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APPHON/ROHPPA NEWSLETTER

Atlantic Provinces Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Network
Réseau d'Oncologie et Hématologie Pédiatrique des Provinces Atlantiques
Summer 2012

Dr. Jack Hand

As many of you are aware, our friend and former Vice Chair of APPHON/ROHPPA, Dr. Jack Hand died on June 6th, 2012 surrounded by his family. Not only did Jack make incalculable contributions to APPHON/ROHPPA, he added spark and joy to our encounters. He was a driving force behind the development and sustaining of APPHON/ROHPPA.

All associated with APPHON/ROHPPA join to extend deepest sympathies to family, friends and colleagues. He will be missed by many.

In recognition of Jack's enormous support of APPHON/ROHPPA, a fund in his name is being established to support ongoing education related to pediatric hematology/ oncology for all disciplines within Atlantic Canada. More details about the educational fund will be sent out later this month.

A Friend and Colleague - by Dr. Conrad Fernandez

Jack Hand was a friend and colleague. He died at home in St. John's Newfoundland on June 6, 2012 surrounded by friends and family,

including his three children Michael, Jessica and Amy and his wife Tina. He and his family were supported enormously by his colleagues in pediatric oncology.



Each of us will have memories of Jack that are personal and relived from our own perspective. I have known him since we trained together in Vancouver - an intense time in which lifetime friendships are forged.

He is remembered by me as a gentle man, humble and with an enormous capacity to make us laugh with a quick wit and an infectious smile. He often had us in stitches during our Friday

afternoon sign over rounds; welcomed moments of relief in often serious discussions. We then had occasion to regularly meet at COG meetings with diversions for dinner, hockey or the golf course.

I had the privilege to attend his funeral mass and the traditional wake that followed in St. John's. The mass was a moving personal tribute attended by more than a thousand friends, colleagues and patients and their families in which priest, brother and friends reflected his legacy of advocacy for patients and families, and of course how he lives on in each of his children. The wake was a huge celebration of his life complete with friends and family belting out his favourite tune "Sweet Caroline".

A trust named in his honour has been established through C17 to support the educational future of his children. Information on how to donate will be sent around shortly. Please give generously in memory of a man whose life was cut short too soon. Jack will be missed in so many ways by each of us.

2012 Conference

The APPHON/ROHPPA annual conference and AGM will be held on Friday, November 16th and Saturday, November 17th. Due to budget constraints throughout Atlantic Canada, we will now be charging a small registration fee of \$50 to help cover the costs. As well, we are looking for some outside funding and all hotel room bookings will be made on at least a double occupancy.

The agenda and speakers will be distributed later this summer. If anyone would like us to book a speaker on a particular subject please let Carol Digout know at carol.digout@iwk.nshealth.ca.

Adverse Events and Source Documents

CI (National Cancer Institute) defines **Adverse Events** as: any unfavorable symptom, sign, or disease temporally associated with treatment which MAY OR MAY NOT be related to the treatment. Health Canada defines a **source document** as: original documents, data, and records. The IWK oncology service, as a Children's Oncology Group member, is required to obtain and keep copies of source documentation from its community health partners of *all* adverse events. This means that rather than your patient information being summarized on a fax cover letter and sent, a fax of your permanent health record documentation of the patient's condition is required. Additionally, as chemotherapy doses are based on heights and weights, we require a fax of your permanent documentation of the patient's **height and weight** each time it is performed. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Gloria Gallant, Clinical Leader, 6 North Clinic, Hematology/Oncology/Brain Tumor Clinic, IWK Health Centre by phone (902)470-6562 or by email gloria.gallant@iwk.nshealth.ca

Guidelines

The new C17 guideline entitled *Guideline for Platelet Transfusion Thresholds for Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Patients* has been adopted by APPHON and will be used in all pediatric tertiary centres across Canada. The guideline is available on the APPHON/ROHPPA website in French and English.

The updated Febrile Neutropenia guideline is now available in French on the APPHON/ROHPPA website.

Maintaining Registered Nurse (RN) Competency for Pediatric Hematology/Oncology - Cathie Watson, Levels of Care Coordinator

APPHON/ROHPPA has been reviewing the current competency documents developed by APPHON/ROHPPA between 2005 and 2009:

1. 'Practice Standards and Competencies for Nurses Providing Pediatric Cancer Care in Atlantic Canada' - dated June 2007 [53 pages]
2. 'Practice Standards and Competencies for Nurses Providing Pediatric Non Malignant Hematology Care in Atlantic Canada' - dated July 2008 [55 pages]
3. 'Pediatric Chemotherapy Administration Standards and Competencies for Practice and Education' - dated November 2009 [5 pages]

If anyone needs copies of these documents, please let Cathie know catherine.watson@iwk.nshealth.ca.

It is a diverse group of nurses who care for our population:

- RNs who work full time in Pediatric Hematology/Oncology - some administering chemotherapy and some not
- Generalist Pediatric RNs who sometimes care for Pediatric Hematology/Oncology patients - some administering chemotherapy and some not
- Adult Oncology RNs who deliver oncology care to adults full time and sometimes administer chemotherapy to pediatric patients.

Over the years, RNs from all of these groups have taken the APHON 'Chemotherapy Biotherapy Provider Course' and RNs from all of these groups have been able to maintain competency as set out by APPHON/ROHPPA in 2009.

While we know that excellent care is being given in the Atlantic Provinces, it

is important that the care delivered to the pediatric hematology oncology population continues to be safe, current, consistent, evidenced based and is delivered by RNs with specific knowledge and specialized skills. To that end, here is a sample of some of the discussion we are having:

- The documents (#1 & #2 listed above) are based on CANO (2006) and the APPHON/ROHPPA working group adapted those standards specifically for pediatric hematology/oncology as well as for the APPHON/ROHPPA levels of care. The competencies required for nurses in Intermediate, Advanced and Sub Specialty settings are outlined in detail. Are these documents and the self assessment tools useful to Atlantic Canadian RNs?
- How can the education needs of the diverse group of RNs be met and how can we ensure that competency is maintained?
- Should we continue to condone "Grandfathering" of experienced RNs who do not have the APHON provider course?

Carol Digout, Stephanie Eason and Cathie Watson would appreciate input from experienced nurses in the Atlantic Provinces. Please let Cathie know if you think the APPHON/ROHPPA competency documents need to be reviewed and/or re-written and if so, if you would be willing to volunteer to be part of a working group to review these standards.

Our Vision

To facilitate access for Atlantic province children and youth to comprehensive, current, effective, evidence-based hematologic/oncologic treatment delivered as close to home as safely feasible.
