

NURSING MATTERS

June 2018

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By nurses, for nurses

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BY NURSES, FOR NURSES

- A Nursing Resource for all BC Oncology Nurses -

Welcome to the June issue of NURSING MATTERS, a bi-monthly newsletter developed by oncology nurses in BC. Our aim is to help connect oncology nurses across the province and keep you informed of upcoming changes, events, opportunities, resources and research. We would love to hear your ideas and feedback! If you would like to submit an article, please email us at nursinged@bccancer.bc.ca for more information.

This month's issue will focus on nursing education: we'll take a look at some of our existing resources and highlight some new and interesting events and conferences. So pour yourself a cup of tea, sit back, and enjoy the newsletter made for YOU!

Nursing Week

Nursing week 2018 was an opportunity to celebrate, reflect and be inspired. Nurse practitioners provided an overview of exercise management and hypertension in oncology and oncologic emergencies; both are key patient concerns that nurses play an important role in supporting. Dr. Denise Bryant – Lukosis and Dr. Raymond Chan both inspired us by sharing the journey of how a clinical question can lead to a research study and to reflect on ways in which we as nurses and our systems can better support the needs of patients during and after treatment. Presentations from nursing week have been saved on the [H drive](#). BC Cancer collaborated with UBC to organize a panel discussion focused on advances in

nurse-led cancer survivorship research ([recording of the presentation](#)). And finally, no modern day celebration would be complete without a [selfie-contest](#).

A Blue Gown

*She lies on a stretcher, in a blue gown.
Her hair disheveled, so obviously in pain.
Accompanied by husband
who looks so fearful,
so tired,
so concerned.*



*Two years ago
she had received
the bad news that the cancer had returned
and could not be healed.
Treatments had been given, but to no avail.
Today, he brought her in, with intolerable pain.*

*I am so moved by his love for her
that I have to turn away.
My eyes, so full of tears, with a lump in my throat.
I keep wondering
who is having the harder time. Me or him?*

*His tears become mine, as I observe the love
that flows, without word
between them.*

- A poem by Dorothy Reimer, RN submitted in celebration of nursing week 2018 -

PRACTICE UPDATES

Intraperitoneal (IP) Port Flushes

What: Clarifying the language in C-252 and recommend use of a 5mL heparin flush prior to de-accessing non-valved IP ports

Where: [C-252](#)

Why: The latest evidence states that although an IP port is not placed in a blood vessel, there is still a risk of fibrin sheath formation. As such, the recommendation is to flush all non-valved IP ports with 5mL heparin (10 units/mL) prior to de-accessing the port

Questions? Talk to your regional Clinical Nurse Educator

Azacitidine Injections: Change in maximum volume of SC injection

As of July 1st, up to 4mls of Azacitidine can be injected subcutaneously into a single site. This change in practice may potentially decrease the number of injections a patient receives and is supported by evidence from trials that have demonstrated that 4mls of Azacitidine can be safely administered. More information is available in the June issue of the [ST update](#). All Azacitidine containing protocols, pre-printed orders, and the cancer drug manual will be updated and clearly highlight this increased volume of injections. A reminder: All hazardous drugs that are dispensed with the ChemoLock injector require the use of the air sandwich technique at BC Cancer.

WHAT'S NEW

Group Chemotherapy Teach Presentation

Immunotherapies are being increasingly utilized as an effective treatment against many types of cancer. To reflect this, our current group chemotherapy powerpoint presentation is undergoing some changes. This will help to decrease confusion for patients who have been told they are receiving “immunotherapy” or “targeted therapy” as opposed to traditional chemotherapy. Some changes you will notice include the removal of the descriptor word “chemotherapy” as the overall treatment language and replacing it with “systemic therapy”. Other updates include theme colours and logo to reflect BC Cancer’s new branding, as well as a new slide about blood clots and the addition of Speech Language Pathologists to the health care team with a description of their role. The current [powerpoint](#) can be found on the website, which will be replaced with the updated version when final review is completed.

BC Cancer Summit

The BC Cancer interdisciplinary summit on Nov 23rd and 24th is an opportunity for professional development, education and networking with oncology professionals from across the province. The [schedule](#) is being finalized and includes a nursing-specific afternoon session on Nov 24th. More information available at www.BCCancerSummit.ca

Funding

March 1-Sept 15:

[RNFCB Bursary Program](#)

June 30: [CANO/ACIO Awards \(CNA certification scholarships, nursing scholarships, nurse of the year award\)](#)

September 15: [BCNU Member Education Bursary](#)

July 13: [Stephen Berg Fund](#)

Nursing Practice Committee Updates

Nursing Practice Committee (NPC) meetings take place monthly. Each centre has a NPC representative who will be able to provide you with updates and minutes are available to read on the [H:\EVERYONE\nursing\C OMMUNICATION\Nursing Practice Committee \(NPC\)](H:\EVERYONE\nursing\C OMMUNICATION\Nursing Practice Committee (NPC)).

Communication Updates

[CST update](#)

[ST update](#)

Record of Exposure to Hazardous Drugs

This record of exposure to hazardous drugs document has recently been updated to ensure consistency with the BC Cancer Hazardous Drug List (as some drugs have been removed and added to the hazardous drug list). The updated document is available [here](#)

Self-discontinuing of an infusor patient handout: use of a Y-connector

As per nursing practice reference [C-252](#), use of a Y-connector with an infusor is recommended to try to minimize exposure of hazardous drugs. An updated patient handout that demonstrates the use of the Y-connector will be available in the Cancer Drug Manual under Fluorouracil by June 11th <http://www.bccancer.bc.ca/health-professionals/clinical-resources/cancer-drug-manual>

EDUCATION & RESOURCES

BC Cancer Library Patient Pathfinders

Pathfinders provide topic-specific lists of books, DVDs, pamphlets, websites and support programs related to cancer, as well as instructions on where to find each resource. There are unique Pathfinders for a wide range of topics, from coping with a recent cancer diagnosis to life after cancer. Pathfinders can be found at www.bccancer.bc.ca/library.

Pathfinders are a starting point for your patient's information-finding journey in addition to visiting a BC Cancer Library, Patient and Family Counselling, or the BC Cancer website (www.bccancer.bc.ca). While BC Cancer does recognize the information provided as useful, Pathfinders are for educational purposes only and are not a substitute for the advice of healthcare providers.

Patient Education Resources on BC Cancer Website

Did you know that there are over 20 different patient handouts on the BC Cancer website to provide information about how to manage cancer and treatment related symptoms such as fatigue, pain, memory, thinking and attention? Check them out here: <http://www.bccancer.bc.ca/health-info/coping-with-cancer/managing-symptoms-side-effects>

BC Cancer Patient and Family Events



BC Cancer organizes a number of events throughout the various regional centres aimed at supporting individuals facing cancer. These events include facilitator-led support or educational groups that focus on topics ranging from relaxation, nutrition, art, children's needs and much more! For the most up-to-date event listings for patients, families and health-care professionals, please visit:

<http://www.bccancer.bc.ca/about/events>.

HealthLink BC

Physical activity and dietary information and advice are available to all British Columbians by qualified professionals through HealthLink BC. Information is available on their website in 8 different languages that can be accessed by the public or printed and handed out to patients and families. Anyone that is unsure of how to safely be physically active during or after cancer treatments can speak to an exercise professional with cancer-specific training just by calling 8-1-1 (or 7-1-1 for the hearing impaired). To find out more, please explore the following links:

- Physical Activity: <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/physical-activity-services>
- Dietician Services: <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/dietitian-services>
- BC Cancer Resources: [BC Cancer Exercise Support](#)

Health Literacy and Care of Older Adults learning hub module

The **Health Literacy and Care of Older Adults** module was launched on the learning hub in April. More than 90% of the people who took the course felt it was useful in providing strategies to support creating a positive health literacy environment. Some of the strategies respondents mentioned include the teach-back method and assessing for signs of low health literacy. Click here to access the module <http://learninghub.phsa.ca/moodle/course/view.php?id=1089>

CANO Resources

The Canadian Association of Nurses in Oncology/Association Canadienne des Infirmières en Oncologie (CANO/ACIO) is the national organization that supports Canadian nurses to promote and develop excellence in oncology nursing practice, education, research and leadership. CANO/ACIO members have free access to learning resources presented by specialty oncology nurses. To view the latest webinars on patient teaching and coaching, please go to: https://www.cano-acio.ca/general/custom.asp?page=past_webinars

HIGHLIGHTS

Getting to Know Your Colleagues

Devon Poznanski is the Provincial Lead for Patient Education and is currently working with BC Cancer staff and patient partners to ensure our patients receive timely, relevant, and appropriate information throughout their cancer care journey. Devon is managing multiple projects that focus on health literacy and access to information. Along with the BC Cancer Patient Education Committee, Devon has written a policy and procedure for developing patient education materials, which will be rolled out across BC Cancer in the near future. Outside of work, she enjoys playing volleyball, cooking, and spending time with her husband and two young children.



Regional Patient Education Group (RPEG)

At BC Cancer, patient education is vital to ensure patients are empowered to make important decisions throughout their cancer care journey. Some centres within BC Cancer have a Regional Patient Education Group (RPEG), which helps to implement any initiatives brought forward by the BC Cancer Patient Education Committee. Additionally, the RPEGs communicate regional issues to the provincial committee to be examined on a broader level. Moving forward, many centres are in the process of creating Regional Patient Experience Councils, which will address not only patient education, but also engagement and overall experience. Some of the work being done under the patient education portfolio includes:

- Health literacy assessment of BC Cancer
- Educational video series for patients
- Patient education forums
- Website updates
- Developing and rolling out the *Developing Patient Education Materials* policy and procedure

Professional Practice Nursing Team

The previous issues of the newsletter featured [Cecilia Li, provincial director, professional practice nursing](#). This issue we want to introduce you to other members of the team: Karen Janes (Provincial Lead, Nursing Practice), Jeevan Dosanjh & Jagbir Kaur (Nurse Educators, Oncology), Sara Frankenberger (Project Coordinator and Administration Role), and Fiona Hutchison (Advanced Practice Lead Role). In close collaboration with nursing leaders and educators at the regional centers, the professional practice nursing team develops, facilitates and maintains a variety of different educational programs and resources for all oncology nurses in BC. Take a look at our [Index of nursing practice and education resources](#) on our website for more information. Any questions email the professional practice nursing team at BCCancerPPNAdmin@phsa.ca

FEATURE ARTICLE

A Healthy Understanding of Health Literacy

Health literacy encompasses a broad set of skills from being able to read health materials to finding, interpreting and evaluating health information (CCL, 2008). Literacy and education have long been recognized as key health determinants that contribute to health outcomes. Nurses can experience communication challenges caring for patients with varying levels of literacy. The article *The Nurse's Role in Health Literacy of Patients with Cancer* (Wittenberg et al., 2018) examines taking a “universal precautions approach” to assessing and addressing health literacy. A universal approach, which assumes every individual needs some type of literacy support, can help nurses develop strategies to positively affect the experiences of patients and families.

“6 in 10 Canadian adults do not have the skills needed to adequately manage their health and health-care needs.”

[Wittenberg, E., Ferrell, B., Kanter, E., Buller, H. \(2018\). Health literacy: Exploring nursing challenges to providing support and understanding. Clinical Journal of Oncology Nursing, 22, 53-61.](#)

The Canadian population is considered one of the most highly educated in the world; however, research shows that low literacy levels affect more than half the population. For a comprehensive review of health literacy in Canada, please see:

Canadian Council on Learning, Canadian Electronic Library (Firm), & desLibris - Documents. (2008). Health literacy in Canada a healthy understanding, 2008 Canadian Council on Learning. <http://www.en.copian.ca/library/research/ccl/health/health.pdf>