



Sociobehavioural Oncology CONNECTIONS

The Newsletter of BCCA's Cancer Rehabilitation Network

Fall 2006 - Issue 6

The BCCA: Reaching out to BC's Cross Cultural Communities

The BC Cancer Agency's (BCCA) Cancer Rehabilitation Network and Sociobehavioural Research Centre (SRC) will once again be taking part in the annual AMSSA Multicultural Health Fair this coming March 2007. This free community event, made possible for the past two years with co-sponsorship from the BCCA, is hosted and organized by the Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of BC (AMSSA). AMSSA is a non-profit affiliation of more than 80 multicultural agencies providing immigrant settlement and multicultural services in communities throughout the province.

The AMSSA Multicultural Health Fair provides a venue for the public



to learn more about health care services offered in BC. With interactive exhibits, educational workshops and entertainment in 9 different languages, the fair is accessible to many of the lower mainland's multiethnic and multicultural communities. A one-stop-shop for basic health information, it promotes awareness in important health topics and preventative health issues, such as

cancer, and connects the community to BC's health organizations and health resources including the BCCA.

Taking advantage of an opportunity to reach out to the public, our co-sponsorship and presence at the event as an exhibitor demonstrates our commitment to improving access to quality health and cancer care for all of

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Newsletter Focus

Research in Practice

Share information and resources on research and clinical innovations.

Connect researchers, clinicians and administrators from across the country.

Build understanding about the sociobehavioural dimension of cancer.

Inside This Issue

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Taking Oncology Nutrition Research to New Heights

The BC Cancer Agency's Oncology Nutrition provincial service received a team planning grant from the Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research

(MSFHR). This grant will allow the 14 member multi-disciplinary research team to advance research in the area of oncology nutrition with a focus on identifying gaps in service and setting priorities as part of a collaborative, province-wide network. The MSFHR grant will provide for the infrastructure necessary to bring this group together and to support innovative diet and lifestyle research.

Ryna Levy-Milne, Provincial Practice Leader, Oncology Nutrition at the BC Cancer Agency, notes that "Although most healthcare professionals recognize the importance of oncology nutrition in symptom management, and improving patient outcomes, there has been limited research on the topic." She reaffirms that with the BCCA's strong commitment to translational research and evidence based practice, it's Oncology Nutrition group is uniquely positioned to lead this research.

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Cheri Cosby, MSc., RD, Regional Professional Practice Leader of Oncology Nutrition at BCCA, Vancouver Island Center



Oncology Nutrition: Meeting Breast Cancer Patients' Informational Needs

After a diagnosis, many women with breast cancer are highly motivated to seek information about diet, physical activity, dietary supplements, and nutritional complimentary therapies. Breast cancer patients on Vancouver Island are seeking out information which resulted in 140 referrals to VIC Oncology Nutrition in 2004. Of the 140 referrals, 57% come from Victoria and 43% from upisland. Cheri Cosby, MSc., RD, Regional Professional Practice Leader of Oncology Nutrition at BCCA, Vancouver Island Center offers patients a weekly 1-hour class in which there is informal discussion around a variety of topics of relevance to breast cancer such as, managing side

effects during treatment, managing weight, dietary fibre, fat, calcium/vitamin D, exercise, and natural health products.

Some examples of questions women ask include:

- Are there foods that should be avoided? What about flax and soy?

A recently published meta-analysis of several epidemiological studies shows that the consumption of soy food and flaxseed decreases the risk of developing breast cancer in both pre- and postmenopausal women. Findings from the studies also suggest that consuming soy foods in adolescence reduces the risk of developing breast cancer later in life with the highest risk reduction seen in those who consume soy foods throughout adolescence and adulthood.

However, based on data from animal research, questions remain about soy and flaxseed consumption and whether it should be consumed by women with estrogen-sensitive breast cancer, or by women with high risk of developing breast cancer. A long-term study found that isoflavones (soy) have no significant impact on breast cancer risk. Some suggest that in ovariectomized rodents, genistein, an isoflavone found naturally in soy, stimulates tumor growth, whereas when using intact rodents, genistein plays a role in the inhibition of tumor growth. Clinical studies currently are underway to continue examining how soy components, including isoflavones, and flaxseed components, including enterolactone

may affect cancer risk.

- Should breast cancer patients take vitamins or other supplements on a regular basis?

Vitamin and mineral supplements should never be taken to substitute for a healthy diet as foods not only contain vitamin and minerals in balance, but many other nutritive factors, such as phytochemicals and fibre. Taking vitamin and mineral pills to supplement a healthy diet is essentially not necessary, however it is often difficult to meet the daily requirements of some nutrients, such as calcium, vitamin D, folic acid, iron, and selenium. Patients should consult with a Dietitian if they are concerned about meeting their daily nutrient requirements, especially if they are experiencing challenges with eating.

Eating well is one of the best ways to keep the body healthy during cancer treatment. Most women who have had breast cancer say that this is not a good time to make big changes in their lives. For the major improvements to their diets, women are advised to save these until after treatment.

* * *

For more information regarding the Nutrition sessions for women with breast cancer weekly classes please contact Melanie Davis, secretary, Oncology Nutrition, VIC, at mdavis@bccancer.bc.ca

Introducing.....

Dr. Margaret Dorazio-Migliore, New Investigator, SRC, Vancouver

In October 2006 Margaret joined the BC Cancer Agency's Sociobehavioural Research Centre in Vancouver as a New Investigator for the Cross Cultural Palliative Care NET Project. She is a medical anthropologist and interdisciplinary scholar whose previous research focused on chronic disease and family eldercare. Earlier this year, she completed a 2-year post-doctoral traineeship at the M. Young Centre for Applied Ethics, UBC. Her post-doctoral research concerned chronic kidney disease and its impact on Lower Mainland and Interior families.



Keeping you posted.....



The SRC will be putting on a **Cross Cultural Cancer Care & Research Forum** in November of 2007 in Vancouver, BC. For more information or to join the conference mailing list contact Dr. Maria Cristina Barroetavena at mbarroet@bccancer.bc.ca



Irene Yim, GL Accounting, PHSA Finance & SRC Volunteer at the AMSSA Multicultural Health Fair 2006.

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BC's cross cultural communities. Dr. Maria Cristina Barroetavena, Research Consultant, at the BCCA's Sociobehavioural Research Centre (SRC), notes that the health fair provides the BCCA with the chance to connect with the public to educate them about our programs which we offer for culturally diverse patients and families, such as interpreter services, and to disseminate our printed materials in different languages, like our Oncology Nutrition and Patient and Family Counselling brochures in Punjabi, Cantonese and Mandarin.

In handing out surveys at the past health fairs the BCCA has also been able to learn more about cancer related beliefs and health practices among people of different cultures, information which the BCCA can take into consideration at the clinical level. In addition, the fair is an opportunity for connecting with other health agencies to discuss potential venues for collaboration in reaching the community for education and information purposes, and to improve access to and use of health resources.

The 3rd Annual AMSSA Multicultural Health Fair is to be held on **Saturday March 3rd, 2007** at the **Croatian Cultural Centre in Vancouver from 11am to 5pm. All are welcome!** For more information and to find out how you can attend or exhibit visit www.amssa.org/healthfair2007/



New 2006 Grant Funded Research Studies

SRC researchers and research associates have continued their success in 2006 in securing research funding for a number of new grants in the area of sociobehavioural cancer research. Congratulations go out for their determination! The following research studies are a few of the recent grants held for 2006:

Exploring Damocles Syndrome (fear of cancer recurrence) in Cancer Patients and their Providers at the BCCA

Investigators: Dr. Lori Brotto
Grant Funding Agency: BCCA

Cancer Health Behaviours, Attitudes towards Sexuality, and Acculturation: Decreasing disparities in East Asian women.

Investigators: Dr. Lori Brotto (PI), Dr. Maria Cristina Barroetavena & B. Gorzalka.
Grant Funding Agency: Herro CIHR Seed Funds

Can mind influence the course of cancer? Identifying the Methodological, Conceptual and Practical Challenges For a Fair and Rigorous Study?

Investigator: Dr. Joanne Stephen
Grant Funding Agency: NCIC

A Methodology to Understand Cancer Screening Behaviour of Culturally Diverse Populations: A feasibility study using administrative data

Investigators: Dr. Arminée Kazanjian, Dr. Thomas Hislop, Dr. Susan Cadell, Alice Chen, Dr. Maria Cristina Barroetavena & Marie Desmeules
Grant Funding Agency: CIHR

Exploring the Relationship Between Androgens, Interpersonal Factors, and Sexual Health in Aging Women

Investigators: R. Basson (PI), Dr. Lori Brotto, F. Labrie & J. Petkau
Grant Funding Agency: CIHR

Who will care in the end?: A Pan-Canadian Study of Palliative Care Providers

Investigators: Dr. Arminée Kazanjian (PI), Dr. Susan Cadell, Dr. Patricia Boston, Dr. David Hemsworth & Dr. Julie Lachance
Grant Funding Agency: CIHR

The NET on the Web

Check out the new Cross Cultural Palliative Care NET web section on the BC Cancer Agency web site @ www.bccancer.bc.ca/RES/ResearchPrograms/NET/



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Collaborators involved in this project include researchers from the University of British Columbia, the University of Victoria, the BCCA's regional cancer centres, and the BCCA Cancer Research Centre. The team has held two meetings so far and has identified two particular areas of research interest for three major tumour sites (breast, prostate & colorectal): 1) The role of diet and natural health products in cancer recurrence and survival; and 2) Best practices to sustain lifestyle changes for the prevention of recurrence of cancer.

Upcoming Events

Psychosocial Oncology Rounds

Join us from 12pm to 1pm every 2nd Wednesday of the month for lunch time learning. Videolink to all 4 cancer centres. Location TBA. For information on upcoming speakers and topics, contact Diana Hass dhass@bccancer.bc.ca

Oncology Nutrition Lunch & Learn

Join us on the 3rd Wednesday of every month for lunch time learning from 12pm to 1pm by teleconference. For information on upcoming speakers and topics contact Angela Bowman at abowman@bccancer.bc.ca

The 3rd Annual AMSSA Multicultural Health Fair. March 3, 2007. 11am to 5pm. The Croatian Cultural Centre. 3250 Commercial Drive, Vancouver, BC. <http://www.amssa.org/healthfair2007/>

Annual CAPO Conference. May 9 - 11, 2007. Fort Garry Hotel, Winnipeg, MB. *Deadline for Abstract Submissions December 1, 2006.* www.capo.ca

9th World Congress of Psycho-Oncology. September 16 - 20, 2007. Imperial College, London, UK. www.ipos-society.org

Find Us on the Web



Connections Newsletter

<http://www.bccancer.bc.ca/RES/ResearchPrograms/>

Sociobehavioural Research Centre

<http://www.bccancer.bc.ca/RES/ResearchPrograms/SBR/>

Oncology Nutrition

<http://www.bccancer.bc.ca/HPI/NutritionalCare>

Psychosocial Oncology

<http://www.bccancer.bc.ca/PPI/CancerTreatment/SupportCopingwithCancerIntroduction/>

Cancer Rehabilitation Network

BCCA's Cancer Rehabilitation Network coordinates regional cancer centre activities for patient and family counselling, psychiatry, and nutrition services. The Rehabilitation Network also works with host hospitals to provide speech pathology and physiotherapy services. Community activities with practitioners are provided through the psychosocial oncology and nutrition oncology networks. Translational research is conducted by the Sociobehavioural Research Centre.

Sociobehavioural Research Centre

Working within the Cancer Rehabilitation Network and with community partners, BCCA's Sociobehavioural Research Centre's (SRC) mission is to provide leadership on quality of life issues by generating, disseminating, and facilitating uptake of an evidence-based understanding of cancer patients' physical, psychological, social, cultural, nutritional, informational, spiritual and practical needs.

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More Information

This newsletter is published quarterly. To submit a story idea or to learn more about the Cancer Rehabilitation Network's activities please contact:

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