Seventh Annual 2013 Human Touch Awards

The Human Touch Awards honour front-line healthcare professionals, providers and volunteers who provide exemplary and compassionate care in Ontario. Earlier this year, Cancer Care Ontario presented seven individuals and one team – who go above and beyond – with a Human Touch Award. The Paediatric Group at the London Health Sciences Centre received one of these impressive awards.

The Paediatric Group in London, comprised of nine radiation therapists and one orderly, go the extra mile for their young oncology patients. Kelly Ackerman, Quinn Benwell, Jessica Csoborko, Meghan Lewis, Brooke Minten, Abby Owsley, Melissa Reaume, Julie Rego, Allison Walker and Jeremy Whiston volunteered for the Paediatric Group to be the point people for paediatric oncology patients and their families. This team exemplifies compassionate care by getting to know each child, personalizing every child’s experience in their cancer treatment and ensuring happy memories are made, even while in the hospital.

The Paediatric Group’s efforts include Csoborko using her artistic talents to paint radiation masks for children to make treatments less scary and Benwell coordinating a princess party for a three-year-old patient. Whiston transports patients to and from the ward each day and always brings smiles to their faces. Together, the team has produced a cook book and run a cookie bake off to raise money for gifts that patients receive to celebrate their last day of treatment. The Paediatric Group’s personalized calendars help their young patients count the days of their treatments and recognize the milestones. And every three months, the team cooks a three-course meal for their local Ronald McDonald House, where many of their patients stay during treatment.

The Radiation Treatment Program (RTP) would like to congratulate the Paediatric Group on receiving a Human Touch Award. The team’s patient-centred and impactful approach to providing care is well aligned with the RTP’s aim of providing timely access to high-quality, safe, and effective radiation therapy to Ontario patients. Hats off to London’s Paediatric Group team members!

Award Criteria
- Provides exemplary and compassionate patient care
- Leads programs and initiatives to improve patient experience, quality of life and knowledge
- Supports patients, families and caregivers by providing information about available treatments and services, helping them navigate the system and guides the decision making process
- Demonstrates leadership and acts as a role model for others
- Ensures that patients have smooth and effective transitions between care settings

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CoP Update - Gynecological Cancer

In our spring 2013 RTP newsletter we introduced the concept of Communities of Practice (CoP), we would like to take this opportunity to highlight the work being done by the Gynecological Community of Practice (Gynae CoP).

The vision of the Gynae CoP is to improve the quality of radiation treatment for patients with gynecological cancer, decrease morbidity, and increase survival for all eligible Ontario cancer patients. The community recognizes that there are differences in gynecological radiation therapy practices across Ontario and the goals of the community are to reduce variation in care and improve the quality of radiation treatment provided in Ontario through collaboration and knowledge transfer.

The inaugural meeting for the Gynae CoP was held in October 2011 and included multidisciplinary attendance by radiation oncologists, physicists and radiation therapists all specializing in the treatment of gynecological cancers in Ontario. The Gynae CoP is led by Dr. David D’Souza from the London Regional Cancer Program and Dr. Anthony Fyles from the Princess Margaret Cancer Centre. CoP members identified over 30 potential initiatives that could be undertaken to help improve patient care across the province. After the meeting, a survey was sent to members listing all of the initiatives discussed and members then voted on the top two initiatives. Two working groups were formed to address the following top two initiatives:

1) Imaging for Cervix Brachytherapy and Moving Towards CT/MRI Access - Led by Ananth Ravi, Medical Physicist, Odette Cancer Centre.
2) Current State for External Beam and Brachytherapy - Led by Raxa Sankrecha, Medical Physicist, Carlo Fidani Peel Regional Cancer Centre.

Working Group Updates:

Ananth Ravi is pleased to announce that a draft recommendation document has been developed by his working group. It is the recommendation of the Ontario gynecological CoP that the use of volumetric imaging is the best practice for cervix brachytherapy treatment planning. Furthermore, the CoP recommends that MR imaging must be a component of any imaging strategy implemented to ensure informed clinical decisions. The document has helped to inform the Capital Projects Office at Cancer Care Ontario regarding the need for MR imaging for the treatment of gynecological cancer.

Raxa Sankrecha is pleased to announce that a current state survey has been distributed on the topic of radiation treatment for cervical cancer. The results of the survey will be used to reduce variation in care and standardize practice in the treatment of cervical cancer for Ontario patients. In addition, the development of a current state survey regarding the radiation treatment of endometrium cancer is currently underway and will be distributed to the community in the next few months.

Ananth Ravi and Raxa Sankrecha would like to thank the dedication of their working group members without which these initiatives would not be possible. Please contact Elizabeth.Murray@cancercare.on.ca for more information on the Gynecological Cancer CoP.
Centre Spotlight—Simcoe Muskoka Regional Cancer Program

The Simcoe Muskoka Regional Cancer Program (SMRCP), located at the Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre in Barrie, opened its new doors in July 2012. The Radiation Treatment program grew from having a single linear accelerator housed in Canada’s first temporary bunker, to having 3 Varian iX linear accelerators and 1 Philips Big Bore CT Simulator. The radiation program is supported by Varian’s Eclipse Treatment planning system and ARIA Oncology Information System. It is staffed by an energetic team of 5 full time Radiation Oncologists, 24 Radiation Therapists, 4 physicists, 6 physic supportive staff, 6 Radiation nurses, and 4 clerical staff. In the first year, the volume of new patient consults has increased by 85%.

The oncology information system supports not only radiation oncology, but also medical oncology. This implementation model is also one of the first in Canada. Configured as a Comprehensive Cancer Solution (CCS) this allows for sharing of patient information in a streamlined way and creates one consolidated centralized patient record for cancer patients within the SMRCP.

Timely access to high quality care is the guiding principle of the program, and all new referrals can be seen within 2 weeks. The radiation program has initially focused on development of program structures and clinical protocols for the commonly treated sites of breast, GU, GI, and lung. Peer review is an integral part of the care path for all patients. Multidisciplinary peer review rounds are held twice weekly to enable review of 100% of cases, both radical and palliative. The development of an incident learning team has also been a major focus supporting the values of safety and quality, which is also reflective in the Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre’s mission that ‘safety is our promise’.

The next steps are to provide telemedicine consult and follow-up services using OTN, to increase the scope and complexity of radiation treatment services provided and to foster greater academic activities within the radiation treatment program.

For more information about the Simcoe Muskoka Regional Cancer Program, please contact Dr. Gerard Morton at mortong@rvh.on.ca.

Mission
Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre

- Exceptional care is our passion
- People are our inspiration
- Safety is our promise
Updates from our Centres

After many years of anticipation in the Niagara Region, the Walker Family Cancer Centre (WFCC) opened for patient care on March 25, 2013. On that day, their first radiation patient received the first external beam radiation treatment to be given in Niagara. In the intervening seven months, approximately 3500 high quality radiation treatments, corresponding to almost 400 new courses of radiation, have been delivered, and there have been over 5500 patient visits to the WFCC Radiation Oncology Department. The dedicated staff of oncologists, medical physicists, therapists, nurses and support staff have provided exemplary care using state of the art equipment, all to the benefit of patients and their families in the Niagara Region, and staff are determined to build on this excellent start. Dr. William McMillan has been appointed as the new head of Radiation Oncology at the WFCC.

Staffing News

- Dr. Padraig Warde began a new role, Interim VP, Clinical Programs & Quality Initiatives within Cancer Care Ontario, in July 2013. He continues in his role as Provincial Head, Radiation Treatment Program.
- Kit Tam — Acting Manager + Technical Lead of the RT department at the Cancer Centre of Southeastern Ontario.
- Dr. Conrad Falkson— Acting Head of Radiation Oncology at the Cancer Centre of Southeastern Ontario.
- Dr. Gregory Czarnota—Head of Radiation Oncology at the Odette Cancer Centre.
- The Thunder Bay Regional Cancer Centre is pleased to announce that it has hired 5 causal positions in the last year to back-fill the MOSAIQ implementation project. As well, Danielle Carroll (MRT) is the newest member to join the Radiation Incident Safety Committee.

American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) Quality Care Symposium

The RTP was well represented at the ASCO Conference in San Diego on November 1-2, 2013. Presentation topics included:

- Development and Implementation of Communities of Practice at Cancer Care Ontario
- eOutcomes-H&N: Development of an electronic point-of-care outcomes collection system for head and neck cancer
- Collaborating with Ontario cancer centres to ensure coordinated, access to safe, evidence based, high quality IMRT treatment
- Development of a Capital Investment Strategy for Radiation Equipment in Ontario

Abstracts from the conference are available on the ASCO Quality Care Symposium website.

If you have any questions about the content of this newsletter or about the RTP, don’t hesitate to contact us. You can reach us by sending an email to our general mailbox (rtp@cancercare.on.ca) or contacting us individually.

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