

The GOC News

Volume 4 Issue 3
 Summer 2004

2004 CPD MEETING AN OUTSTANDING EVENT



Fellows Waleed Al-Jassar, Pamela Chu and Shaundra Popowich

The 2004 CPD Meeting was an outstanding success with an action packed and superstar guest speaker list. The meeting was attended by over 100 participants. Invited speakers included Dr. John Bell, Senior Scientist at the Ottawa Regional Cancer Centre, who gave us a riveting talk on the role of viruses in the treatment of tumors and some of the preliminary data both in the mouse model as well

as in some human models using this therapeutic avenue. His talk was concise and to the point. We were also treated to Dr. Jane Weeks who gave us an overview of health services research and the impact on oncological care. Dr. Weeks raised the bar for all of us, looking at the potential future of gynecologic cancer and research. The Society is well positioned to explore this with a number of members with postgraduate degrees in this domain. Dr. Michael Bookman gave us an overview of individualization of therapies, stressing to us that we were not quite at that point. He also gave us an overview of where clinical trials of the GOG are heading as well as the present state of the trial designs in ovarian cancer. We were greatly stimulated by Dr. Eduardo Franco's state-of-the-art discussion on "Primary HPV Screening in Canada: Are We Ready Yet?" The result is

that we are almost but not there yet. He gave us a comprehensive review of HPV, its relationship to cervical cancer, the impact of HPV testing as well as new vaccine trials which have all been positive and the impact of that on the paradigm of cervical cancer screening.

We had our usual debate format with
(Continued on page 3)



Drs. Jason Dodge, Valerie Capstick, Mark Carey and Peter Bryson

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The Society of Gynecologic Oncologists of Canada/La société des gynécologues oncologues du Canada

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The GOC acknowledges the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada for their continued support.

2ND CANADIAN CONFERENCE ON OVARIAN CANCER RESEARCH A SUCCESS

The 2nd Canadian Conference on Ovarian Cancer Research was held in Ottawa May 16-18, 2004. This meeting was sponsored in part by the Society of Gynecologic Oncologists of Canada. The meeting is unique in that it brings together the breadth of Canadian ovarian cancer researchers including surgeons, medical oncologists, basic scientists, epidemiolo-

gists, psychologists, nurses and allied health professionals. The meeting was opened by Dr. Robert Lotocki, our Society's President. His opening remarks are included in this newsletter. The conference was structured to include such topics as the clinical management of ovarian cancer, social and quality of life issues, and database development for ovarian

cancer. From a translational research perspective, there were numerous presentations on novel approaches and new directions for diagnosing ovarian cancer. There was much discussion about the need to continue the work of integrating this large group and the formation of an ovarian cancer consortium was discussed. In order to keep the communication

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GOC SURVEY ON JOB SATISFACTION IN GYN ONCOLOGY ACCEPTED FOR PUBLICATION

Dr. Laurie Elit, in conjunction with the Society of Gynecologic Oncologists of Canada, conducted a survey re: job satisfaction, stress and burnout among gynecologic oncologists. The information was presented at last year's ACM and has been accepted for publication. The work is summarized below. The work will provide a benchmark for us to measure trends in gynecologic oncology going forward. This is an important part of GOC's agenda to measure and address the issue of human resources and quality of work life for Gynecological Oncologists in the country.

Elit, Trim, Mand-Bains, Sussman, Grunfeld, in conj with SGOC Job Satisfaction, stress, and burnout among Canadian gynecologic oncologists. Accepted for publication Gyn Onc 2004

Summary:

The purpose of this work was to provide a job description of Canadian gynecologic oncologists and to assess job satisfaction and job stress and measure the prevalence of burnout and psychological morbidity. The cross-sectional survey was mailed to all Canadian gynecologic oncologists in September 2002. Our job profile is predominantly clinical with a minor component of administration and to a lesser extent education or research. Clinically, 80% of our activity is focused on gynecologic cancer care. 92% of Canadian gyn oncs

are satisfied with their job but there are clear concerns regarding system issues in health care delivery. 26% of physicians are experiencing high stress and this is strongly associated with emotional exhaustion and high depersonalization. 14% of Canadian gyn oncs are actively looking for alternative jobs while 45% are trying to decrease the number of hours worked per week.

High stress and low personal accomplishment is seen in Canadian gynecologic oncologists. Some avenues to explore to dissipate these tensions include: maximum hours of exposure of a physician to patients and mandatory time away from the workplace which would necessitate increased hiring of gyn oncs. Altering the job description to decrease hours of patient exposure and increase protected hours toward academic pursuits would necessitate changing the type of patients who have access to gyn oncs i.e.: follow-ups being seen by nurse specialists or family doctors. Improved hospital environment would include minimizing waiting times for care and improved access to diagnostic procedure and minimally invasive surgery. Altering university environment issues include better alignment of service and education needs with the number of house staff. It is important for the specialty and policymakers to continue to monitor stress and burnout among gyn oncs in Canada to ensure that a crisis situation does not develop.

SURGICAL INNOVATION & DEVELOPMENT GROUP STRUCK

Dr. Michael Fung Kee Fung

As part of its overall strategic planning in terms of moving forward the agenda for gynecologic oncology, the GOC Executive Committee has decided to create the Surgical Innovation & Development Group. Surgery remains at the cornerstone of gynecologic oncology and although there has been significant development in the non-surgical aspects of gynecologic oncology whether it'd be chemotherapy, tumor banks, molecular pathology or the advent of new drugs, it was felt that the development of surgery as a discipline within gynecologic oncology needed to remain a discrete focus within the Society. It was also recognized that there are a number of Canadian groups doing innovative work leading the exploration of new diagnostic and therapeutic techniques involving surgery, many of which include, but do not exclude, laparoscopic surgery for oncological malignancies including laparoscopic assisted trachelectomy, radical vaginal hysterectomy, and laparoscopic staging of ovarian masses. Also included are innovations in the role of sentinel node assessment for cervical, uterine and vulvar cancers. The traditional scope of a gynecologic oncology practice including gastrointestinal, urological and upper abdominal surgery has been well established but the need to re-focus in terms of addressing the issues within training programs, as well as with physicians already in practice was identified. It is clear amongst gynecologic oncologists

that the amount of time that each has actually placed on their own surgical professional development has potentially been limited because of a number of competing interests. Therefore, the Surgical Innovation & Development Group (name to be re-done) was initiated. The Executive Committee has asked Dr. Marie Plante to head the group. Dr. Plante will be asking interested members from various centers to participate in setting-up the group. Initial thoughts would be the following:

- Establishment of a white paper on the state of gynecologic cancer surgery within the participating centers.
- The breadth of cancer surgery offered.
- The diffusion of innovations in cancer surgery within various centers across the country.
- The opportunities for innovation.
- The opportunities for re-training and enhanced training for people already in practice.
- The state of teaching new surgical techniques and the maintenance of gastrointestinal surgical techniques within the present training programs as established.

There is also an opportunity to formulate groups interested in working together in pooling their data in order to move some of the innovations forward in terms of a research profile.

Members can direct their comments and/or suggestions to Ms. H el ene Soubli ere at hsoubliere@sogc.com or to Dr. Marie Plante at marie.plante@crhdq.ulaval.ca



VISIT OUR REVAMPED WEBSITE AT WWW.G-O-C.ORG!

TO EVEREST AND BACK - GOC Canadian Leadership Lecture speaker Ms. Sharon Wood

By Dr. Michael Fung Kee Fung

On April 16, 2004, Ms. Sharon Wood presented the Society of Gynecologic Oncologists of Canada Canadian Leadership Lecture, held at the GOC's 4th Annual Continuing Professional Development Meeting in Toronto. Ms. Wood is the first North American woman and the fifth woman in the world to have reached the summit of Mount Everest. Her talk was extremely fascinating, and focused on the theme of "surviving or thriving". Ms. Wood captivated the whole audience, talking us through the challenges of the ascent to the summit of Mount Everest and the comparison between the Canadian team and an American team climb-

ing at the same time. What was clear from her experience was that the Canadian team functioned as a group, working on each other's strengths and prioritizing according to each other's ability. Of the 14-member team who ascended, only two were eligible, because of their physical stamina, to make the final push to the summit. Ms. Wood was one of them. What was amazing is that at each challenge, the team had to decide whether to accept their difficult situation (i.e. "survive") or to move beyond that and "thrive" and go to the next level up the mountain. This theme resonated with all of the members in attendance and was ex-

tremely motivational. In comparison, the American team making a similar ascent had no leader and was not functioning in a team fashion. As a result, their ascent was eventually aborted. Focusing on one's strength, using each team member to the best of their ability and going for a team goal (i.e. making sure at least one person reached the summit) was similar to the conference's theme of Leveraging Partnerships. The GOC continues to have its annual CPD meeting, attended by medical, radiation and surgical oncologists, nurses and scientists. It is hosted in conjunction with the National Cancer Institute of Canada semi-annual Clini-



cal Trials Meeting. This year's meeting also included numerous international and national speakers and forms an integral part of the Society's professional development. Ms. Wood joins a series of well-known speakers who have participated in the GOC Canadian Leadership Lecture. Previous speakers include Lt.-Gen. (Ret.) Roméo Dallaire and Marc Garneau. We look forward to another exceptional Canadian leader presenting to the group in 2005, the Society's 25th anniversary.

2004 CPD MEETING (Continued from page 1)



Drs. Lesa Dawson and Mark Carey

"Retreating Ovarian Cancer: Two Strikes and You're Out!" was very wide ranging and we thank both Dr. Dawson and Dr. Hoskins for their contributions.

Dr. Wylam Faught and Dr. Marie-Claude Renaud debated on "Secondary Debulking has No Place in Ovarian Cancer Therapy", another very informative and in-depth debate spurring a lot of discussion.

We were treated to an outstanding performance from the Coach's Corner with Dr. Mark Carey (AKA Don Cherry) and Dr. Peter Bryson (AKA Ron MacLean). Mark and Peter gave us an overview of Coach's Corner using a number of hockey metaphors for gynecologic oncology. We were treated to a performance that very few of us will forget.

Last but not least was our second Canadian Leadership Lecture with

Sharon Wood. This outstanding event held in the beautiful Casa Loma setting was extremely well received.

The feedback from the meeting was very positive and the organizing committee is grateful for everybody's participation. Each speaker's presentation can be found on the GOC website at www.g-o-c.org. We look forward to the meeting in 2005 which will be the 25th anniversary of the Society.

CPD PRESENTATIONS ON GOC WEBSITE

Each of our CPD speakers has given their permission us to post their presentations in a secure area of our website. To access the presentations, go to www.g-o-c.org, click on 'speakers bureau', 'presentations',

then 'GOC Continuing Professional Development Meeting April 16, 2004'. You will be prompted to enter your GOC member sign-in and password in order to gain access to the secured information.



Drs. Betsy Brydon, Robert Lotocki and Marie-Claude Renaud



Drs. Michael Bookman, Johanne Weberpals, Lucy Gilbert



Dr. Robert Lotocki, Ms. Hélène Soublière, Ms. Sharon Wood, Mr. Brent Graham (GSK) and Dr. Michael Fung Kee Fung

Dr. Paul Hoskins taking on Dr. Lesa Dawson. It was an unfair fight as Lesa challenged the Englishman to the ground in what was thought to be a definitive knockout. The discussion entitled

NEWS FROM MONTREAL

DIANE PROVENCHER RECIPIENT OF THE 2004 WOMAN OF DISTINCTION AWARD



Award recipients for each sector. Dr. Provencher pictured 2nd from the right

On May 12, 2004, Montreal's Y Foundation for Women awarded to Dr. Diane Provencher the prize for the 2004 Woman of Distinction in the Health Sector. This award recognizes the significant contributions of a woman who has served as a source of inspiration to other women through her example and her accomplishments in a professional capacity and through her promotional efforts in the Health Sector.

Women of Distinction nominees have demonstrated, in a sustained and substantial way, their commitment to improve the economic and social role of women in society. Through their personal as well as their professional accomplishments, the finalists have made a significant contribution to the advancement of women at the local, national or international level.

The Y Foundation for Women is a non-profit organization whose mission is to support the development and pursuit of goals of the Y for Women in Montreal. We, in Montreal, are very proud of her.

MONTREAL HOSTS NOCA SYMPOSIUM



Women L t R: Dr. D. Provencher, Ms. Corbeil (patient), Mrs. St-Amour, Ms. J. Brodeur, Ms. E. Ross (NOCA) - Men L t R: Dr. P. Bessette, Dr. P. Gauthier

The National Ovarian Cancer Association held, on May 1st, 2004, the Ovarian Cancer Symposium at the Fairmont Queen Elizabeth Hotel in Montreal. This symposium was an educational program for healthcare professionals, survivors, friends and family members. The presenters were Dr. Diane Provencher, Dr. Philippe Gauthier, Dr. Paul Bessette, Ms. Joanne Brodeur (nurse), Ms. Fortin (survivor) and Ms. Line St-Amour (psychologist).

MONTREAL U'S ANNUAL RESEARCH DAY

The Annual Research Day of the Ob-Gyn Dept. of the Montreal University was held on Friday April 30th. Special guest Dr. Eduardo Franco, Director, Division of Cancer Epidemiology Division at McGill University was the special guest presented the topic of "Primary HPV Screening in Canada: Are We Ready Yet?". Karine Nadeau, 2nd year resident, was the recipient of the prize for the best oral presentation for her abstract titled "Anogenital warts in children during a consultation in a Montreal tertiary-care hospital: Importance of HPV type in determining transmission mode." Magdalena Zietarska, molecular biol-



Drs. Eduardo Franco and William Fraser

ogy student at the Montreal Cancer Institute was awarded the prize for best poster presentation for her work titled "Development of a new in vitro model of epithelial ovarian cancer." This Annual Research Day was organized by Drs. Diane Provencher and William Fraser.

Finally, on May 9th, we celebrated Dr. Pierre's Drouin's 65th



Dr. Pierre Drouin and his office staff.

FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT - ADVANCED LAPAROSCOPY AND VAGINAL RADICAL SURGERY COURSE

GOC Postgraduate Course - QUEBEC CITY - JUNE 16-17, 2005

FACULTY

President Dr. Daniel Dargent, Lyon

Directors Dr. Michel Roy, Québec michel.roy@ogy.ulaval.ca
 Dr. Marie Plante, Québec marie.plante@crhdq.ulaval.ca
 Dr. Marie-Claude Renaud, Québec mc.renaud@sympatico.ca

Faculty Dr. Nadeem Abu-Rustum, New York
 Dr. Allan Covens, Toronto
 Dr. Denis Querleu, Toulouse
 Dr. Yukio Sonoda, New York
 Dr. Arnaud Wattiez, Strassbourg

PRELIMINARY PROGRAM

June 16 Didactic sessions
 June 17 Tele-surgery
 Cadaver lab (to be confirmed)

REGISTRATION

There are a limited number of places. Register EARLY at one of the e-mail addresses listed in the Faculty under Directors.

2ND CANADIAN CONFERENCE ON OVARIAN CANCER RESEARCH

Opening Remarks

It is a pleasure for the Society of the Gynecologic Oncologists of Canada to be here co-hosting the 2nd Canadian Conference on Ovarian Cancer Research.

Every attendee appreciates the devastation that ovarian cancer brings.

For 2004, Canadian Cancer statistics estimate 2600 women with ovarian cancer will be diagnosed and 1500 women will die. Seventy-five percent of individuals with ovarian cancer present at advanced staged disease because of the lack of early pathonomic symptoms and the lack of effective screening techniques.

The diagnosis of individuals with advanced disease is usually obvious. For each woman diagnosed with ovarian cancer, there are probably another 10 to 15 women going to operating rooms in Canada with a pelvic mass. An individual who has gallstones demonstrated pre-operatively generally has gallstones at surgery. In contrast, a woman with a pelvic mass generally faces a gigantic step between our pre-operative diagnosis and her final pathology. Our pre-operative counseling stretches from what we would recommend if benign versus staging if the mass was malignant

and apparently confined to the ovary versus potentially debulking if advanced disease is found. The limitations of our clinical examination, imaging and biochemical markers marginalize our ability to discriminate pelvic masses pre-operatively from benign to malignant.

If we are to progress forward in the management of this cancer, there are several targets to aim for:

- We need effective methods that can screen a general population.
- We need better methods to define appropriate risk for ovarian cancer to help triage a pelvic mass.
- We need appropriate individuals to perform their surgery.
- Our current treatment with surgery and chemotherapy has increased median survival but has not significantly improved overall survival. We need more effective and less toxic treatments.
- Given the poor survival, we need palliative care research that will help provide care with some of the difficult end of life issues women with ovarian cancer face.

All through these steps, women need appropriate informational tools to help them define risks, appropriate treatment, and so on and not leave

them with inappropriate web-based information, for example, that every woman should have a CA-125.

To achieve these goals, we shall need a strategic plan that can be truly called national. Canada is a country of 10 provinces and three territories, each of which functions as a separate individual country. Each jurisdiction has its own strengths and weaknesses. None have enough depth to achieve all these goals. We need to combine our research power and clinical power by horizontal collaboration. We need to make the commitment to enroll patients into national clinical trials that we can evaluate these new modalities. However, we also need the resources to help enroll patients for trials.

There is a need for more monies to be dedicated to research for ovarian cancer. Although the National Cancer Institute of Canada provides an existing mechanism for clinical trials, it, too, is under-funded. It also needs an expanded funding mechanism that would allow promising screening or therapeutic options to be evaluated.

To make any in-roads to improving outcomes for ovarian cancer, we shall need the combined vertical

collaboration between scientists, post-doctoral fellows, graduate students, physicians (family physicians, gynecologic oncologists and their fellows), nursing, other allied health care givers and patient advocacy groups. We shall need everyone working together, translating bench research to clinical practice.

The Second Canadian Conference on Ovarian Cancer Research is bringing together those interested in ovarian cancer, to present the results of their research, their ideas, and concepts. Most but not all of Canada's 13 jurisdictions are represented.

Barbara Vanderhyden, as the Corinne Boyer Chair in Ovarian Cancer Research, and Dianne Miller have put together an excellent program. The opportunity is here for us to learn about ovarian cancer research across Canada. The opportunity is here to collaborate and develop multidisciplinary research projects. The opportunity is here for us to develop a truly national strategy.

*Robert Lotocki, BSc. M.D., FRCSC
President, Society of Gynecologic
Oncologists of Canada (GOC)*

WILL THAT BE CASH, CHEQUE, OR... CREDIT CARD?

The GOC is very pleased to announce that it can now offer to its membership the additional option of paying via Visa or MasterCard. Whether it'd be your annual dues payment, meeting registrations fees or other fees, credit card payments are now accepted through faxed authorizations, by phone and on-site at conferences.

We recognize the opportunities available to better serve our membership and will continue to implement new services as we continue to grow as a Society.

CONFERENCE ON OVARIAN CANCER RESEARCH

(Continued from page 1)



Drs. Robert Lotocki and Al Hirte

alive and the cross-pollination for further research, it was decided that the GOC Website would become one of the technological facilitators.

An informal GOC dinner held on May 17th was well attended.

The 3rd Canadian Conference on Ovarian Cancer Research will be held in Vancouver in two years' time followed by a 4th conference in Montreal. This is a true and important event for the Society as we continue our agenda of advocating and promoting the scientific advancements of the treatment gynaecological malignancies.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

- GOG Semi-Annual Meeting – July 16-18, 2004 – Orange County, Garden Grove, California
- 10th Biennial IGCS Meeting – October 3-8, 2004 – Edinburgh, Scotland
- SLS (Society of Laparoscopic Surgeons) InterAmerican Multispecialty Congress of Laparoscopy and Minimally Invasive Surgery – February 23-26, 2005 - Miami Beach, Florida
- SGO Annual Meeting – March 19-23, 2005, Miami Beach, Florida
- FIGO World Congress – 2006 – Kuala Lumpur

ACADEMIC CORNER

Welcome to the Academic Corner, a place where we will celebrate and recognize the academic achievements of our society as a whole. We will be showcasing grants and publications which have been printed. Below is a list of some of the publications of the GOC members over the last year.

Please continue to send us your publications as they come up so we can include them in our newsletters and post them on our website. You may email your publications to hsoubliere@sogc.com.

Publications

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We weren't able to include all publications in this issue. The next newsletter will include those we had to omit.

Over 20 Years of Excellence in
Women's Cancer Care