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[CCO](#) > [Newsletter](#) > [Ontario Cancer News](#) > Ontario Cancer News - June 2010

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Ontario Cancer News



In this issue of Ontario Cancer News

- Terrence Sullivan to Step Down as Cancer Care Ontario's President and CEO
- 2010 Cancer System Quality Index Released
- Driving Change Beyond Cancer - PET Scans Ontario
- Ontario Health Minister Celebrates de Souza Institute during Nursing Week
- CCO's Annual General Meeting and Fourth Annual Human Touch Awards
- Regional Updates
- Ontario Cancer Facts
- People News
- Upcoming Events

Terrence Sullivan to Step Down as Cancer Care Ontario's President and CEO

'I have accomplished what I came here to do'

This past April, Terrence Sullivan, President and CEO of Cancer Care Ontario (CCO), announced that he will be stepping down as head of the organization.

Over the past 10 years - almost seven as President and CEO - Dr. Sullivan has led a rapid transformation in the cancer system and has worked to make CCO evidence-based and focused on patients. Dr. Sullivan's work with CCO is credited with dramatically improving the lives of cancer patients in Ontario.

"We have achieved many firsts - better access, stronger preventive health services, higher quality care, and transparent performance reporting," Dr. Sullivan said.

"This is my tenth year at Cancer Care Ontario and I have cherished every minute of it. I have accomplished what I came here to do and it's time for a new leader to take the organization to new heights."

At the request of Dr. Sullivan, CCO's Board has struck a search committee to recruit a new Chief Executive Officer who will provide the organization with continuing leadership. Dr. Sullivan said he intends to leave by the end of the fiscal year, but will adjust his departure over the next 12 months according to CCO's requirements and to allow for the orderly recruitment of a new leader.

2010 Cancer System Quality Index (CSQI) Released

On May 27th, 2010, the Cancer Quality Council of Ontario released their annual report - the Cancer System Quality Index - on the quality of Ontario's cancer system.

Joining in the release of the Index was the Honourable Deb Matthews, Ontario Minister of Health and Long-Term Care; Dr. Robert Bell, Chair of the Cancer Quality Council of Ontario; Terrence Sullivan, President and CEO, Cancer Care Ontario; and Dr. Carol Sawka, Vice President of Clinical Programs and Quality Initiatives, Cancer Care Ontario.

The 2010 Cancer System Quality Index reports on 29 evidence-based quality measures - covering every aspect of cancer control from cancer prevention to end-of-life care - and indicates gains and areas where quality and performance improvements are needed.

Highlights from this year's Index include:

- A reduction in wait times for cancer radiation across Ontario, despite a 10% increase in the number of patients receiving treatment;
- A look at the quality of cancer pathology reporting across the province and improvements that have been made; and
- Benchmarking of Ontario's performance against international best practices.

Visit the [Cancer System Quality Index](#) website for more information

Driving Change Beyond Cancer - PET Scans Ontario

Over the past several months, Cancer Care Ontario (CCO) has been working collaboratively with the

Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to transition responsibility for uninsured PET scan services in Ontario. As of May 17th, 2010, CCO's PET Scans Ontario program became responsible for the coordination of uninsured PET scan services across the province. The Program includes the following areas:

- 1. Accountability for the PET Steering Committee
- 2. PET Registry
- 3. Selected clinical trials guided by the PET Steering Committee
- 4. PET Access Program
- 5. Continual review of evidence

The Program works to improve transparency, accountability and equity across the province, and ensures the appropriate use of PET scanning based on the best available evidence.

For more information on PET scan services in Ontario, please visit [PET Scans Ontario](#)

Ontario Health Minister Celebrates de Souza Institute during Nursing Week



Pictured from L to R: Dr. Bob Bell, President and CEO, University Health Network; Dr. Mary Jane Esplen, Director of de Souza Institute; Ivan de Souza, husband of Anna Maria de Souza; Deb Matthews, Honorable Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, Ontario; Esther Green, Provincial Head, Nursing and Psychosocial Oncology, Cancer Care Ontario

Ontario's Minister of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC), the Honourable Deb Matthews, celebrated the success of the de Souza Institute during National Nursing Week in May.

The de Souza Institute - funded by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and in partnership with Cancer Care Ontario and Princess Margaret Hospital - is an innovative centre of learning for Ontario nurses who care for cancer patients or work in cancer prevention. The Institute is comprised of numerous learning centres located across Ontario's 14 regional cancer centres.

"With instances of cancer expected to increase 40% over the next ten years, it is crucial Ontarians have access to highly trained and skilled nurses to deliver the best cancer care", said Deb Matthews, Minister of Health and Long Term Care. "The de Souza Institute is a vital resource for Ontario nurses to expand their skills and knowledge, and we are proud of what has been accomplished in only 18 months."

In operation since October 2008, the Institute provides free ongoing educational support, professional development and career counseling to Ontario nurses who care for cancer patients in any setting. Using Telemedicine, innovative technologies and live events, the Institute provides education to nurses in their local care settings.

"Our intent is to provide Ontarians with the world's best cancer care by creating de Souza nurses: nurses who will deliver high quality, safe, compassionate and evidence based care to cancer patients and families ", said Dr. Mary Jane Esplen, Director of de Souza Institute. "We are proud to offer free education and mentorship opportunities to Ontario nurses, no matter where they live in the province."

Also in attendance to celebrate the success of the Institute were Ivan de Souza, husband of the late Anna Maria de Souza, distinguished philanthropist for whom the institute is named; Terrence Sullivan, President and CEO of Cancer Care Ontario; and Esther Green, Provincial Head, Nursing and Psychosocial Oncology, Cancer Care Ontario.

Visit the [de Souza Institute](#) for more information

CCO's Annual General Meeting and Fourth Annual Human Touch Awards

On April 22nd, Cancer Care Ontario held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) and hosted the fourth annual Human Touch Awards (HTA). Presented by Terrence Sullivan, President & CEO of Cancer Care Ontario, the focus of this year's AGM was championing information management innovations to improve system performance and patient care.

View [Dr. Sullivan's presentation](#)

Human Touch Awards

The Human Touch Awards recognize health care professionals, providers and volunteers in the cancer system who demonstrate exemplary and compassionate patient care.

This year's ceremony was unique, with the addition of a dedicated volunteer award. The volunteer award is handed out to an individual who demonstrates an unwavering commitment to cancer care through exceptional volunteer work that enhances the quality of life of cancer patients and improves access to quality of cancer care.

This year's five extraordinary winners are:

- Julie Garrett, Registered Nurse, London Health Sciences Centre
London Regional Cancer Program
- Linda Johnson, Registered Nurse, Winchester District Memorial Hospital
Champlain Regional Cancer Program
- Dr. Chris Lund, Lead Palliative Care Physician, Grand River Hospital
Waterloo/Wellington Regional Cancer Program
- Karen Simpson, Registered Nurse, Grand River Hospital
Waterloo/Wellington Regional Cancer Program
- Strachan Bongard, volunteer, Princess Margaret Hospital

More information on the [Human Touch Awards](#) is available on Cancer Care Ontario's website

Regional Updates

"MORR" Improvements in Oncology Care at Lakeridge Health

As the first healthcare organization in Canada to implement an innovative Oncology Management application, Lakeridge Health's (LH) R.S. McLaughlin Durham Regional Cancer Centre (MDRCC) is committed to providing the right care at the right time and in the right location for its patients.

"We're always searching for opportunities to improve care and better manage information technology systems that support that care," said Kathy Fraser, Information Technology (IT) Manager for MDRCC. "The software application - dubbed the MEDITECH Oncology Regional Record (MORR) - lets us improve quality patient safety and streamline documentation."

LH is just one of seven healthcare organizations in the world and the first in Canada going live with the application. It's implementing the system at the MDRCC, located in Oshawa, and its affiliate clinics in two phases. The first phase was implemented in late 2009 at both MDRCC and the Peterborough Regional Health Centre.

You can view the full article online at [Lakeridge Health](#)

100th Patient Benefits from PET/CT

On April 7th, the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre (TBRHSC) reached a milestone with the scanning of the 100th patient on the state-of-the-art 64-Slice Philips Gemini TF PET unit.

For patients - referred through the PET Registry, Ontario Clinical Oncology Group feasibility study for Diagnosis of Recurrent Cancer (PETREC) and PET Access - the PET scans can prove to be invaluable in cases where conventional diagnostic tests have not answered the clinical question.

"The PET allows us to offer patients the opportunity to participate in a clinical trial or a registry that could provide information that could improve care, and that is worth celebrating," says Tarja Heiskanen, Director of Translational Research.

"PET research allows us to detect cancer more precisely because we're looking at it on a molecular level. It is reducing the impact of more invasive procedures like surgery and assisting in treatment planning," says Michael Power, Vice President of Regional Cancer Care.

For more information on the 100th patient scanned, visit [TBRHSC](#)

For information on PET scan services in Ontario, visit [PET Scans Ontario](#)

Northwestern Ontario's Regional Cancer Care Breast Bag Program

Fashion students are typically inspired by the catwalk or glossy magazines. Now the fashion class at Superior High School in Thunder Bay has new inspiration: breast cancer. They are creating Breast Bags for patients at Northwestern Ontario's Regional Cancer Care program (housed in the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre).

The Thunder Bay Breast Cancer Support Group came up with the idea. They wanted all cancer patients to receive the same educational material in the same way, so why not package it all up in a simple reusable, cotton tote bag.

"When we compared experiences, people in our support group realized that there are inconsistencies, some had received information, others didn't and this seemed like a solution," says Jody Nesti, Chair of the Thunder Bay Breast Cancer Support Group.

The group had one obstacle to overcome: Who was going to sew the Breast Bags?

Staff at Regional Cancer Care approached Valarie Midgley, a Thunder Bay seamstress and owner of the

Whole Nine Yards. It was Midgley who decided to approach the high schools.

"My mother is a breast cancer survivor, in fact she had it twice, and she is the reason I wanted to do this," says Midgley.

"It was an absolutely terrifying experience, and when someone is first diagnosed there are a lot of decisions that need to be made in short period of time. The best thing you can offer is education."

When Trish Cibinel's fashion class learned about the Breast Bags they jumped at the idea. Midgley provided the fashion class with a pattern and over 20 metres of fabric donated by Fabric Land. So far, they've made 72 bags.

Now the Breast Bag project is motivating the students to talk about cancer and share their personal experiences with cancer.

"My aunt really struggled with breast cancer and she started to cry when I told her we were working on the Breast Bags" says Carmela Graham-Zaffino, 16.

The project is so popular that the students are now planning ways to keep it going in their spare time.

To learn more about how you can help, or to donate fabric to the Breast Bag project, contact [Northwestern Ontario's Regional Cancer Care](#) or [The Whole Nine Yards](#)

Celebrating the Olympic Spirit in the JCC Chemotherapy Suite

There's a tree near the reception desk of the Juravinski Cancer Centre's Chemotherapy Department in Hamilton. Most patients and visitors can't help but notice that staff take great pride in ensuring that each month, the tree has different decorations reflecting the season or closest holiday.

Although it's a small touch, these efforts are an example of how staff go above and beyond in providing exemplary care for patients, helping to lift their spirits so they can feel less anxious about coming in for chemotherapy.

This past February, the staff in the Chemotherapy Department brought the spirit of the Vancouver 2010 Olympics to patients and visitors coming in for treatment. Wednesday, February 17th was officially designated as "Go Canada Gold" day in the Chemotherapy Suite.

The scene was set with Canadian flags hanging throughout the suite, decorating the "Chemotherapy Tree" with the flags of competing nations and newspaper clippings of Canadian athletes posted on the walls.

Staff wore Olympic apparel including the much sought-after red mittens and brought along winter sporting equipment such as skates, hockey sticks, skis, and curling brooms.

Each staff member received their very own gold medal stamped with the Olympic theme slogan "I Believe". The day was topped off with a delicious cake decorated with the Olympic rings.

The day was a way for patients to participate in the spirit of the games and forget about their battle with cancer, at least for a little while.

Ontario Cancer Facts

Occupational Cancer Research Centre's stakeholder community identifies research priorities (Mar. 2010)

The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) has identified nearly 60 workplace factors and substances as carcinogenic to humans, and lists an additional 100 as probable carcinogens.¹ Recent estimates suggest that many Ontarians continue to be exposed to cancer-causing substances in the workplace.²

The Occupational Cancer Research Centre (OCRC) was established to identify, prevent and ultimately eliminate Ontarians' exposure to cancer-causing substances in the workplace. Their mandate is to support community action, public education, prevention, legislation, and policy development.

During the summer of 2009, OCRC consulted a broad spectrum of stakeholders through an online survey to help establish its research priorities. The survey was completed by 177 participants from academia, government, labour unions, non-governmental organizations, industry, health and safety organizations, and health care institutions.

Find out more in [March's Ontario Cancer Fact](#) on Cancer Care Ontario's website

Colorectal cancer subsite distribution differs by sex (Apr. 2010)

The distribution of cancers occurring along subsites of the colon and rectum differs between sexes. Among females, proximal colon cancers are most common, accounting for approximately 42% of all colorectal cancers. Rectal cancers and distal colon cancers account for the second (28%) and third (22%) largest proportion of female cases, respectively. In contrast, rectal cancers are most common among males (38% of all cases), followed by cancers of the proximal (31%) and distal (25%) colon.

Find out more in [April's Ontario Cancer Fact](#) on Cancer Care Ontario's website

Population aging and growth main contributors to increasing cancer

burden (May 2010)

The number of new cancer cases diagnosed annually in Ontario increased from approximately 30,340 in 1982 to 61,550 in 2006. This represents a doubling of cases over these 25 years. Population growth, population aging and rising cancer incidence rates all contributed to the increase in the number of new cases.

Find out more in [May's Ontario Cancer Fact](#) on Cancer Care Ontario's website

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People News

New to CCO

Matthew Hodge joins Cancer Care Ontario as the Director of Informatics and Chief Medical Information Officer. In this new role, Matthew will be responsible for setting strategic and operational direction for the informatics portfolio at CCO. Specifically, he will lead the development and implementation of strategic and operational informatics plans to deliver on CCO's IM/IT Strategic Plan, and ensure alignment of our informatics strategy with CCO's corporate vision and the Ontario Cancer Plan. He is a PhD epidemiologist, a practicing emergency room physician, and has wide experience at the World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations (UN) in population health management and public health.

Leonard Kaizer joins CCO as Provincial Program Head, Systemic Treatment Program. Leonard was the first medical oncologist recruited to the Credit Valley Hospital. He has been a key member of the team since 1986 and has played an important role in the significant growth and development of systemic treatment services in what is now the Peel Regional Cancer Centre. From 2004 to 2009, Leonard served as Director Medical Oncology at the Peel Regional Cancer Centre, and from 2007 to 2009, he was the physician lead in the Mississauga-Halton Central West Regional Systemic Treatment Program.

Alethea Kewayosh joins CCO as the Provincial Lead for Aboriginal Cancer Control at the Prevention and Screening Department. Alethea has been involved in addressing health-related issues on behalf of First Nations and other Aboriginal groups for over 20 years. Her early work in diabetes has led to the development of the National Aboriginal Diabetes Association and to the development of diabetes programming initiatives at the national, provincial and community levels.

Mark Muldowney joins CCO as the Director, Project and Performance Management, CIO portfolio. In this new role, Mark will be responsible for the strategic leadership, development and management of the Resource Management, Project Management and Performance Management functions within the CIO portfolio at Cancer Care Ontario (CCO). Mark brings over a decade of experience working in management roles in the information technology sector. More recently, Mark was accountable for establishing and managing IT business management functions including PMO, financial management, service management, resource planning, corporate reporting/business intelligence, strategy and process management.

Dean Gillan joins CCO as Director, Operational Services, Technology Services Department. Dean will provide leadership and direction to the Service Management and Operational Services teams which provide support through the service desk, computer training, network, server and operational security services for CCO's staff, external customers and partners. Dean has many years of experience providing IT Services within Ontario's healthcare sector. Most recently, Dean has led an enterprise unified communications deployment initiative at the Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion.

Leaving CCO...

George Pasut , Vice President of Prevention and Screening, has left CCO for an exciting new position with the Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (OAHPP) as Vice President of Science and Public Health.

During his time at CCO, George not only led the Prevention and Screening Department - which includes the cancer prevention, screening, aboriginal cancer and primary care programs - but was also involved in a number of key corporate initiatives. George oversaw the launch of the ColonCancerCheck program as well as InScreen, one of CCO's newest information systems, which creates a colorectal screening record for all age-eligible Ontarians.

George also led the CCO team that worked with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care in developing a provincial Integrated Cancer Screening Strategy. He also played a significant role in CCO's outreach and engagement with the primary care community.

In his new position with OAHPP, George's expertise will allow him to act as a key bridge between CCO and Ontario's public health agency on areas of common interest.

While a search for the new Vice President of Prevention and Screening at CCO is underway, George continues to offer support in an ongoing advisory role. During this transition, **Helen Angus**, Vice President of the Ontario Renal Network (ORN) for CCO, has graciously stepped in to fill the role of Vice President of Prevention and Screening. As Vice President of ORN, Helen provides leadership as the Network begins to create an organized provincial system of quality renal care across Ontario.

John Garcia, Director of the Population Health Unit at CCO, has accepted a challenging new position as Program Leader for the Master of Public Health Program and Associate Professor in the Department of Health Studies and Gerontology, Faculty of Applied Health Sciences at the University of Waterloo.

Most recently, as CCO's Director of Population Health, John directed the Program Training and Consultation Centre of the Smoke-Free Ontario Strategy, Aboriginal Tobacco Program, Aboriginal Cancer and Prevention Team, and Ministry of Health Promotion's Guidance Document Project.

During his service with CCO, one of John's many contributions included establishing the primary prevention function at Cancer Care Ontario as first Director of the Prevention Unit in a Division of Preventive Oncology.

Upcoming Events

Touch Point with Terry (live web chat)

Patients, family and caregivers are invited to help shape the future of Ontario's cancer system by sharing their thoughts, feelings and experiences in a live web chat with Terrence Sullivan, President and CEO of Cancer Care Ontario (CCO).

Date: Thursday, June 3, 2010
Time: 7:30p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
Location: www.caringvoices.ca

Ontario Renal Network's 2010 Annual Town Hall Meeting

Date: Tuesday, June 22, 2010
Time: 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Location: Sheraton Toronto Airport Hotel and Conference Centre
801 Dixon Road, Toronto ON

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