



Disease Management Initiative

Alice Tseng & Michelle Foisy

Toronto General Hospital/Alberta Health Services & University of Alberta

2010 winners

Joint pharmacist effort optimizes HIV care

The field of HIV is rapidly and continually changing with the addition of new anti-retroviral drugs and drug classes that are highly susceptible to drug interactions and adverse effects. For close to 20 years, two Canadians—pharmacist **Alice Tseng**, of the Immunodeficiency Clinic at the Toronto General Hospital, and **Michelle Foisy**, HIV Clinical Pharmacist of the Northern Alberta Program and professor at the University of Alberta, Faculty of Pharmacy—have been at the forefront of collecting the most up-to-date information on HIV drug therapy to help clinicians and pharmacists from around the world better serve their HIV-infected patients. Their *HIV Drug Therapy Handbook* and website are recognized as the leading international authoritative resources on HIV drug information.

The handbook and accompanying website were developed to address and consolidate many of the gaps identified in the rapidly expanding field of HIV. They serve as a centralized repository for current HIV drug information for healthcare professionals with a main focus on drug interactions and to promote safe and rational prescribing of antiretrovirals.

The handbook was launched in 1992 as a 14-page pocket-sized publication with only three antiretrovirals from one drug class. By 2010, the ninth edition had grown to a 550-page manual with an accompanying CD-ROM. Fully referenced, in-depth information on 24 antiretrovirals from seven different classes is included (with a total of 1,544 references) as well as 19 tables on drug interactions. The website (www.hivclinic.ca) was launched in 2000 and houses the



Left to Right: Alice Tseng; Michelle Foisy

handbook as well as 75 patient medication fact sheets in English and French, and sections for provincial and national pharmacist groups to promote networking. It is updated quarterly and has received more than half a million hits since its inception. An international independent published review of HIV drug interaction websites ranked this website as one of the top in the world. The site is fully accessible, free of charge and does not require any user registration or passwords.

"I truly cannot think of two more dedicated and deserving individuals for this award," noted Christine Hughes, Associate Professor & Chair of the Pharmacy Practice Division at the University of Alberta. "The quality of the handbook

and website speaks to the commitment to excellence that both Alice and Michelle have demonstrated for years in the care of HIV-infected patients, and the translation of knowledge to other healthcare professionals. This type of work is essential in promoting the profession of pharmacy as well as improving the quality of life of Canadians living with HIV."

The award judges agreed wholeheartedly. "Your body of work in HIV care has rightly garnered you international recognition," said one. "Your dedication to evidenced-based care has improved the health of patients around the world and enabled pharmacists to elevate their roles on multidisciplinary teams. 'Congratulations' is the least we can say."

—Anne Bokma

SPONSORED BY

