

June 2001

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## CPD Meeting a Success!

*Michael Fung Kee Fung, GOC Secretary-Treasurer*

GOC held a successful First Annual Continuing Professional Development meeting April 20-22, 2001 in Montreal conjointly with the NCIC CTG.

Dr. Jan Vermorken, an outstanding speaker from Antwerp, Belgium, presented a review of adjuvant chemotherapy in early stage ovarian cancer, suggesting that in inadequately staged patients, adjuvant chemotherapy does provide a survival benefit. Strong discussion of the points he raised was presented by Drs. Ken Swenerton and Robert Grimshaw who gave the Canadian perspectives on the early ovarian cancer controversy. Details of Dr. Vermorken's findings were presented at the recent ASCO meeting.

Dr. Jacobus Pfisterer of Kiel, Germany presented a review of various strategies in recurrent ovarian cancer and the German proposal for a trial in this field. Dr. Heywood provided a review of the literature and an in-depth analysis of the cons of the German approach, and Dr. Bryson presented his experience with surgery in this particular patient population. Spirited discussion followed both topics and provided a highly informative session.

Dr. Mary Ellen Kirk, professor of pathology at University of Western Ontario presented the need for secondary consultation in pathology review. Dr. Kirk indicated that the range in the literature for significant changes in diagnosis when pathology slides are

reviewed at the centre where the patient is sent for treatment is from 1 to 12%. This led to a call from GOC members to examine how patients could be standardised for review and how specialists in gynecologic pathology could be identified within each centre.

The meeting's social events were also a big hit, with a casual dinner Friday evening at Profusion Restaurant and dinner and entertainment by Cirque du Soleil performers on Saturday.

*Special thanks to Lise Leduc, Secretary for the Division of Gyn-Oncology at Ottawa Hospital, for her efforts in helping to make this meeting a success.*

## OSLOTO Team Victorious!

Despite heroic efforts by the AWANGA team (Drs. Swenerton, Rittenberg, Shehata and Grimshaw), the OSLOTO team (Drs. Lotocki, Trudeau, Dawson and Ackerman) reigned victorious by two points in the first Gyn Oncology Survival Jeopardy match held at the Montreal CPD meeting. It was ruefully noted that no gyn oncologist on either team survived to the final round of questioning. Many thanks to the two teams and to those who contributed questions (Drs. DePetrillo, Murphy, Stuart, and Fung Kee Fung).



OSLOTO Team: Dr. R. Lotocki, Dr. M. Trudeau, Dr. L. Dawson and Dr. I. Ackerman

## News from the Centres

### Ottawa

- Dr. Carlos Leal from Mexico has begun fellowship training in Gynecologic Oncology.
- Open Trials: Ovarex OVA - Lsy - 15; OV 14; OV 15; NESP

### Hamilton

- Radiation delivery will now have extended hours.
- Open Trials: OV 13; OV 14; OV 15; EN5; submitted to REB - Phase II CAELYX and Carboplatin for metastatic cervix or endometrium; submitted to NCI - EGFR in cervix and ovary.

### London

- Dr. Akira Sugimoto is working with a group at the London Regional Cancer Centre to develop a clinical pathway for ovarian cancer.
- Open Trials: IND.126 - phase II study of Letrozole in patients with advanced or recurrent endometrial cancer; OV.14 - international randomized phase III trial of Paclitaxel/Epirubicin/Carboplatin (TEC) v. Paclitaxel/Carboplatin (TC) in the initial treatment of women with advanced ovarian cancer; OV.15 - international randomized phase III study comparing Gemcitabine plus Carboplatin v. Carboplatin monotherapy in patients with advanced epithelial ovarian carcinoma who failed first-line Platinum-based therapy.
- Closed Trials: Ovarex trial closed.

### Awards - Congratulations!

- Dr. Wylam Faught of University of Ottawa recently completed the APGO/Solvay Pharmaceutical Educational Scholars Development Program.

### New Positions

- Dr. Robert Lotocki at University of Manitoba and Dr. Josée Dubuc-Lissoir at University of Montreal have recently been promoted to full professors in obstetrics and gynecology.
- Dr. Denny DePetrillo has recently been appointed Chair of a Surgical Oncology Committee for the Canadian Association of Provincial Cancer Agencies.
- Dr. François Moens has been appointed the new Medical Director for the joint Hamilton Regional Cancer Centre/Hamilton Health Sciences Centre Oncology Programme effective January 15, 2001.

### Presentations at National/International Meetings

- Dr. Faught presented recently at the following meetings:
- Council of Resident Education in Ob/Gyn on surgical skills evaluation - March 2001 in Orlando, Florida
- European Society of Gynecologic Oncology on bowel obstruction in ovarian cancer - April 2001 in Venice, Italy
- Queen's University Resident Research Day invited professor - March 2001 in Kingston, Ontario

## Website News

### GOC Website Keeps on Growing!

The Website Committee met during the GOC CPD meeting and now includes representation from all centres. To find out who your centre's representative is, log on at [www.g-o-c.org](http://www.g-o-c.org).

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Reuters News Agency has recently been hired to carry out searches of gynecologic oncology news stories and will provide several current and significant front-page items on a regular basis. These articles will be archived for review by GOC members.

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The site's patient education component is developing with the assistance of Mrs. Lynne Jolicoeur, gynecologic oncology nurse specialist, and Mrs. Chantal Lacasse, research coordinator and GOC's Web developer. A physician and a patient are being sought to contribute to this project. If you are interested, contact Chantal Lacasse at [clacasse@ottawahospital.on.ca](mailto:clacasse@ottawahospital.on.ca) or by phone at 613-737-8648.

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The society's membership list has been posted on the site and the password protected members only section is currently being developed. It will soon include members' e-mail addresses, on-line continuous medical education, the GOC News, and a discussion board where hot topics and issues of interest and concern can be addressed among members. Other surprises are soon to come, so remember to visit us now at [www.g-o-c.org](http://www.g-o-c.org)!

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## AGM Fast Approaching

GOC's 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual General Meeting will take place June 16 and 17<sup>th</sup>, 2001 in St. John's, Newfoundland. The program is filled with 15 high quality abstracts highlighting the latest research findings in the field of gynecologic oncology.

Guest speakers will include Dr. David Luesley, professor of gynecologic oncology at the University of Birmingham, who will discuss the case for neoadjuvant chemotherapy in ovarian cancer. Royal College speaker, Dr. Jeff Boyd, associate attending biologist at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, will examine the molecular classification of gynecologic cancer and its clinical implications. Dr. Ramiro Arellano, assistant professor of anesthesia at Dalhousie University, and Dr. Laurie Elit, assistant professor of obstetrics and gynecology at McMaster University, will discuss perioperative blood conservation programs as alternatives to transfusion. An international symposium will take place on Sunday, June 17 entitled "The Importance of the Gynecologist/Gyn Oncologist in Hereditary Ovarian/Breast Cancer."

Also scheduled for noon on Saturday, June 16 is a GOC Executive Meeting. The GOC Business Meeting is scheduled the same day from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.

Social events for the weekend will include a gathering Friday evening in honour of Dr. Denny DePetrillo's retirement, and dinner and entertainment at Bianca's on Saturday.

For further details on GOC's Annual General Meeting, visit our Website at [www.g-o-c.org](http://www.g-o-c.org). To receive a copy of the meeting brochure, call GOC National Coordinator, Elizabeth Waite, at 1-800-561-2416 or 613-730-4192.

## SGO Report

The 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual SGO meeting took place in Nashville from March 3-7, 2001 and was attended by several Canadian members. Congratulations to Dr. Michel Roy who presented the work of Canadians in radical vaginal surgery during the Advanced Pelvic Surgery course. Dr. Al Covens presented his study entitled "How Important is Removal of the Parametrium at Radical Surgery for Carcinoma of the Cervix?" and Dr. Joan Murphy presented her study entitled "Pathologic Assessment of Prophylactic Oophorectomy Specimens." Drs. Elit and Fung Kee Fung attended the advanced surgical course, receiving information about the new LEER procedure as well as radical trachelectomy and myocutaneous flaps.

## Captain Canada Thwarted!

### *IGCS 2006 Bid goes to L.A.*

Recently, a delegation of Canadian gynecologic oncologists visited Nashville to present their bid to host the International Gynecologic Cancer Society's 2006 meeting in Vancouver. The team was escorted before the IGCS Council by Dr. Ken Swenerton (alias Captain Canada) in full RCMP regalia and attempted to coerce council members with samples of B.C. salmon. Members present included Dr. Josée Dubuc-Lissoir, Dr. Michael Fung Kee Fung, Dr. Monique Bertrand and Dr. Lou Benedet. Disappointingly, in spite of the tremendous quality of the Canadian presentation, the Council awarded the bid to Los Angeles. The society would like to thank the members of the Canadian team, and in particular Dr. Ken Swenerton, for the extraordinary amount of effort put into this project on behalf of the society.

## On a Personal Note.....

Congratulations to Dr. Marie Plante and Dr. Marie-Claude Renaud on the births of their new baby boys, François and Thomas-Xavier. Congratulations also to Dr. Akira Sugimoto on the birth of his baby girl Sarah. All moms, dads and babies are doing well!

Good luck to Dr. Wylam Faught who is attempting to climb Mount Kilimanjaro this month.



Dr. Ken Swenerton, in full RCMP regalia, leading the Canadian team to the IGCS 2006 bid presentation.

# Alternate Payment Plan

*Dr. Barry Rosen*

Over the last year and a half, the gynecologic oncologists of Ontario have been directly negotiating an APP with the Ministry of Health. An agreement in principle has been reached which recognizes the need to fund gynecologic oncology care at a higher level than is accomplished through the fee schedule.

The Ministry was presented with the difficulties the subspecialty was having recruiting new people at the current levels of payment. In addition, concerns were voiced about retention of subspecialists with individuals leaving for the United States and others retiring.

Statistics were provided to the Ministry demonstrating a significant increase in the absolute number of cancer cases in the next ten to fifteen years as the Ontario population ages. As well, as cancer care becomes more subspecialty focused, women are not only going to need our care as opposed to that of a generalist gynecologist, but will demand it. Furthermore, unless the fee schedule issues were addressed, those gyn oncologists staying in Ontario would preferentially begin to do more general gynecology (less time-consuming cases) and less gyn oncology. These issues were brought to the Ministry's attention

and the Ministry was made aware that a retention and recruitment strategy was needed to guarantee cancer care for women in this province. The Ministry agreed with our position and recommended an APP. Since that time the gyn oncologists have been working out the details of the agreement with the Ministry, such as governance, and hope to have it in place in the next 2 months.

This has been a long and, at times, a very slow process for the gyn oncologists, but in the end it should prove very beneficial. For patients it is a guarantee that they will have gyn oncologists to help them overcome their illnesses in the future.

## Mark Your Calendar

- 22<sup>nd</sup> GOC Annual General Meeting/57<sup>th</sup> SOGC Annual Clinical Meeting - June 14-19, 2001 in St. John's, Newfoundland
- 8<sup>th</sup> Laparoscopic and Vaginal Surgery in Gynecologic Oncology Workshop - June 25-30, 2001 in Lyon and Lille, France. Contact Dr. Denis Querleu by fax 33 3 20 99 30 03.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual International Conference on Ovarian Cancer - September 20-22, 2001 in Houston, Texas.
- 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual SGO Meeting - March 16-20, 2002 in Miami Beach, Florida.
- 9<sup>th</sup> Biennial IGCS Meeting - October 20-24, 2002 in Seoul, Korea
- 34<sup>th</sup> Annual SGO Meeting - January 31 - February 4, 2003 in New Orleans, Louisiana
- 10<sup>th</sup> Biennial IGCS Meeting - October 3-8, 2004 in Edinburgh, Scotland.

## Canadian-Led Trial Wins NCIC Support

The new phase III trial with a doublet of carboplatinum/topotecan and carboplatinum/taxol was supported by the NCIC Disease Site Group at their April meeting. A start date of late August 2001 is anticipated. This Canadian-led front-line trial is a great advancement in the field of Canadian gynecologic oncology and we look forward to the trial having adequate accrual and success.

*GOC acknowledges the support of GlaxoSmithKline in the production of this newsletter.*

