

This newsletter is published by the BCCA Provincial Psychosocial Oncology Program for health care professionals in communities throughout British Columbia and the Yukon.



Fall 2018

What's New?

Psychosocial Oncology Featured in BC Cancer's recurring series: **The Clinical Chronicle**

The Clinical Chronicle written by Jonathan McDonald, Director of Business Operations, tells the stories of its various provincial clinical programs at BC Cancer. If you are a PHSA employee you can click on links below to read full article on the POD.

During July and early August the chronicle featured a four part series on Psychosocial Oncology.

1. **Mental health needs associated with cancer**



In the first instalment, Dr. Alan Bates provincial lead for psychiatry report that with radiation, surgery and chemotherapy as the three main pillars of cancer treatment, Psychosocial Oncology can at times take a back seat.

"We treat people, not illnesses," says Dr. Bates. "I understand that killing cancer has to be the primary thing, but whole-person, comprehensive care, including the emotional side of it, has been neglected for many years in the health care system. Not just here, but everywhere."

2. **Q&A on Chinese-language art therapy**



The second, explores the potential of a unique outlet of art therapy for Chinese language-speaking patients and their families.

BC Cancer social worker Sandy Kwong says that, *"I mainly see Chinese-speaking patients and family members and there are many cultural issues and language barriers surrounding this life-threatening issue. Some people might*

take counselling and be happy to talk; others just can't."

Sandy envisioned this program and teamed up with art therapist Cathie Dunlop to reach out to BC Cancer's Cantonese- and Mandarin-speaking patient and family population and see if they might attend art therapy groups as an alternative to traditional counselling. The success of this approach is reflected in the consistent attendance of over 15 participants at the Vancouver Centre.

3. **The 'art' in art therapy**

In the third, there is a quick look at the sort of art that patients create – and how they feel about the art therapy group sessions.



Here is an example of one patient's art work. There are also many quotes from patients about impact of this program, for example.

"Everything can be changed if not digging oneself into a hole. Things can be changed from imperfect to full of options. I was changed from pessimistic to optimistic."

4. **BC Cancer's spiritual care practitioner**



Ali Cumming joined BC Cancer in December, on a BC Cancer Foundation grant to develop a spiritual care program. Cumming is a multi-faith practitioner who helps patients deal with spiritual distress related to cancer.

"Feelings of isolation and hopelessness, abandonment and despair can arise and this can happen when major setbacks occur during their journey. Long periods of pain

and suffering can wear people down over the course of time.”

Her role includes helping patients explore their spirituality, beliefs and values, and name things they are already doing in their life that give them peace and feed their spirit such as traditions, spiritual practices and rituals.

She similarly encourages staff members to take time for self-care and bereavement in the fast-paced environment of cancer care.

News on Patient Reported Outcomes

Update on the EPIC Project

By Antony Porcini

During the cancer journey, many cancer patients need palliative care support consisting of symptom identification and management. Historically, this support occurred later resulting in palliative care becoming equated to end-of-life care. Research shows, however, that early assessment and management of symptoms has significant positive impact on patient health and well-being, including less depression and anxiety, better quality of life, better symptom control, longer life span, and lower costs of care.

The Early Palliative Integration into Cancer Care (EPICC) project, funded by the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer, involves: 1) Staff education in the Serious Illness Conversation Guide (www.bc-cpc.ca/cpc/serious-illness-conversations) and the Learning Essential Approaches to Palliative Care (LEAP) programs (www.pallium.ca) and 2) Implementation of repeat symptom screening for patients receiving palliative radiation, metastatic breast or gastrointestinal cancers. EPICC is starting with pilots in Prince George (launched) and Vancouver (later this year), with a goal to expand over time to more populations and centres. Details: www.bccancer.bc.ca/EPICCPrinceGeorge. Repeat symptom screening assesses key patient symptoms and issues using the revised Edmonton Symptom Assessment System (ESAS-r) and Canadian Problem Checklist (CPC). Patients complete their screening using iPads before each physician/nurse appointment and results are trended over time. Patients receive a copy of their results and review and prioritize concerns in collaboration with their oncology team. Several items on the screen may

trigger referrals to the Patient & Family Counselling team. The Prince George team continues to refine and optimize the screening and delivery of care processes to best serve the patient needs. Questions? Contact us at: antony.porcino@bccancer.bc.ca

Ride for the Cure

The weather was perfect for an EPIC Ride to Conquer Cancer. BC Cancer staff joined together to form the “Bio-Cycle-Social” team to raise money for the new Supportive Cancer Care Fund.

This fund supports staff and patient education/research related to supportive cancer care services including Patient and Family Counselling, Psychiatry, Nutrition & Rehabilitation, and Pain and Symptom Management/Palliative Care. Over the past two rides, this team has raised over \$37,000.



Pictured here (left to right): Avril Ullet, Bill Hawley, Dr. Pippa Hawley, Jill Matheson, Anita Chow, Sara Camano and Sara Hankinson (missing Dr. Alan Bates)

Spin-a-thon

Fundraiser October 19, 2019 (12- 6 pm)

Sign up, join a team or donate to this good cause! This is the inaugural fundraising event to support this exercise program for people with cancer called NEXT.



Ryna Levy-Milne Retiring at the end of 2019

By Satnam Sekhon, RD



It is hard to believe Ryna will be retiring at the end of the year! Ryna joined BC Cancer in January 2006 as provincial lead to the Oncology Nutrition Program. Her diverse work experiences, vision, collaborative and innovative approach and drive for outcome-oriented solutions have positioned BC Cancer Oncology Nutrition as national leaders in the field.

She has consistently been a champion for patient-centered care. One of her first initiatives to ensure this was collaboration with HealthLink BC to recruit and train an Oncology Dietitian for telehealth services from anywhere in the province. This was the first specialized oncology dietitian with this scope of practice and has been instrumental to meeting patients' needs for timely nutrition information. In addition, Ryna implemented a validated Nutrition Screening Tool to assess risk of malnutrition to ensure that patients are referred to Oncology Nutrition early in their treatment. She collaborated with Population Oncology – Surveillance and Outcomes department to document the Screening Tool information resulting in the largest database of its kind nationally. She has successfully used this data to advocate for additional dietitian positions as well as identify areas for quality improvement for patient care. She did not stop with dietitian services but furthered her advocacy to successfully include Speech Language Pathologists for more comprehensive care for our Head and Neck Cancer Patients.

With Ryna's research background from her prior role at UBC as an Assistant Professor, she had the insight to create a new unique role of a Research Dietitian at BC Cancer, focusing on practice-based research initiatives. In addition, she has mentored the clinical dietitians to share their research resulting in numerous poster presentations at international conferences.

It is quite clear that Ryna values the importance of education as evidenced by her own academic achievements but also her daily enthusiasm for life-long learning. She was instrumental in launching the PHSA Year 5 Studentship in 2011. By doing this, she has inspired other dietitians to become preceptors and obtain clinical instructor status at UBC and pursue post graduate education.

Her love of education does not end with students. She is passionate in providing evidenced-based nutrition guidance to our oncology patients as well. Her positive and forward thinking leadership in embracing technology has produced the largest compilation of oncology nutritional resources for patients in Canada on our BC Cancer website that are accessed by Oncology dietitians and other health care professionals nationally and internationally.

It is obvious that Ryna has excelled in every role that she has taken on in her professional work life. On a personal level, Ryna is an amazing individual. Her interpersonal skills of humility, genuine kindness, and transparency have earned her the trust of her staff. She treats all of her work colleagues with respect and takes the time to listen. She is compassionate and understanding of the challenges faced by her staff when working with oncology patients on a daily basis, and strongly advocates for staff engagement and maintenance of work life balance to uphold a healthy work environment. She herself has demonstrated the importance of work life balance with an accomplished career and by raising her 2 daughters to be successful young individuals contributing to society. It doesn't get better than that!

We wish her all the best as she moves forward into another new and exciting chapter of her life!



Victoria Lau has started in her new role as Speech Language Pathologist.

Victoria joins us from Westmead Rehabilitation Hospital, Australia where she worked as a Level 3 Speech Pathologist.

Victoria specialized in the management of Head & Neck cancer patients while working at Chris O'Brien Lifehouse, a specialized oncology hospital. She has also worked across the road at VGH – where she was part of a resource team covering surgical wards, including Head & Neck surgery, outpatient laryngectomy management and neurosciences caseload.

Update from Psychiatry



Dr. Stephen Fitzpatrick joined the Vancouver Centre Team. Dr. Fitzpatrick has most recently been a Consultant Psychiatrist at Vancouver General Hospital and has previously served as Assistant Head of the Department of

Psychiatry at St. Paul's Hospital as well as the Division Head or lead for Consultation-Liaison Psychiatry, Outpatient Psychiatry, General Psychiatry, Emergency Psychiatry, and HIV Psychiatry. Fitting to our work, he also previously worked in Family Medicine and completed some residency training in Radiation Oncology before switching to Psychiatry. His work at St. Paul's has been recognized through numerous awards including the Faye Meuser Memorial Leadership Award, the Above and Beyond Award for Outstanding Service to the Department of Psychiatry, the Outstanding Teamwork Award, and the Annual Team Mission Award. He has also won awards for teaching from both Psychiatry and Family Medicine residents.



Dr. Jasmina Kobiljski has moved from Vancouver Centre to Victoria Centre in August where she continues to share her expertise in mindfulness-based cognitive therapy.

Last, **Dr. Vally Mendoza**, our longest-serving psychiatrist at Vancouver Centre, is leaving the clinic to work to lead the Reproductive Psychiatry clinic at St. Paul's Hospital.

Despite departures of two great physicians from our Vancouver clinic, we continue to have what I believe is the best pound-for-pound Consult-Liaison Psychiatry team in Vancouver. Our Psychiatry team going forward will be: Dr. Alan Bates, Dr. Stephen Fitzpatrick, Dr. Carole Richford and Dr. Pulkit Singh.

Update from Victoria Counselling Team



After working as an interim Counsellor since 2017, **Beth Burton-Krahn** has recently accepted a permanent position with Patient and Family Counselling Counseling Services (PFC). Her

background includes 10 years working in hospice/ palliative care for Victoria Hospice where she was a member of the clinical team, as well as a group facilitator and educator. She also brings with her many years of private practice counselling covering a wide range of issues including drug/alcohol addictions counselling, life transitions, grief and loss to name a few.

Beth loves her work here at BC Cancer-Victoria. Alongside of providing counselling support to our patients and their family members, Beth also currently runs our support group for Women with Advanced Ovarian and Gynecological cancer. As well she teaches our New Normal workshops. Beth is also delighted to be the clinical counsellor for our Prostate Supportive Care Program (PCSC program) here at BC Cancer (Victoria Centre). She is passionate about integrated psychosocial care for our patients from the moment of diagnosis through to and including post-treatment survivorship.



Long-time counsellor, **Paula Myers** has moved and joined the Patient and Family counselling team in Victoria. Paula will be working Tuesdays through Fridays. Paula has a Masters' Degree in Social Work and an extensive career in the helping profession that has included working with youth, addictions, mental health, teaching and for the last 14 years, psychosocial oncology.

Paula brings a love of learning. She offers a focus on self-compassion; that most times, we are trying to do the best

we can while acknowledging we are just “humans”. She appreciates the learning she has experienced in working with patients, families and staff at Fraser Valley Centre and Vancouver Centre. Patients and families have taught her about the strength of the human spirit. It has been a choice to remain working with BC Cancer because of the compassionate, quality care provided by her teammates and colleagues throughout the Centre.

Update from Vancouver Counselling Team

Parent Tot Group

Sara Hankinson, Art therapist, piloted the first ever Parent & Tot Group, for patients and their children who are between ages 0-5. The



group includes art therapy activities, a circle time including stories and songs, and play time. Three group sessions ran in the spring and the group is scheduled to run monthly in the fall. So far, six families have attended the group and more have signed up for the Fall. The group provides them with the opportunity to connect with other patients their age, undergoing the same challenges of parenting young children while going through treatment. The group is informal and play-based, and parents have taken a role in shaping and leading the group as well by leading songs in the opening circle.

Psychosocial oncology interdisciplinary support group

pilot: 8 sessions ran May – July 2019 led by Dr. Alan Bates (psychiatrist), with co-facilitation from Sarah Buddingh Smith (physiotherapist), Sharon Pause and Bronwyn Barrett (PFC Counsellors, Late Effects, Assessment and Follow Up Clinic); this group focused on using exercise as intervention to address anxiety and depression in adult survivors of childhood cancer. Group held in Vancouver

Update from Kelowna Counselling team

David Greenshields presented at the BC Cancer Foundation Discovery luncheon about the Financial Impact of Cancer and Treatment - the event raised \$170K for Kelowna Patient Emergency Fund.

In partnership with Inspire health, Kelowna developed a **weekly Exercise program** at the Kelowna Cancer Clinic for people undergoing and post treatment.

Kelowna piloted an 8 week **Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction program** for BC Cancer Kelowna staff.

Pictured here are the Patient and Family Counselling staff team in Kelowna celebrating some changes:



Skye Kaidannek - with flowers - is moving on to the Kootenays, having supported the team for the past 2 years covering various maternity leaves. Suzanne Thompson – 2nd from right – is moving from a casual position to a regular post starting in September. Amanda Kerr – 3rd from left – is returning from her maternity leave in September. Stacey Creak – not pictured – has moved to Vernon Cancer Clinic, but delighted to say, remains with us on a casual basis. The others – Kathy Green (left); Kristen Renwick-Johnson (2nd from left); Val Colquhoun (3rd from right); David Greenshields(right); Not pictured Myrna Tracy or Stacy Rodriquez.

Update from Prince George Counselling Team

Volunteer Appreciation Tea

At the Centre for the North PFC continues to be well supported by the volunteer program.



Pictured here are(left to right) counsellors: Kayla, Savita, Olivia, volunteers: Kathy, Margaret, Diane, and on the far right Carolyn Jacob, Practice leader for Patient and Family Counselling Services (PFC).

This is a photo from what has become an annual tea thanking the volunteers for their generous donation to the Centre for the North Patient Comfort Fund. This year gas and grocery gift cards were provided that support patients living throughout northern BC. Gift cards were funded by two craft fairs run by the volunteers and donations made at the café, also managed by centre volunteers. PFC extends heartfelt thanks to the volunteers who touch the lives of so many patients with their generosity and kindness.

Update from Community Partners

Retreat Yourself (YACC) – Nov. 28 – Dec 2, 2019

<https://youngadultcancer.akaraisin.com/Common/Event/Home.aspx?seid=20040&mid=8>

This retreat for young adults and is in Abbotsford this year

Retreat Yourself weekends offer an opportunity to get together with other young adults with cancer. Many of them are recently out of treatment and have never attended another Young Adult Cancer Canada program. We share our stories and talk about what's bothering us about cancer, hang out, let loose, and build relationships you'll value for a long time.

There is no registration fee for YACC's Retreat Yourself programs. The cost of food and accommodations for the duration of the program is funded through YACC's annual fundraising efforts. Travel assistance is available.

Please note that to be eligible, you have to attend the full event from Thursday afternoon to Monday morning. All details and information will be provided to you once you are confirmed.

Purpose

The main purpose of Retreat Yourself is to meet people who understand what you're going through and to connect with them. Retreats offer an opportunity to talk about your experiences, relax, have fun, and share stories with your peers who get it.

Eligibility

Young adult cancer survivors between 18- and 39-years-old who were diagnosed between 15- and 39-years-old who

have not attended Retreat Yourself before, or have relapsed since their last retreat.

You can bring one supporter who is also between 18 and 39.

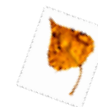
Retreat Yourself participants can be in active treatment (with their doctors' permission to attend) or in remission for many years.



Seven BC Cancer staff will be presenting research and best practices at this IPOS Psycho-Oncology Conference in Banff in September 23-26, 2019. Stay tuned for their reflections on what they learned in our next issue.

Educational Opportunities:

Supportive Care Rounds



SEPTEMBER 25th noon -1pm

In a Nutshell.....Current initiatives!

- 1) NeXT Up Spin-A-Thon-Learn about this exciting exercise fundraiser that will support nutrition and exercise programming for British Columbian cancer patients. Speaker: Cheri Van Patten, Research and Clinical Practitioner, BC Cancer-Nutrition and Rehabilitation
- 2) Health Care Providers' Perspectives of the Ketogenic Diet- Speaker: Cara Miller, Clinical Dietitian, BC Cancer-Victoria Centre
- 3) Swallow exercises to reduce swallowing problems-Learn how our Speech Language Pathologists work with patients with head and neck cancer to help to reduce swallowing problems. Speaker: Gigi Finger, Speech Language Pathologist, BC Cancer-Prince George Centre.
- 4) Nutrition Screening at BC Cancer- What we have learned from screening over 83,500 BC Cancer

patients since 2012. Speaker: Dr. Ryna Levy-Milne, Provincial Program Lead, BC Cancer-Nutrition and Rehabilitation

OCTOBER 23rd noon -1pm

Working with Marginalized Cancer Patients

Presenter: Barbara Eddy, MN, NP(F), CHPCN®, Adjunct UVIC School of Nursing, Associate Member UBC Department of Medicine, Division of Palliative Care

IPODE Continuing Education Courses

Register for courses online at www.ipode.ca.
For more information contact Natasha Boutilier:
Natasha.Boutilier@cdha.nshealth.ca
or 902-473-6618.

BC CANCER SUMMIT - November 22 & 23 at the Sheraton Wall Centre

Register now at <https://bccancersummit.ca/>
Here are just some of the presentations that may be of interest:



Friday November 22

11:00 – noon

Quick therapeutic interventions using art therapy that anyone can use with Sara Hankinson, Art Therapist

Leveraging technology to improve quality: The Power of Patient Reported Outcomes to Improve Care with Antony Porcino, Dr. Michael McKenzie, Linda Watson, Melanie McDonald and Sarah Taylor

Lost in knowledge translation: supporting patient's knowledge preferences with Cathy Rayment

1:45-3:15pm

Innovations in Spiritual Care with Alison Cumming, Spiritual Care Practitioner

Gender identity and sexual orientation in cancer care: why does it matter? with Bronwen Engels and Jaby Santos

3:30- 5:00 pm

Cancer and Living Meaningfully (CALM) Therapy with Dr. Alan Bates

Unfiltered conversations: Discuss provocative topics with patient and family partners with Lisa McCune, Cheryl Heykoop, Sally Douglas and Vikram Bubber

Saturday November 23

10:30-noon

Navigating New Frontiers in Cancer Treatment: A Multidisciplinary Panel on the Psychosocial Impact of

Immunotherapy - Panel: Marita Poll, (PFC), Katie Hennessey (Nursing), and Brittney Mathers (Pharmacy)

Lifelong Learning: Approached to Cultural Safety and Humility with Harmony Johnson and Warren Clarmont

Serious Illness Conversation (SIC) training with Antony Porcini, Laura Mercer and Shelley Pennington

Food as Your Medicine – Cultural Diversity with Satnam Sekhon, sandy Kwong and others

MAID: Integrating the Dying Care Option

Why should I care about health literacy? with Devon Poznanski

Laughter Yoga with Dr. Kasim Al-Mashat, Registered Psychologist

1:00-2:30pm

Nutrition, Gut Microbiome and Cancer: Linking the puzzle pieces together with Ryna Levy-Milne

Constipation and Sex with Dr. Pippa Hawley

Patient Engagement: Optimizing Impact with Joyce Lee, Adrian White, Cheryl Carter, Regina Tam and Sonja Luehrmann

Mindfulness and resilience with Dr. Kasim Al-Mashat, Registered Psychologist and Certified Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) Teacher

3:00-5:00pm

Debunking Food Myths with Cheri Van Patten



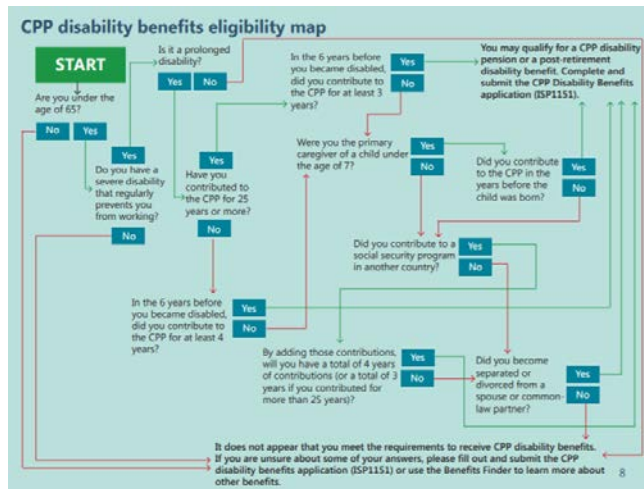
Information & Resources:

Updated hand-out

To find an excellent new resource on sexual health look under **Emotional Support Resources** on the BC Cancer Website and it will be listed under **Managing Symptoms and Side Effects** > Sexual Health

Post-Retirement Disability Benefit

The Post-Retirement Disability Benefit is a new benefit that is intended for Canada Pension Plan (CPP) retirement pension beneficiaries found to be disabled but not eligible for a disability pension due to being CPP retirement pension beneficiaries for more than 15 months.
<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/publicpension/cpp/cpp-post-retirement-disability-benefit.html>



NEW TOOL KIT for completing CPP Disability applications.
<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/pension-plan-disability-benefits/reports/toolkit.htm>

Some non-profit programs to help with patients' practical and financial needs - More information at <http://www.bccancer.bc.ca/health-info/coping-with-cancer/practical-support#Resources>

Angel Flights provides free flights for cancer patients requiring travel to treatment at cancer clinics and hospitals in Vancouver and Victoria. Tel: 778.677.8920
www.angelflight.ca/

BC Hospitality Foundation has a fund for eligible patients in the hospitality industry who have a medical condition and financial need. Tel: 604-986-3256
<https://bchospitalityfoundation.com/get-help/>

BC Rehab Foundation provides grants for eligible individuals and organizations for rehabilitation and mobility aids. Tel: 604-737-6383 www.bcrehab.com

BC Hydro Customer Crisis Fund - a program that offers support for residential customers who are facing disconnection of their BC Hydro service.
<https://app.bchydro.com/accounts-billing/billpayment/ways-to-pay/customer-crisis-fund.html>

Breast Cancer Support Fund for people with breast cancer who have a financial need. Tel: 416-233-7410
<https://breastcancersupportfund.ca/apply-forfunds/>

Cancer and Work Update:

To help assess patient's cognitive challenges with respect to working, the Cognitive Symptoms at Work Tool has been validated for cancer survivors who have worked and is available to complete:
<https://www.cancerandwork.ca/tools/cognitive/>

If you would like to submit an article, or ask a question, please contact the Community Education Coordinator eshearer@bccancer.bca.ca. Final decisions about the content of this newsletter are made by the Editorial Board. Content of articles in this newsletter represent the views of the named authors and do not necessarily represent the position of BCCA, PHSA or any other organization.

September is

Prostate Cancer Awareness Month
Blood Cancer Awareness Month
Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month
Childhood Cancer Awareness Month

October is

Brain Tumour Awareness Month
Breast Cancer Awareness Month

November is

Lung Cancer Awareness Month
MOVEMBER Canada

Deadline for submission for the winter newsletter is December 1st, 2019. Send information to eshearer@bccancer.bc.ca.