

Connections

Sociobehavioural Oncology

BCCA Cancer Rehabilitation Network Newsletter



BC Cancer Agency

CARE + RESEARCH

An agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority

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Issue 12

Newsletter Focus

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.

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New Website to Help Children When Cancer Affects the Family

BC Cancer Agency launches www.cancerinmyfamily.ca

Coping with cancer is hard enough when you're an adult. It can be even more scary when you're a child and your mom, dad, or grandparent gets sick.

To help families cope, the BC Cancer Agency, an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority, has created a new website called Cancer in my Family (www.cancerinmyfamily.ca), aimed at children aged 8 to 12.

The website is a fun interactive environment where children can feel safe, play games, create friendly characters – and at the same time explore how they're feeling, and learn

about cancer.

"It's an opportunity for children to explore in an interactive way their thoughts, feelings and questions about cancer," explains Carly Fleming, a clinical counsellor at the BC Cancer Agency in Vancouver. "Kids process things through fun, art and play, so it will help them on that level."

Breast cancer survivor and mother Deanna Van Der Burg, 46, of Surrey, says: "It's hard to see a parent sick. It affects our children a lot more than you think, whether they talk about it or not."

Deanna initially

struggled to find ways of helping her seven year-old son Ben to understand what was happening and to answer his many questions. "A lot of the time I didn't have answers for him. When you're first diagnosed with cancer, you're like a deer in headlights. The only person Ben had heard of with cancer was Terry Fox, who didn't survive. Explaining that there are lots of different types of cancer was tough, too."

There wasn't a lot available online, and Deanna didn't know anyone who'd survived breast cancer. When she was able to access BC Cancer Agency support groups and meet some survivors, Deanna gained some hope, which helped her to reassure Ben. "He was acting out a lot at one point, but now whenever we pass a poster about cancer he stops in his tracks and points it out to me."

Deanna and Ben were able to attend the
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"It's hard to see a parent sick. It affects our children a lot more than you think, whether they talk about it or not."

Children's Club offered by BC Cancer Agency's Fraser Valley Centre in Surrey (also offered at the Agency's Vancouver Centre). It was a very positive experience, but not one that's easily accessible to every family in B.C. The website will offer the same kind of help, but will be available to everyone, whenever and wherever they need it most.

The site includes a choice of fun games that emphasize supportive messages such as: "You can't catch cancer from someone else"; and "It's OK to have fun, even when someone you love is sick". Children can draw pictures on a virtual rock wall, which includes a feature showing the difference between a healthy cell and a cancer

cell. Bouncing fruit and veggies, caught in a virtual basket, teaches children about the importance of a healthy diet. They can go on a scavenger hunt for a "feel-good" bag, create cute characters to be their buddies, and set the weather to reflect their mood.

Deanna thinks the site will be great for kids like Ben: "It's good to know that now I've got a resource for him. He loves computers – he has better mouse control than I have! It will be interesting to see how he navigates it while sitting on Mummy's lap, and how differently he'll navigate it when he's on his own."

Envision Credit Union Charitable Foundation provided a generous donation to the BC Cancer Foundation to start up

the website. "This was a dream we'd held for some time, to do more to help children understand cancer in their family and cope with changes," says Patient and Family Counselling program leader Gina MacKenzie. "It was wonderful to know that Envision was also excited and willing to provide a significant donation. Without it, the website wouldn't have been possible."

For more information, please contact Ruth Hartnup, Web Communications Specialist (604.877.6000 x2326 or rhartnup@bccancer.bc.ca) or Jinny Wu, Communications Specialist (604.877.6272 or jwu2@bccancer.bc.ca)

National Centre of Excellence in Health Economics, Services, Policy and Ethics (HESPE) Research

We are pleased to announce Canada's first National Centre of Excellence in Health Economics, Services, Policy and Ethics (HESPE) research in cancer control. The Centre will tackle research and policy questions across the HESPE disciplines over the next five years, drawing on multi-professional and interdisciplinary researchers who will work collaboratively, build capacity and disseminate new knowledge.

The National Centre of Excellence (NCE) is an equal partnership of the British Columbia Cancer Agency, Cancer Care Ontario, the University of British Columbia

and the University of Toronto. It brings together a network of researchers, policy-makers, and practitioners committed to enhancing Canada's health care system through improved cancer control. This partnership between Canada's two largest cancer organizations and two of its leading universities is an essential and strategic collaboration for this cutting-edge pan-Canadian Centre. The partnering Cancer Agencies are responsible for cancer control for over one-half of the Canadian population - more than 16 million people - including over 80,000 new cancer cases diagnosed each year.

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The Centre will undertake research in the following thematic program areas over the next five years: 1) Health Technology Assessment (*Program co-leaders: Hoch and Krahn*); 2) Health Systems, Services and Policy (*Program co-leaders: McBride and Dobrow*); 3) Public Engagement and Societal Values (*Program co-leaders: Peacock and Gibson*); and, 4) Patients and Families (*Program co-leaders: Doll and Ringash*).

The objective of the Patients and Families Program is to examine issues relating to comprehensive cancer care (patient navigation, supportive care, psychosocial care, and palliative care) and their effects on the health and well-being of cancer patients, survivors and their families. Our work will cover the full cancer trajectory although there will be particular attention to the economic

impact at the post-treatment phase. The program will initially focus on two projects which address the question "What are the costs and consequences associated with the introduction of quality supportive cancer care?"

The Centre will establish a Network to promote knowledge synthesis, translation and exchange with other Provincial Cancer organizations, the Canadian Partnership against Cancer, the Canadian Cancer Research Alliance, the CIHR-Institute of Cancer Research and other international bodies. The Centre will host a series of HESPE methods and policy workshops for researchers, policy-makers and practitioners, and it will build capacity by offering graduate placements in HESPE research and cancer control at its partnering organizations.

Multinational Association of Supportive Care in Cancer (MASCC): International Symposium

The Multinational Association for Supportive Care in Cancer (MASCC) recently held its annual conference in Rome, Italy, on June 25-27, 2009. MASCC is an international, multidisciplinary organization with members representing over sixty countries and five continents. Founded in 1990, MASCC is dedicated to research and education in all aspects of supportive care for patients with cancer, regardless of the stage of their disease.

This year's conference featured Cancer Survivorship keynote presentations by Patricia Ganz, Professor of Health Services and Medicine,



University of California Los Angeles, and Antonella Surbone, Medical Oncologist at New York University. Staff from the Sociobehavioural Research Centre at the BC Cancer Agency, along with national and international partners, presented a joint session to the Rehabilitation/Survivorship Study

Group entitled: Cancer Survivorship: Creating National Priorities Through International Collaborations. The session, despite its 7:00 a.m. scheduled time, was well attended and received much enthusiasm.

We look forward to the next MASCC conference in Vancouver on June 24-26, 2010!

MASCC

June 25-27, 2009

Rome, Italy

Upcoming Events

3rd International Cancer Control Congress (ICCC09)

November 8-11, 2009. Cernobbio, Como, Italy.

<http://www.cancercontrol2009.com>

EORTC Symposium on Quality of Life, Symptom Research and Patient Reported Outcomes in Cancer Clinical Trials

November 25-27, 2009. Brussels, Belgium.

<http://www.eortc.be/probe/>

7th Annual Conference of the American Psychosocial Oncology Society (APOS), "Integrating Psychosocial Research and Practice in Quality Cancer Care: Confronting Challenges Together."

February 18-21, 2010. New Orleans, Louisiana, USA.

<http://www.apos-society.org/apos2010/>

16th International Conference on Cancer Nursing (ICCN), "Enhancing Knowledge, Promoting Quality."

March 7-11, 2010. Atlanta, Georgia, USA.

http://www.isncc.org/conference/16th_ICCN/

Announcement:

Funding Announced to Enhance Quality of Life for Canadians Affected by Breast Cancer

Dr. Joanne Stephen receives \$582,995 for "A randomized controlled trial testing efficacy of professionally-led online support groups for young Canadian breast cancer survivors" in the Canadian Breast Cancer Research Alliance/Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation Special Research Competition on Psychosocial Aspects of Breast Cancer! More to come...

Introducing

Tracey Brickell, PhD, is a new Research Scientist at the BCCA Sociobehavioural Research Centre.

Lisa Lanaway, RCC, is a new part-time Clinical Counsellor for the PFCS at the BCCA Centre for the Southern Interior.

Kate MacGregor, MPH, is the new Research Project Coordinator for the Online Group Counselling Research at the Fraser Valley Centre.

Trevor Olson, MEd, is a new Casual Counsellor with the PFCS, BCCA Vancouver and Fraser Valley Centres.

Betty Owen, MSW, is a new Casual Counsellor with the PFCS, BCCA Vancouver Centre.

Douglas Ozier, MA, is a new Counsellor with the CNS Tumour Team, BrainCare Project.

Kayla Roxas & Michelle Da Silveira will be providing Casual Clerical Support at the PFCS.

Sharla Schofield, RSW, RCC, is a new Casual Counsellor for the PFCS at the BCCA Centre for the Southern Interior.

Farewell

Sophie Bartek, Research Project Coordinator, has left her position with the Online Group Counselling Research, but will remain with PHSAs as a facilitator/coach in the Department of Strategic Planning, Transformation and Innovation.

Virginia Boquiren, Casual Clinical Counsellor, vacated her position at the PFCS, BCCA Vancouver Centre, and will be going to Princess Margaret Hospital.

Ilana Katz, Casual Counsellor for the PFCS at the BCCA Vancouver Centre, has accepted a permanent position with the Arthritis Society.

Solveig Scott, Social Worker for the PFCS at the BCCA Fraser Valley Centre, has now retired after 8 years of service and will be missed.

Barbara Smith, Casual Counsellor at the BCCA Vancouver Centre, retired last month after a long and productive career as a counsellor.

Find us on the Web

Connections Newsletter www.bccancer.bc.ca/RES/ResearchPrograms/SBR/News/Connections

Cross Cultural Palliative Care, NET www.bccancer.bc.ca/RES/ResearchPrograms/NET

Oncology Nutrition www.bccancer.bc.ca/HPI/NutritionalCare

Psychosocial Oncology www.bccancer.bc.ca/PPI/copingwithcancer

Sociobehavioural Research Centre www.bccancer.bc.ca/RES/ResearchPrograms/SBR

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. Knowledge Translation research is conducted by the Sociobehavioural Research Centre.

SRC

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.

Subscribe

Sign up to receive Connections Newsletter in print or PDF format. Send your name, address and subscription request to Kimberly Burrus at kburrus@bccancer.bc.ca

More information

To submit a story idea or to learn more about the Cancer Rehabilitation Network's activities please contact:

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