

Ontario Cancer News



CCO Tool Garner's Top Innovation Award for Health Information Management

Cancer Care Ontario's Interactive Symptom Assessment and Collection (ISAAC) tool has won the top award for Innovation in Health Information Management at the recent Celebrating Innovations in Health Care Expo 2008. The awards were presented in recognition of outstanding innovation in six designated categories.

Developed by CCO and introduced through the Provincial Palliative Care Integration Project, ISAAC is an easy-to-use electronic tool that allows cancer patients to track their own symptoms over time and report them directly to the patient's care team to enable better patient management.

- Read the [MOHLTC news release](#)
- Read more about ISAAC on [CCO's web site](#)



CCO Presents Second Annual Human Touch Awards

In hospitals and cancer centres across Ontario, front-line cancer care professionals routinely deliver a high standard of care for their patients. But, as many cancer patients and their families have discovered, some of these care providers go well above and beyond what's expected to deliver exceptional compassion and care for their patients.

Last week, Cancer Care Ontario recognized eight of these outstanding teams and individuals from across the province at the Second Annual Human Touch Awards. The awards were established last year to honour front-line cancer care professionals from across the province for providing exceptional and compassionate care to cancer patients.

Each winner or team received an elegant etched glass plaque to commemorate their achievement. The awards were presented by CCO Chairman Richard Ling and President & CEO Terry Sullivan.

Congratulations to the following Human Touch Award recipients for providing exceptional patient care:

- Dryden Regional Health Centre Chemotherapy Unit, Dryden Regional Health Centre
- Hilda Dube, Ambulatory Care Dept. and Michele Cardoso, Radiation Therapy Dept., Juravinski Regional Cancer Centre, Hamilton Health Sciences
- Shelley Lillie, Upper Grand Family Health Team
- Jennifer Deering, Toronto General Hospital, University Health Network
- Tasha K. Murji, Princess Margaret Hospital, University Health Network
- Jo-Anne McGuire, Windsor Regional Hospital
- Danielle Scott, Radiation Therapy Dept., London Regional Cancer Program
- Diane McManaman, Chemotherapy Dept., Riverside Healthcare Facilities Inc.

The Second Annual Human Touch Awards were generously sponsored by the Canadian Cancer Society – Ontario Division, Royal Bank of Canada and Gold Line Telemanagement Inc.

The awards ceremony followed Cancer Care Ontario's 2008 Annual General Meeting held at the Metropolitan Hotel in Toronto.

CCO Launches Refreshed IM-IT Strategy



Ontario is leading the way in Canada and internationally in the use of information management (IM), information technology (IT) and eHealth to improve the safety and experience of cancer patients and the performance and accountability of the cancer system.

CCO's 2008-2011 IM/IT Strategic Plan sets out the strategic priorities for CCO's IM, IT and eHealth efforts for the next three years, including:

- Supporting cancer screening
- Enhancing data timeliness, quality and completeness
- Increasing online, on demand access to information
- Supporting the Regional Cancer Programs
- Increasing patient safety
- Enabling patient self-care
- Supporting access to care
- Supporting research and innovation

The initiatives outlined in this Strategic Plan will support the goals and priorities of the new ***Ontario Cancer Plan***, and enable Cancer Care Ontario and its partners to continually improve cancer services at every step of the way.

For more information, [go to Cancer Care Ontario's web site](#).



Research Update

Research uncovers genetic link to lung cancer

An international study has uncovered, for the first time, an important genetic region associated with lung cancer risk. As published in the April 3, 2008 edition of scientific journal *Nature*, results show that chromosome 15 is associated with lung cancer, and provides new clues on how smoking tobacco can cause this cancer.

Dr. Rayjean Hung, first author of the *Nature* paper and principal investigator with the Samuel Lunenfeld Research Institute of Mount Sinai Hospital, conducted the genome-wide scan of 2,000 patients with lung cancer and 2,600 people without the disease to seek genetic variants thought to be associated with lung cancer. A further 5,000 patient samples were then used to confirm the findings.

"Lung cancer continues to be the most common cancer in Canada and survival rates remain low," said Dr. Hung. "This new information could lead to possibilities of new prevention strategies and therapeutic targets at early stages." This is the largest genetic study of lung cancer ever conducted.

Within the genomic region that Hung and colleagues studied, several genes interact with nicotine and other tobacco toxins, called nicotinic acetylcholine receptor genes. These receptor genes are thought to be related to tobacco dependence.

"This research project has been a very valuable global effort and the Ontario Institute for Cancer Research (OICR) is pleased to have had the opportunity to collaborate with colleagues in genomic agencies in France, the United Kingdom, the United States and Ontario," said Dr. Tom Hudson, President and Scientific Director of OICR. The Institute's \$750,000 contribution covered the genotyping cost of samples from Ontario residents.

Lung cancer is the most common cause of cancer death worldwide with more than 1 million cases diagnosed annually. In 2008, it is projected 64,447 people in Ontario will be diagnosed with lung cancer and 26,581 people will die of the disease.

"This is an exciting breakthrough for understanding the genetic basis for lung cancer and underscores the importance of international collaboration and the benefits of applying powerful new scientific tools in solving important health problems," says Dr. John McLaughlin, who is Vice-President of Population Studies and Surveillance at Cancer Care Ontario, a Senior Investigator at the Samuel Lunenfeld Research Institute and co-author of the study. "This project is an outstanding example of what can be accomplished and demonstrates one of the aspirations outlined in the recently released Ontario Cancer Plan, whereby we aim to strengthen Ontario's international leadership in research that leads to important new discoveries and the application of new knowledge to improve cancer prevention and cancer control."

The Toronto component of this international collaboration was supported in part by a grant from the National Cancer Institute of Canada with funds from the Canadian Cancer Society.

For a copy of the paper, "A susceptibility locus for lung cancer maps to nicotinic acetylcholine receptor subunit genes on 15q25" – Rayjean J Hung et al. April 3, 2008, *Nature*, go to the [Nature web site](#).

Safety Institute funds CCO-sponsored project to facilitate safe and consistent approach to delivery of IV chemotherapy

A project co-sponsored by Cancer Care Ontario – Improving the Safety of Ambulatory Intravenous Chemotherapy in Canada – has received funding from the Canadian Patient Safety Institute through its 2007 Research Competition. Of 40 applications received, 26 were eligible for full Peer/Merit Review. Of those, just eight were selected for funding.

The project aims to facilitate a safe and consistent approach to the delivery of IV chemotherapy in Canadian cancer centres. The project team – led by University Health Network's Dr. Anthony Easty and including CCO's Esther Green and Dr. Maureen Trudeau – will examine current practices for ambulatory IV chemotherapy across Canada, approaches being taken by each province to improve the safe delivery of ambulatory IV chemotherapy, and what approaches improve safety.

More information is available on the [CPSI web site](#).



Remembering our Past

One of the early activities of The Ontario Cancer Treatment and Research Foundation (Cancer Care Ontario's predecessor, incorporated in 1943) was to provide research grants to Ontario cancer researchers. One of these grantees was Dr. M. Vera Peters, a radiation oncologist at the Ontario Radiotherapy Institute, located in the Dunlap Building at the Toronto General Hospital.

In 1950, Dr. Peters published her paper in which she showed that early stage Hodgkin's disease, previously thought to be incurable, could be cured with high dose radiation. Though it took more than ten years for the world to accept the work, ultimately she was acclaimed for demonstrating to the world that Hodgkin's disease (now called Hodgkin lymphoma) could be cured.



Cancer 2020 eScoop

Cancer 2020 e-Scoop is a monthly bulletin from Cancer Care Ontario's Division of Preventive Oncology, consisting of regional and provincial news, initiatives, events and resources relevant to those working in cancer prevention and screening.

- [Read the March issue of Cancer 2020 eScoop](#)



People News

Dr. Jonathan Irish has been appointed as Provincial Program Head, Surgical Oncology Program for Cancer Care Ontario.

Dr. Irish is a practicing surgical oncologist specializing in head and neck surgery, Head of Surgical Oncology at Princess Margaret Hospital/University Health Network and Mt. Sinai Hospital, and co-lead of the Toronto-Central LHIN Surgical Oncology Program. Since 2004, Dr. Irish has been the lead for the Access to Care and Strategic Funding Initiatives portfolio within the Surgical Oncology Program and the cancer surgery expert lead for the Wait Times Strategy at the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care.

Dr. Irish will provide strong provincial leadership by working with provincial partners to develop and implement a strategic quality and access improvement program for surgical oncology.

Sharon Pfaff will join Cancer Care Ontario May 20 as Deputy Chief Information Officer. She will play a critical role in driving the implementation and management of CCO's Information Technology (IT) strategy.

Sharon, a nurse by background, brings 30 years of health care and IT experience to this leadership role. Most recently, she was the first Chief Executive Officer at the Consolidated Health Information Services, where she was instrumental in implementing the award-winning IT system at Chatham-Kent Health Alliance and the Windsor Regional Hospital. Her accomplishments in that role include launching QUEST for eCare, and leading the deployment of an electronic health record for the region. Sharon is also currently the eHealth Lead for the Erie St. Clair LHIN.

In this new role at CCO, Sharon will oversee and ensure the successful delivery of CCO's key information programs – including the Wait Times Information Program and the ColonCancerCheck Information Program, as well as ensure sound technical and project management operations and services delivered through the IT Operations group and the Project

Management Office.

Steve Hall has been appointed Cancer Care Ontario's Chief Technology Officer, effective May 1st. In this new role, Steve will be responsible for providing strategic technology leadership for CCO and for our partners and stakeholders. Steve will be the chief advisor to the Chief Information Officer on technology strategy; his team will be responsible for comprehensive technology architecture and planning, technology standards and policy, and systems security.

Steve has been with Cancer Care Ontario (CCO) for almost five years, and holds a Master's Degree in Science, from Queen's University. He is currently the Director of Information Technology, where he is responsible for providing CCO's technology support and disaster recovery planning.

Upcoming Events

Primary Care Today, May 8 to 10, 2008, International Centre, Toronto



Cancer Care Ontario's screening programs are participating in the Primary Care Today exposition. If you are attending this educational conference and exposition for Toronto family physicians, be sure to drop by the booth and find out about Ontario's screening initiatives. For more information about this CME event, visit <http://www.primarycaredtoday.ca>.

17th International Congress on Palliative Care, September 23-26, 2008, Palais des Congrès, Montréal

This biennial international congress is presented by the Palliative Care Division of the Departments of Medicine and Oncology of McGill University. Poster abstracts may be submitted until May 28, 2008. For more information, to register or to submit an abstract, please visit www.pal2008.com or call 450-292-3456 ext. 227.

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