We are pleased to introduce the new look of our newsletter and with it highlight two new areas we have added as regular sections, ‘Spotlight’ and ‘Education Corner’. Spotlight is an opportunity to feature some of our network members and the great work they are doing in oncology. This edition features the dietitians at the two tertiary cancer sites. Education Corner will consist of supportive cancer care topics and will provide tips or resources to use in your everyday practice.

We hope you find these sections useful and informative!

If you have any questions, concerns, or comments you would like to share with us regarding this newsletter please contact Alberta Health Services, Community Cancer Support Network Team; Vivian Collacutt, Provincial Manager, Daena Lamoureux, Provincial Coordinator, and Glenda Armstrong, Program Assistant.

tasteandsmellalterationsincarencancerimpactonfoodchoiceandfoodenjoyment.
Submitted By: Wendy V. Wismer, PhD, Sensory and Consumer Scientist, University of Alberta

The majority of patients with cancer experience a variety of alterations in their sense of taste and smell, such as increased or decreased food flavour perception and persistent tastes in the mouth. These alterations can change the liking for foods, reduce dietary intake and diminish the social enjoyment of foods, resulting in inadequate nutrient intake, poor appetite, weight loss, reduced food-related quality of life, and distress for patients and caregivers.

The objective of my research is to determine the nature of taste and smell alterations associated with cancer, its treatments and the alterations that persist post-therapy, with the ultimate goal of providing supportive tools to encourage adequate and appropriate dietary intake that allows eating to be an enjoyable experience. The standard tools of my research are a survey to assess taste and smell alterations and a three-day dietary record to measure food intake. Clinical sensory testing, a quality of life tool and qualitative methodologies have been added to further describe the alterations and their impact.

Previous studies in the literature regarding the nature of cancer-associated taste and smell alterations have generally indicated a loss of sensation for the basic tastes and sense of smell, but we have observed decreases and increases, with some individuals experiencing both. All types of alterations are associated with reduced energy intake and shorter survival time compared to no alterations, and are most severe for those who experience the greatest number of taste and smell alterations. Our qualitative work reveals that patients with cancer use strategies unique to the individual to manage altered taste and smell sensations, although all are motivated to eat for survival in the later stages of the disease.
Interface Project Applications Due Soon!
Submitted by: Daena Lamoureux, Provincial Coordinator, Nutrition & Rehabilitation Oncology Network

The Interface Projects were begun in 2003 and have grown and evolved over the years with an overarching goal of enhancing access to hospice palliative care and/or supportive (ex. psychosocial, rehabilitation, nutrition) oncology care for individuals with cancer and their families living in rural Alberta. This year, with the support of the Canadian Cancer Society and the Alberta Cancer Foundation, we are pleased to be able to fund four Interface Projects with a value of $10 000 each- the most funding for a project that we’ve been able to offer so far! Do you have an idea that would improve cancer care in Alberta? Do you need some funding to help get your creative idea off the ground? Get together with other key stakeholders in your community and submit an application! Contact Daena Lamoureux at the Community Cancer Support Network (daena.lamoureux@albertahealthservices.ca or 780-643-4485) if you have questions, to obtain more information, or to receive an application form. Or check out the online application form at http://www.cancerboard.ab.ca/Professionals/CommunityCancerSupportNetworks/ for more information about the Interface Projects and how to apply. Also, just a friendly reminder that applications for this year’s Interface Projects are due April 16th.

Prostate Cancer Canada Network Calgary
Submitted by: Karen Whiteman, Executive Director, PCCN Calgary

Prostate Cancer Canada Network Calgary (PCCN Calgary) is a peer based support organization for men and their families battling prostate cancer. Our objective is to assist and support patients, families and friends by informing and empathizing. By sharing our own experiences with our own cancer we lift spirits and strengthen our resolve to fight for quality of life and a cure. We do not give medical advice. We recommend that a qualified health professional be consulted before making medical sessions.

Information and Support for Health Care Professionals
Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada

To help support you, your patients and their families, the Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada offers several free resources, workshops and awards for health care professionals including the following:

- Patient Resource Handbooks available in adult and pediatric versions,
- ‘A Friend in Hope’ a children’s book created to provide support for children who have been affected by a brain tumour diagnosis,
- Newsletters, including an ‘ask the expert’ column,
- Health Care Professional Kits and Workshops,
- Information Days for patients, caregivers, and health care professionals,
- and much more!

Please visit the link below to find out more about the opportunities available to you. For further information regarding the resources please contact Janic Gorayeb, Health Information Specialist by email at jgorayeb@braintumour.ca or by phone at 1-800-265-5106 ext 233.

http://www.braintumour.ca/braintumour.nsf/eng/HealthCareProfessionals
Online Support Program for Canadians Affected by Cancer
Submitted by: Reema Jayakar, Project Coordinator, BC Cancer Agency - Patient Family Counselling

CancerChatCanada (http://cancerchatcanada.bccancer.bc.ca) provides psychological support to cancer patients and their families throughout Canada. In conjunction with Alberta Health Services psychologists Dr. Jill Turner, Dr. Michael Specia, and other professional psychosocial oncology counsellors, CancerChatCanada is a program led by Dr. Joanne Stephen (BC Cancer Agency) and provides counsellor-led, live, chat support groups. The program is in its 3rd year of operation and partially funded by the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer.

Some upcoming groups:
- Young (under 45) patients/survivors – Scheduled start: 4th week of April
- Advanced/metastatic/incurable cancers – Scheduled start: 4th week of April
- Caregivers – Ongoing enrolment and wait-list

We’re all in this together - Palliative care rural road show

By attending this workshop you will learn how to support people in your community who are dealing with end of life issues. This is an opportunity to share your concerns about life altering illness and develop strategies to improve palliative care in your area. The session is open to anyone who is coping with end of life concerns their families and caregivers, professionals and all interested community members.

Cost:
Health Care Professional $65
AHPCA Member $50
General Public $25

This workshop qualifies for 6 Category “A” credits for Registered Social Workers

For more information, and to register, visit the AHPCA website at www.ahpca.ca
welcome to attend. Every second Friday at the Holy Cross Site, Erin teaches "Breast Cancer & Nutrition" (90 minutes). All individuals with Breast Cancer are encouraged to attend. Both classes are offered via self referral.

Clinical Dietitians in hospitals throughout Calgary and area are an active part of cancer patients' inpatient care. This can range from patients who require Enteral Nutrition (tube feeds), Parenteral Nutrition, or oral nutrition. The Clinical Dietitians with the Home Enteral and Parenteral Nutrition Program, based out of FMC, are also involved with oncology patients.

The outpatient contact number for the dietitians in TBCC is (403) 521-3719.

Tom Baker Cancer Centre (TBCC) is located at the Foothills Medical Centre (FMC) in Northwest Calgary and is an outpatient based facility. The Holy Cross Site in Southwest Calgary also has outpatient services and is a part of Alberta Health Services - Cancer Care. If inpatient treatment is required, patients are admitted to FMC or other hospitals within the city and area.

TBCC has two outpatient Clinical Dietitians who work with outpatients: Jennifer Black and Erin Benner. Erin works with the Blood Marrow Transplant (BMT) Team as part of their clinic to see new assessments and follow ups. She also collaborates closely with the FMC inpatient dietitians (Chelsea Barlow and Rebecca Holmes), who follow the BMT patients in hospital.

Both Erin and Jennifer attend four weekly clinics as part of the Head & Neck Team. During the week, Erin and Jennifer also provide nutrition counseling to individual patients from a variety of oncology groups (e.g. Lung, GI, Breast, Head and Neck, etc). Two Nutrition Classes are offered to lessen the demand for one-on-one consults. On the first and third Wednesday at TBCC, Jennifer teaches "Eating For Your Life" (90 minutes). All oncology patients/families are

Cross Cancer Institute Dietitians
Submitted by: Patty Tachynski, Team Leader, Clinical Nutrition Department

The Cross Cancer Institute is a free standing facility that treats over 600 outpatients daily and has a 58 bed inpatient unit. The Clinical Nutrition Department became a separate department from Food Services in January 2004 and currently has 2.8 FTE of dietitians on staff as follows:

1.0 FTE Patty Tachynski, Dietitian II, Team Leader
0.8 FTE Kathryn Houlihan, Dietitian I
0.5 FTE Kim Johnson, Dietitian I
0.5 FTE Andrea Smith, Dietitian I

Our department also has 1.45 FTE Dietary Technologists:
FTE Michelle Newberry
0.45 FTE weekend and relief

Our involvements are a variety as we are cross-trained to see all cancer patients, both inpatient and outpatient. This provides variety to our day and a common knowledge of our patient cases. We tend to see our inpatients every second day, however all TPN and tube fed patients are seen daily. Our priority caseload includes the head and neck patients, which we see weekly during their treatments together with a team of SLP, PT and oncologist. We also are involved in a variety of outpatient clinics including: pain and symptom control, radiation brain and bone mets, small cell lung and new head and neck. We also offer monthly Basic Nutrition Classes as well as are involved with multidisciplinary Fatigue Management, Chemo Brain, New Breast and Head & Neck feeding tube group.

Our department contact number is 780-432-8782.
Translational Research in Physical Activity for Cancer Survivors
Submitted By: Nicole Culos-Reed, Ph.D., Faculty of Kinesiology, University of Calgary, Dept of Psychosocial Resources, Tom Baker Cancer Centre

Research has consistently shown how physical activity (PA) can be beneficial at every stage of the cancer journey, including during & after treatment. ¹ However, national statistics reveal that survivors usually achieve suboptimal activity levels: the latest data shows only 22% of survivors are physically active and over 18% are obese.²

Through evidence-based programs and education, our mission at the Health & Wellness Lab is to increase the awareness & availability of suitable PA programs to the cancer survivor community. Working closely with local resources and cancer care professionals, we translate our research knowledge into practical options for survivors to learn about and experience the benefits of active living.

Highlights of some of our programs include:

**Yoga Thrive**: Yoga for cancer survivors is offered in multiple locations in Calgary, throughout Alberta and across Canada (Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario). To register in Calgary, call Campus Recreation at 403-220-7749.

**Drop-in Exercise Class**: With Wellspring Calgary, we offer drop-in fitness classes on Mondays (5:30 and 7 pm) and focus on exercises using minimal equipment, so that participants can perform their PA at home. A certified fitness professional leads all classes. To register, please call 403-521-5292.

**Education Events**: We provide monthly PA and educational events at the TBCC (1st Wednesday of each month) and the Prostate Cancer Centre (3rd Tuesday of each month). We provide PA information at the TBCC “cancer awareness days”, hosted the first “Physical Activity and Cancer” educational day at the TBCC in January 2010, and provide presentations upon request to interested cancer support and professional groups.

And coming soon – fitness testing for cancer survivors in Calgary! Stay tuned to our website for updates!

For more information about our work, research, programs and educational links, please see our website at: [www.kin.ucalgary.ca/healthandwellnesslab](http://www.kin.ucalgary.ca/healthandwellnesslab)

or call 403-210-8482

References:


Upcoming Community Cancer Support Network
Telehealth Presentations

- April 14, 2010 - 12:00 - 1:00, Zane Feldman Auditorium, Cross Cancer Institute.
  Research in Practice Series: The Economic Burden of Providing Informal Care to Cancer Patients in Alberta Presented By: Konrad Fassbender, PhD
  Assistant Professor, Division of Palliative Care Medicine Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry, University of Alberta

- June 2, 2010 - 12:00 - 1:00, Tom Baker Cancer Centre, room cc105
  Title: The Way of Hospice
  Presented By: Colleen E. Clark, MSW, RSW, Manager of Child/Youth & Family Services, Co-Director of Programs and Services, Hospice Calgary

- June 16, 2010 - 12:00 - 1:00, Zane Feldman Auditorium, Cross Cancer Institute.

To register for any of the above telehealth sessions please contact your local telehealth coordinator. Thank you!

Articles of Interest


- Journal of Palliative Care – 26:1/2010

Available Resources

- Below is a link to view a telehealth presentation titled ‘Knowing What to Say – Speaking with Patients About Spirituality and Exploring Verbal Responses to Spiritual Pain’ presented by Oceanna Hall, B.Sc., M.Div., M.Ed., CPE Specialist
  http://www.screencast.com/t/ZmlxYWRk

  **Please note this presentation is also available on CD.

- The following presentations are available on CD for your use. Please note that we have a limited number of copies and they will be distributed on a first come first serve basis.

  - “Communicating About Sexuality in Cancer Care” presented by Dr. John Robinson, Ph.D., R. Psych
  - “Virtual Pain & Symptom Control / Palliative Radiotherapy Clinic Update” presented by Dr. Sharon Watanabe, Dr. Alysa Fairchild, Edith Pituskin, Jill Woods