience of age-related memory change
- Self-reported implementation of a healthier lifestyle and improvements in the area of relaxation, physical activity, cognitive and social engagement, and nutrition

## KEY ACTIVITIES

Wellness Institute's key activities include Winnipeg and regional coordination of the peer-led self-management programming:

- Facilitated and coordinated the oversight, implementation and evaluation of all evidence-based self-management programming;
- Maintained all programming standards by ensuring that all Manitoba programs work within the license requirements;
- Expanded capacity for programming by offering peer leader trainings in PTC, MAP and TBH;
- Engaged with RHAs, stakeholders, My Health Teams and Healthy Aging Resource Teams to strengthen integration, coordination and delivery of programming;
- Offered virtual program registration province-wide to allow for all Manitobians to take part; and
- Coordinated province-wide public awareness of peer-led self-management programming.

## PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION & UPDATES

### Health System Integration & Chronic Disease Self-Management Program Networks

WI continues to reach out to disease-based organizations, acute care organizations, and existing health programs to aid in embedding self-management programs into their services.

Partnerships continue with My Health Teams, Access Centres, Senior Resource Finders, Winnipeg Libraries, Canadian Cancer Society's Community Services Locator (CSL) and 211 which allows for opportunities for programming across the city and province.

Two fourth-year nursing students from the University of Manitoba completing their community health practicum at Gwen Selter Living Centre developed a brain health pamphlet for seniors in the Seven Oaks community. The finished pamphlet includes mention of the Wellness Institute, and a listing of community supports including MAP, TBH and Minds in Motion, a program offered in collaboration between WI and the Alzheimer's Society.

## Marketing & Communications

Province-wide program promotion included articles, print advertising materials and WI and RHA social media posts.

A new promotional leaflet titled “Community Health Programs” was created with information on all four programs: Get Better Together, Powerful Tools for Caregivers, Memory and Aging Program and Total Brain Health. The leaflet follows the same format as the other Wellness Institute rack cards that promote facility wide programs and services.

WI is part of the Seven Oaks Neighbourhood Resource Network and the Keewatin Inkster Neighbourhood Resource Council. These networks allow us to stay connected, build relationships, be current on the needs of the communities and find new sites to host programming.

The Wellness Institute held its annual Active Aging Day in October, a half-day event featuring a keynote speaker, a guided stretch, a refreshing walk outside, with or without urban poles, and a full three-course sit-down lunch. The day allowed for the endorsement of the facility, sharing information on GBT, PTC, MAP, and TBH, distributing/promoting our Positively Healthy Guide, socialization, and, of course, providing information for older adults on how to remain healthy and active.

The WI and health programming was promoted at the Transcona Health Fair hosted by the Transcona Council for Seniors at Kildonan Place Mall. Information was also shared at the Manitoba Diabetes Roundtable event.

The Wellness Institute hosted the 2026 Mega Heart Event for the Institute of Cardiovascular Sciences and the St. Boniface Hospital Foundation. The day allowed the facility to be showcased, information to be shared on chronic disease programming, and for the distribution/promotion of the Positively Healthy Guide. A WI staff member provided a short presentation on PTC in collaboration with a caregiver presentation showcasing their experiences supporting someone with heart failure.

## REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION

The information below is an overview of all four of Manitoba’s peer-led, evidence-based self-management program offerings for the 2025-2026 year.

### Overview of Service Targets

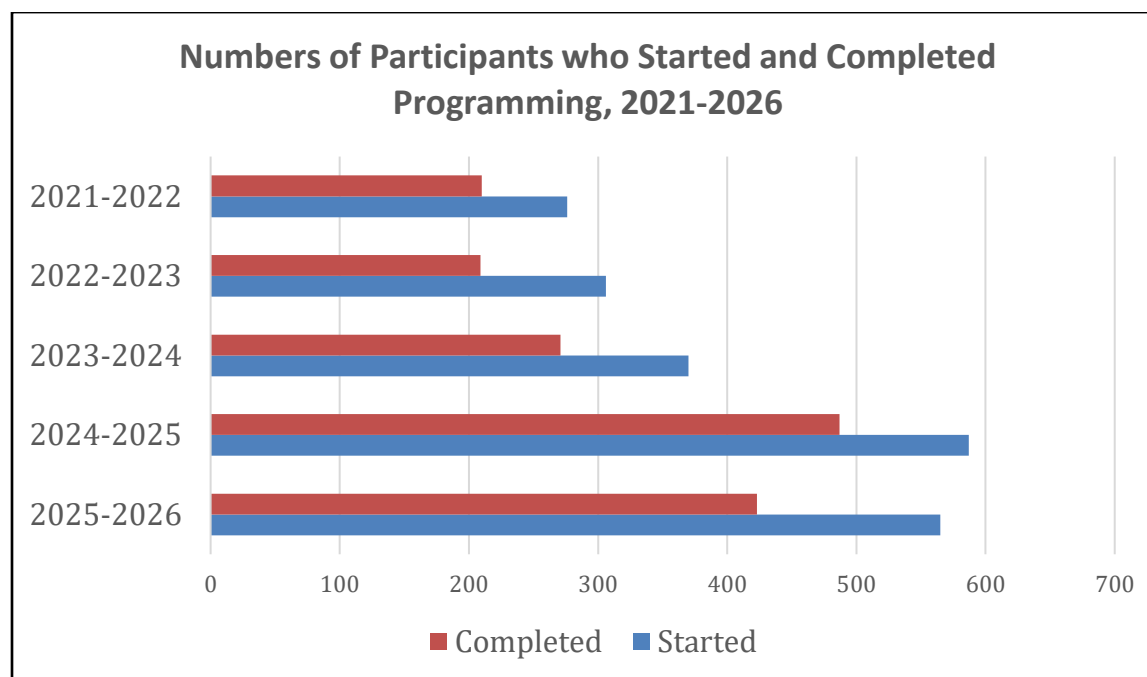
| <b>Get Better Together, Powerful Tools for Caregivers, Total Brain Health and Memory and Aging Program</b> |           |           |           |           |                     |                      |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Manitoba Programs</b>                                                                                   | <b>Q1</b> | <b>Q2</b> | <b>Q3</b> | <b>Q4</b> | <b>Yearly Total</b> | <b>Annual Target</b> |
| Programs offered                                                                                           | 14        | 6         | 15        | 19        | 54                  | 50                   |
| Programs ran                                                                                               | 10        | 4         | 11        | 14        | 39                  | 36                   |
| Participants that started the program                                                                      | 124       | 49        | 152       | 240       | 565                 | 405                  |
| Participants that completed the program                                                                    | 98        | 43        | 105       | 177       | 423                 | 300*                 |
| <b>Trainings</b>                                                                                           |           |           |           |           |                     |                      |
| Leader Training and Refreshers                                                                             | 0         | 1         | 0         | 0         | 1                   | 2                    |

\*Based on average program attrition

The Yearly Total columns for programs offered and programs that ran are higher than the annual target this year, which can be attributed to several Regional Health Authorities expanding their offerings to include the Memory and Aging and Total Brain Health programs. These two new programs were heavily favoured this year and can be offered more frequently due to their shorter program lengths. For example, one MAP program is three weeks and one GBT is six weeks, meaning two MAP programs can run during the same time frame as one GBT. This therefore increased the number of programs in 2025-2026.

| Regional Health Authority                   | # of Leaders/ Master Trainers certified 2025/26* | # of Programs Completed 2025/26* | # of Participants Started/ Completed 2026/26* |
|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Southern Health -Santé Sud                  | 0 / 0                                            | 0                                | 0 / 0                                         |
| Prairie Mountain Health                     | 5 / 0                                            | 8                                | 163/110                                       |
| Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority | 0 / 0                                            | 13                               | 176/134                                       |
| Northern Regional Health Authority          | 0 / 0                                            | 1                                | 12/12                                         |
| Churchill Health Centre                     | 0 / 0                                            | 0                                | 0 / 0                                         |
| Winnipeg Regional Health Authority          | 0/0                                              | 17                               | 214/167                                       |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                | <b>5 / 0</b>                                     | <b>39</b>                        | <b>565/ 423</b>                               |

\* Includes Get Better Together, Powerful Tools for Caregivers, Total Brain Health and Memory and Aging programs.



\*Includes GBT,PTC,MAP and TBH

## ***Implementation of programs by RHA***

### **Southern Health – Santé Sud**

- No programs were offered in Southern Health – Santé Sud (SHSS) this year.
- No Leader Training or Refresher sessions were offered in SHSS this year.

### **Prairie Mountain Health**

| <b>Host</b>             | <b>Program</b> | <b>Mode</b> | <b>Start Date</b> | <b># of Participants Attended</b> | <b># of Participants Completed</b> |
|-------------------------|----------------|-------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Ebb and Flow            | GBT            | In-person   | April 21          | 6                                 | N/A cancelled                      |
| Virtual                 | GBT            | Virtual     | May 15            | 8                                 | 8                                  |
| Gilbert Plains          | MAP            | In-person   | October 14        | 4                                 | N/A cancelled                      |
| Grandview               | TBH            | In-person   | October 29        | 3                                 | N/A cancelled                      |
| Virtual                 | GBT            | Virtual     | November 6        | 12                                | 7                                  |
| Brandon Mood Disorders  | GBT            | In-person   | November 6        | 6                                 | 5                                  |
| Virden SAIL*            | MAP            | In-person   | January 13        | 56                                | 45                                 |
| Brandon Rotary Villas   | MAP            | In-person   | February 5        | 10                                | 8                                  |
| Virden SAIL*            | TBH            | In-person   | February 3        | 31                                | 18                                 |
| Virden Kin Place        | TBH            | In-person   | February 2        | 20                                | 13                                 |
| Brandon Park View Manor | MAP            | In-person   | February 23       | 7                                 | 6                                  |
| <b>TOTAL</b>            |                |             |                   | <b>163</b>                        | <b>110</b>                         |

\*SAIL – Seniors Access to Independent Living

- A total of 11 programs were offered this year in Prairie Mountain Health (PMH), however three of these programs were cancelled after one class because the program was not what they expected and in one case a few of the participants moved from the community during this time. The start numbers were included for reporting purposes.
- Eight programs were successfully completed in the region in 2025-2026. Two were TBH, three were MAP and three were GBT. There were two GBT programs offered virtually and the rest of the programs were offered in-person.
- An additional two programs were offered in the region but were either cancelled or postponed before they started. Both were GBT programs.
- PMH promotes programming internally through My Health Teams, Physician Clinics, Nurse Practitioners, Mental Health Workers, the Chronic Disease Prevention Program Nurses and Dietitians, Health Promotion Coordinators, etc. GBT is promoted on social media and in the monthly publication of Health Plus.
- An interactive presentation on GBT, TBH and MAP was offered in PMH to Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative program staff at their quarterly meeting in Dauphin in September. Promotional material was also handed out to attendees.
- PMH created a new display board to help promote programming offered in the region.
- One virtual MAP and TBH training included five leaders from PMH.

### Northern Regional Health Authority

| Host         | Program | Mode      | Start Date | # of Participants Attended | # of Participants Completed |
|--------------|---------|-----------|------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| The Pas      | GBT     | In-person | April 30   | 12                         | 12                          |
| <b>TOTAL</b> |         |           |            | <b>12</b>                  | <b>12</b>                   |

- One GBT program was delivered in 2025-2026 in the Northern RHA.
- One additional GBT program was planned in Flin Flon but was cancelled due to low registration.

### Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority

| Host           | Program | Mode      | Start Date   | # of Participants Attended | # of Participants Completed |
|----------------|---------|-----------|--------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Selkirk        | MAP     | In-person | April 9      | 15                         | 15                          |
| Teulon         | TBH     | In-person | April 8      | 10                         | 8                           |
| Virtual        | TBH     | Virtual   | May 7        | 9                          | 7                           |
| Gimli          | MAP     | In-person | May 14       | 22                         | 16                          |
| Gimli          | MAP     | In-person | September 17 | 18                         | 16                          |
| Teulon         | TBH     | In-person | October 7    | 7                          | 6                           |
| Gimli          | TBH     | In-person | November 3   | 13                         | 11                          |
| Stonewall      | MAP     | In-person | November 6   | 14                         | 6                           |
| Gimli          | TBH     | In-person | November 12  | 14                         | 11                          |
| Virtual        | TBH     | Virtual   | November 18  | 14                         | 10                          |
| Winnipeg Beach | MAP     | In-person | January 13   | 8                          | 3                           |
| Stonewall      | TBH     | In-person | January 29   | 17                         | 11                          |
| St Georges     | TBH     | In-person | February 10  | 15                         | 14                          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>   |         |           |              | <b>176</b>                 | <b>134</b>                  |

- At total of 13 programs ran this year in 2025-2026. An additional three were offered but were either cancelled or postponed to later.
- All of the programs offered this year were the newer MAP (5) or TBH (8) programming.
- IERHA promotes its programming through social media, senior group pages, word of mouth, e-newsletters, health providers, senior centres, and community events section of local newspapers.

### Winnipeg

| Host                           | Program | Mode      | Start Date   | # of Participants Attended | # of Participants Completed |
|--------------------------------|---------|-----------|--------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Virtual with Winnipeg Library  | PTC     | Virtual   | April 10     | 13                         | 8                           |
| Wellness Institute             | GBT     | In-person | April 22     | 7                          | 7                           |
| LB Towers                      | MAP     | In-person | May 13       | 16                         | 12                          |
| Kildonan Manor                 | MAP     | in-person | May 29       | 6                          | 5                           |
| Opportunities for Employment   | GBT     | In-person | June 5       | 6                          | 4                           |
| Age and Opportunity            | PTC     | Virtual   | September 3  | 11                         | 9                           |
| St James Assiniboia 55+ Centre | MAP     | In-person | September 11 | 14                         | 14                          |
| Columbus Villa                 | MAP/TBH | In-person | October 22   | 17                         | 16                          |
| East Park Lodge                | MAP/TBH | In-person | October 22   | 29                         | 22                          |

| Host                       | Program | Mode      | Start Date  | # of Participants Attended | # of Participants Completed |
|----------------------------|---------|-----------|-------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Wellness Institute         | MAP     | In-person | October 18  | 9                          | 5                           |
| Wellness Institute         | TBH     | In-person | November 18 | 10                         | 6                           |
| Parkside Plaza             | MAP     | In-person | January 22  | 12                         | 12                          |
| Virtual                    | GBT     | Virtual   | February 17 | 8                          | 7                           |
| Age and Opportunity        | PTC     | Virtual   | February 18 | 8                          | 8                           |
| Louis Riel Library         | MAP     | In-person | February 20 | 15                         | 13                          |
| Autumn House               | TBH     | In-person | March 3     | 12                         | 6                           |
| Donwood Personal Care Home | MAP     | in-person | March 3     | 21                         | 13                          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>               |         |           |             | <b>214</b>                 | <b>167</b>                  |

- A total of 17 programs ran in Winnipeg in 2025-2026; three programs were Get Better Together, three were Powerful Tools for Caregivers, two were Total Brain Health, and nine were the Memory and Aging program.
- An additional six programs (one GBT, two MAP, two PTC and one TBH) were offered but were either cancelled or postponed.
- There were four virtual programs offered this year; three were PTC and one was GBT.
- Winnipeg Libraries have partnered with WI and are offering our slate of programming. The programs are promoted and listed on the City of Winnipeg Library website, allowing easy online registration and links for virtual offerings.
- No Leaders were trained in the Winnipeg region this year.

### ***Implementation of Leader Training***

The Wellness Institute hosted an virtual combined training for the Memory and Aging Program (MAP) and the Total Brain Health (TBH) program, during which five leaders from the Prairie Mountain Health region were trained.

### **Training Session**

| Dates             | Program     | Mode    | Attended / Completed Training Session |
|-------------------|-------------|---------|---------------------------------------|
| September 4, 2025 | MAP and TBH | Virtual | 5/5                                   |
| <b>TOTAL:</b>     |             |         | <b>5/5</b>                            |