

Why is it critical to establish a Family Practice Oncology Network?

Primary Care Renewal, Chronic Disease Management. These, along with Collaboratives, Patient Safety and others are some of the catch phrases that you may have been hearing about. Now you have another one...the Family Practice Oncology Council & Network (FPON).

Concerns regarding the function of our health care system have been growing for years. There are many efforts aimed at improvement. Some of us have been involved in such efforts. Yet we know that trends causing the system to be less than desirable are unaltered. We all know that, eventually, an effort must come along that will

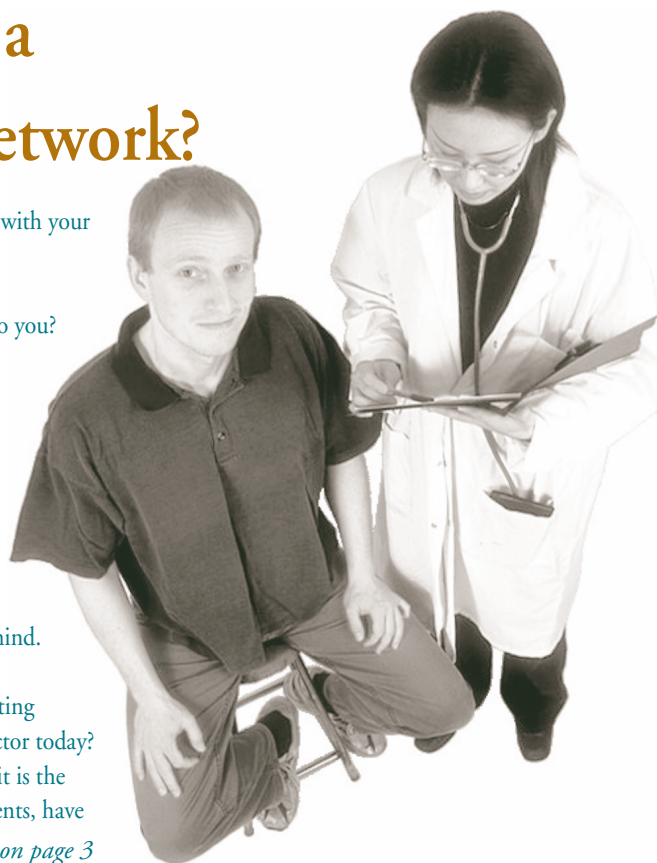
make a difference. The FPON, with your assistance, can be just that.

Why would this be of interest to you?

You have a busy practice and not enough time in the day to accomplish everything that needs to be done. The last thing that you need to do is to involve yourself in something new...right? Take the time to read through this. Perhaps you will change your mind.

What is one of the most frustrating things about being a family doctor today? Many of us would answer that it is the poor support that we, and patients, have

continued on page 3



Inside...

- Mark your calendars to learn more about FPON at the BCCA's annual conference – November 29 in Vancouver!
- Help us to assist you with your chronically ill and complex patients and have a chance to WIN one of four gift certificates to a restaurant of your choice by filling out a brief survey!
- Providing Access – the inaugural version of the FPON website will be up and running by September. The website will provide information and allow for feedback which will enhance our ability to provide the highest quality care for cancer, as well as links to other chronic and complex illnesses. Please look for our link on the BCCA website (www.bccancer.bc.ca).

Supporting family physicians in managing chronic and complex diseases

The Family Practice Oncology Council and Network's goal is to assist the BC Cancer Agency (BCCA) in its mandate to improve cancer control in the province by providing support and connection to physicians in the community. Specific areas of activity will include

- developing of communications tools to keep BCCA and community providers in touch;
- participating in the identification and/or development of peer reviewed, evidence

based guidelines based on 'best practice' principles;

- developing a high quality continuing education program that meets the standards of the College of Family Physicians;
- developing a training program for family physicians who wish to become an enhanced resource to their community through the acquisition of more in depth knowledge regarding cancer control and a greater link with the BCCA

continued on page 3

BC Cancer Agency perspective

Dr. Simon Sutcliffe



More people are experiencing, or have experienced, cancer within our society. Cancer is most common after the age of 60, when other health complaints and issues related to aging are of increasing importance. The known causal factors for cancer are common to a range of other chronic health concerns. People now live

longer with cancer, as more treatments that can extend or improve the quality of life are available. More of our therapies can be managed in a community setting ... more therapy can be delivered in an ambulatory setting ... and increasingly, treatments are becoming oral and more readily tolerated. Although a minority of adult cancer is determined through familial (hereditary) predisposition, genetics will increasingly become a part of our evaluation of the 'high risk' well population, and diagnostic and prognostic procedures for those determined to have cancer.

Cancer control is a population-based activity and the population extends from the healthy, the cured, the acutely ill, the chronically ill, and the dying. Primary care, the family doctor, and health and illness care services across the community – tertiary environments are inextricably linked. Accordingly, it behoves to us to learn how to manage this environment well if we are to enhance cancer control, provide quality care for patients and support knowledgeable, professionally-rewarded health professionals.

Messages from the co-chairs

Dr. Dan Horvat



It is a great honor to have been selected by a group of peers, and the BC Cancer Agency (BCCA), to act as co-chair of the Family Practice Oncology Network (FPON). I have a long standing interest in determining ways of supporting general and family practitioners in their work with patients with chronic and complex illnesses. The BCCA, and its president, Dr. Simon Sutcliffe, are exhibiting tremendous leadership in facilitating the creation of the FPON. Not only have they recognized the great need that is growing in our communities but they have gone that crucial extra step to commit to doing something about it.

I can say, without hesitation, that the BCCA has committed to the development of this Network in such a way that will be of great benefit to not only the BCCA and to the control of cancer in this province but also to the evolution of family practice. I look forward to working with those interested in this exciting endeavor.

I would also like to thank Dr. Jack Chritchley for laying much of the ground-work for this effort. For those of you who

have worked with Jack, I very much hope that you will continue to participate in the great work that he was instrumental in beginning. And finally, a special thanks also to the BC College of Family Practice for their support.

Dr. Philip White



Like Dr. Horvat I also feel it to be a great honour and privilege to be part of this initiative. As the co-chair elected to assist with the development of the program from an Interior and smaller centre perspective, I am very pleased to see the number of physicians from these areas are already actively working on committees to help make this program a success. I too applaud both Dr. Simon

Sutcliffe and Dr. Jack Chritchley for the vision and energy that initiated this process and have great confidence in the ability of all of those involved to be able to carry it forward.

Having been in medical administration for many years, while maintaining a family practice throughout, I have had an opportunity to see things from different perspectives. I can only reinforce the importance of engaging and involving family practitioners in complex care in a way which inspires and motivates and which leads to optimal patient and physician satisfaction and outcomes. This initiative truly will help to do this, and may well evolve as a model that will manage other chronic diseases. I think that those of us involved to date are excited to see the progress being made with the FPON and its great potential. I firmly believe that once we start engaging our fellow practitioners they will share the same enthusiasm.

Network Updates

Four working groups - Communications, Continuing Medical Education, Preceptorship & Research - have been established so far to assist the Family Practice Oncology Council and Network in achieving their goals. Consideration is being given to the development of a fifth working group that will address barriers to general and family practitioners engagement in chronic and complex illnesses. If you feel that you have a strong interest in any of the working groups please let us know. On page 4 is a brief outline of the activities of the established working groups.



Mark Your Calendars!

The BCCA will hold its annual conference in Vancouver on November 27-29, 2003. This gathering will bring together leading edge expertise in many facets of cancer control.

On November 29 a day long session will be devoted to those general and family practitioners who are, or who are interested in becoming involved with cancer control activities and with the FPON space is limited to 200. For information, check out the BCCA website at www.bccancer.bc.ca We anticipate having a plenary speaker who will assist with framing this effort in the context of the larger picture of chronic and complex disease care that we, as community practitioners, are immersed in. Expect a day of challenges, learning and collegial dialogue!

Supporting Family Physicians continued from page 1

- conducting regionally based research and outcome analyses to provide vital information for Network activities
- identifying methodologies for supporting family physicians with the management of cancer and other chronic and complex diseases in their communities

Family Practice Educational Day November 29, 2003

0800 – 0810	Welcome/ Introduction/ Agenda Chair: Dr. Peter Battershill
0810 – 0830	Intro to the Council & Network Speakers: Dr. Dan Horvat & Dr. Phil White
0830 – 0915	Keynote Address – Chronic Disease Management Speaker: To be confirmed
0915 – 1000	Use of Tumour Markers Speaker: Dr. Grant McLean
1030 – 1115	Febrile neutropenia Speaker: Dr. Marianne Taylor
1115 – 1200	Follow up of patients treated for cancer Speakers: Breast – Dr. Stephen Chia GI – Dr. Marianne Taylor GU – To be announced
1200 – 1300	Lunch – Provided
1300 – 1430	Workshops a) Pain management – Speaker: Dr. Doris Barwich b) Palm pilot applications – Speaker: Dr. Keith Phillips c) Giving bad news – Dr. Grant McLean
1445 – 1545	Panel : Alternative Therapies of Cancer Moderator: Dr. Trina Montemurro Speakers: Drs. Robin O'Brien, Hal Gunn, Brian Dixon-Warren
1545 – 1600	Closing

Oncology Network? continued from page 1

when we are confronted with chronic and complex illness. As family physicians we are trained to deal with many illnesses but, if we take on too many patients with chronic and complex illnesses, then the demands on our time and practices go up immensely. Throughout much of the province, and Canada for that matter, this reality is pushing family physicians to become more involved with types of care that are not so onerous.

The BC Cancer Agency has come to realize that the patterns of care in family practice are changing significantly. As an organization whose objective is to assist patients with a chronic and complex illness, these practice changes have led to some real difficulties. The BCCA recognizes it must establish a partnership with family physicians to assist them with preventative counseling, early screening and diagnosis, appropriate referral and support through and after cancer diagnosis and treatment.

The BCCA further recognizes that this involves supporting family physicians in their communities using information technology and enhanced access to specialists. The BCCA also understands that somehow family physicians need to be able to take the time necessary to get involved with such work without being penalized for it.

Hence the creation of the FPON. The BCCA has brought together family physicians to establish a council and four working groups. This is the beginning of a network of family physicians of which, we are hoping, you can become a part. Simon Sutcliffe, president of the BCCA realizes the task ahead is not an easy one. Despite the complexity of the issues in family practice today, the BCCA is taking this step to find ways to ensure family physicians are assisted when they choose to engage in the more complicated aspects of health care delivery. The FPON, and the BCCA, believe that when methods to enhance cancer control are found in B.C. that a similar approach and infrastructure should be useful to assist with other chronic and complex illnesses. Due to the importance of efforts such as this the BC College of Family Practice and the UBC Department of Family Practice have also lent their support to this effort.

Included in this newsletter is a survey. If you have no other involvement with this effort you would have made a valuable contribution by completing and returning this survey. Together we can begin to articulate what we need in order to provide the highest quality care to even our most complex patients.

For more information please contact Dr. Dan Horvat at 604.707.5948 or Frances Lasser at 604.877.6000 ext 2295

Communications Working Group

Members: Kendall Ho (Associate Dean Continuing Professional Development, UBC), Dan Horvat (family physician, Coquitlam), Pierre Leung (family physician, Vancouver), Andrew Murray (family physician, Nelson), Keith Phillips (family physician, Nanaimo), Avis Picton (clinical associate, Surrey), Carolyn Wang (family physician, Vancouver), Brian Willoughby (family physician, Vancouver)

For a project like this to be successful, excellent communication is essential. Initially we have committed to developing a newsletter, website and using video conferencing to achieve our goals. In time, local presentations will also be launched. We encourage anyone with an interest in, or questions regarding, the FPON to please contact Dr. Dan Horvat at 604.707.5948 .

Continuing Medical Education Working Group

Members: Shirley Howdle, Chair (clinic associate, Vancouver), Peter Battershill (clinic associate, Victoria), Tom Bailey (family practice, Victoria), Trina Montemurro (family practice & clinic associate), Neil Hilliard (family practice, Chilliwack), Avis Picton (clinic associate, Surrey), Henry Docherty (clinic associate, Kelowna), Philip White (family practice, Kelowna)

This Working Group first identified the need to plan an education day on November 29, 2003 to coincide with the BC Cancer Agency Annual Conference (see page 3). Now the Working Group is undertaking a Provincial Needs Assessment to determine the topics for a CME Road Show to be presented in a number of locations throughout the province beginning in early 2004. Contact Frances Lasser, flasser@bccancer.bc.ca or 604-877-6000, local 2295.

Research Working Group

Members: Dan Horvat, Chair (family physician, Coquitlam), Wing Lee Leung (clinical associate, Vancouver), Helen Karsai (clinical associate, Vancouver), Susan Mann (family physician, Kamloops)

There are many research opportunities that will evolve from the development of the FPON. Initially, research will aim to better understand and articulate the needs of the province's family physicians for enhancing cancer control and caring for patients with other chronic and complex illnesses. Areas likely to be of interest include how best to incorporate IT into practices, which relationships with other healthcare providers can assist with patient care, what forms of communication with specialists best supports care in the community, and what other tangible forms of support are necessary to sustain family physicians in delivering high quality care to patients with cancer and other chronic and complex diseases. The overall goal of the network in assisting the BCCA in improving cancer control in BC will also be measured. Contact Dr. Dan Horvat at 604.707.5948 .

Preceptorship Program Working Group

Members: Bob Newman, Chair (family practice, Dawson Creek), Sharon Dougan (family practice, Vernon), James Levin (family practice, Salmon Arm), Mary Lymburner (clinic associate, Vancouver), Christine Blyth (clinic associate, Surrey), Frances Wong (radiation oncologist, Surrey), Judith Pike (clinic associate, Vancouver), Philip White (family practice, Kelowna)

The Preceptorship Working Group is developing a two-month program in a module format that can be taken as an entire program or by individual modules. The modules include Medical Oncology, Radiation Oncology and Palliative Care. The goal is to have the program offered in each of the four cancer centres (Kelowna, Surrey, Victoria and Vancouver). There are several funding sources to support family practitioners who would like to take the program. The first program will be offered in late 2003 or early 2004. Contact Frances Lasser, flasser@bccancer.bc.ca or 604-877-6000, local 2295.

Family Practice Oncology Council Members

Dr. Simon Sutcliff,
President, BC Cancer Agency, Vancouver

Dr. Dan Horvat,
Co-chair and general practitioner, Coquitlam

Dr. Phil White,
Co-chair and family practitioner, Kelowna

Dr. Tom Bailey,
Family physician, Victoria

Dr. Henry Docherty,
Clinical associate, BCCA, Kelowna

Dr. Sharon Dougan,
Family practitioner, Vernon

Dr. Shirley Howdle,
Clinical associate, BCCA, Vancouver

Dr. James Levins,
Family practitioner, Salmon Arm

Dr. Art Macgregor,
Family practitioner, Victoria

Dr. Robert Newman,
General practitioner, Dawson Creek

Paddy O'Reilly,
Director, Healthy Heart Society

Dr. Keith Phillips,
Family practitioner, Nanaimo

Mr. Geoff Rowlands, Assistant Deputy Minister
of Health Planning, Victoria

Dr. Caroline Wang,
General practitioner, Richmond

Dr. Robert Woollard,
Chair of Department of Family Practice, U.B.C.

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Website

The inaugural version of the Family Practice Oncology Network Website will be available by September, 2003. This website provides valuable information on how to assist with cancer related care in your community, as well as a link to other organizations. Please visit the BC Cancer Agency website (www.bccancer.bc.ca)