



# The Canadian HIV and Viral Hepatitis Pharmacists Network (CHAP)

The Canadian HIV and Viral Hepatitis Pharmacists Network (CHAP) was formed in January, 1997, and is comprised of pharmacists involved in both mono and/or co-infection with HIV and viral hepatitis practice across Canada. CHAP members meet on an annual basis, communicate regularly through e-mails, and collaborate on a variety of projects and publications.

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## WINTER 2019 NEWSLETTER

### NEWS FROM THE CHAIR

**Mike Stuber**  
Chair, 2019/2020

The year is rapidly drawing to a close but the CHAP executive is working hard once again to prepare an enjoyable and informative annual general meeting in Quebec City. Our 2020 AGM will be held on Wednesday April 29<sup>th</sup> at the Quebec City Convention Centre. As usual our meeting will be hosted as an ancillary event preceding the CAHR Conference (April 30<sup>th</sup>- May 3<sup>rd</sup>). Accommodations will be at the Delta Quebec City. For those of you not attending the CAHR conference we will have a reservation code sent out soon so you can still get a conference rate.

Details on CAHR website:

<https://www.cahr-acrv.ca/conference/>

To ensure we provide a meaningful agenda we ask you to **please complete the following survey by the end of the**

year. Thank you for your help and we look forward to seeing you in Quebec City. **LINK TO SURVEY:** <https://hes32-ctp.trendmicro.com:443/wis/clicktime/v1/query?url=https%3a%2f%2fwww.surveymonkey.com%2fr%2fFMGDWDV&umid=ebdf7c9f-208c-4ae5-9940-7d2f02a3825d&auth=264e636f8a7899a1bca3b66cba6e4e44ed141273-1af059e45082b8a88e9a58c0b66eab3e16f3f3b6>

*Check out Mike Stuber's article in The CATIE Exchange on the importance of community pharmacists in HIV care.* [http://blog.catie.ca/2019/09/09/community-pharmacists-underutilized-resources-in-the-hiv-care-team/?utm\\_source=CATIE+Email+Subscriptions&utm\\_campaign=7fcb8149b9-tce\\_email\\_en\\_091119&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_ae993f6577-7fcb8149b9-45817171](http://blog.catie.ca/2019/09/09/community-pharmacists-underutilized-resources-in-the-hiv-care-team/?utm_source=CATIE+Email+Subscriptions&utm_campaign=7fcb8149b9-tce_email_en_091119&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_ae993f6577-7fcb8149b9-45817171)

### WELCOME TO ALL THE NEW CHAP MEMBERS

- **Laurence Messier**  
[laurence.messier@muhc.mcgill.ca](mailto:laurence.messier@muhc.mcgill.ca) is a new pharmacist at the Chronic

Viral Illness Service, McGill University Health Centre.

- **Linda Methot**  
[linda.methot@kingstonhsc.ca](mailto:linda.methot@kingstonhsc.ca) works at the ambulatory care site of Kingston Health Sciences Centre. Our HIV clinic has not had pharmacist involvement in a couple of years and they would like to revive this. She would love to ask members about their role in clinics.
- **Claude Charbonneau**  
[ccharbonneau@hsnsudbury.ca](mailto:ccharbonneau@hsnsudbury.ca) is the new pharmacist with the Haven program in Sudbury.
- **Evelyn Low**  
[elow@providencehealth.bc.ca](mailto:elow@providencehealth.bc.ca) is a new pharmacist at St. Paul's Hospital, Vancouver. Evelyn worked previously in an outpatient cardiology setting and the pharmacy team is excited to have her join the group.

## WELCOME TO CHAP'S NEWEST WORKING GROUP MEMBER

### **Jodi Symes – Saint John Hospital, NB**

Jodi joined the Saint John Regional Hospital HIV clinic in 2010 as a temporary assignment to cover an unexpected vacancy. During a short period of time she developed a strong interest and enthusiasm for these patients. Our clinic is small with approximately 120 patients and we see around 6 patients a week. Our clinic is multidisciplinary and has 2 infectious disease physicians, an RN, a social

worker, a dietitian, a psychologist, and a pharmacist. In addition to HIV care we also provide primary care as many of our patients do not have a family physician. I find that my background in cardiology, diabetes and community pharmacy an asset and it augments the care we provide to our patients.

*CHAP currently has 21 working group members. General members can submit an application for inclusion in the CHAP working group if they are interested. We are looking for working group members from the Yukon, NWT or Nunavut!*

## UPCOMING CONFERENCES

**9<sup>th</sup> Canadian Symposium on Hepatitis C Virus & Canadian Liver Meeting – Feb 28 – Mar 1, 2020, Montreal, QC**  
<https://www.canadianlivermeeting.ca/>  
Early Registration Deadline December 18, 2019

**10<sup>th</sup> International Workshop on HIV & Women March 6-7, 2020, Boston, MA**  
<https://www.virology-education.com/event/upcoming/10-international-workshop-hiv-women/>  
Registration Deadline Jan 5, 2020

**CROI 2020 – March 8-11, 2020 at the Hynes Convention Center, Boston, MA**  
<http://www.croiconference.org/>  
Early Registration Deadline January 28, 2020  
Registration Deadline February 12, 2020

The annual Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections (CROI) brings together top basic, translational, and clinical researchers from around the world to share the latest studies, important developments, and best research methods in the ongoing battle against HIV/AIDS and related infectious diseases.

**Canadian Association of HIV Research (CAHR) April 30-May 3 2020, Quebec City, QC**

<https://www.cahr-acrv.ca/future-cahr-conferences/>

Abstract Submission Deadline Dec 20, 2019

Early Registration Deadline March 15, 2020

**HIV & Hepatitis in the Americas – April 23-25, 2020, Buenos Aires, Argentina**

<http://www.hivhepamericas.org/>

**The 21<sup>st</sup> International Workshop on Clinical Pharmacology of HIV, Hepatitis, and Other Antiviral Drugs - May 12- 14, 2020, New York, NY**

<https://www.virology-education.com/event/upcoming/antiviral-pk-2020/>

Abstract Submission Deadline March 27, 2020

Early Registration Deadline Jan 12, 2020

The 2020 program will cover topics fundamental to the optimal use of antiviral therapy including drug-drug interactions, pharmacokinetics of investigational agents and existing drugs, pharmacodynamics, drug dosing in underrepresented populations, and regulatory considerations. It will be at

the New York Marriott at the Brooklyn Bridge.

**International Liver Congress (EASL) – April 15-19, 2020, London, UK**

<https://ilc-congress.eu/>

Early Registration Deadline January 14, 2020

**HIV Update: Contemporary Issues in Management – May 28-30, Boston, MA**

<http://hivupdateboston.com>

**International Workshop on HIV Pediatrics – July 3-4, 2020, San Francisco, CA**

<https://www.virology-education.com/event/upcoming/international-workshop-hiv-pediatrics-2020/>

**International Workshop on HIV and Transgender People – July 5, 2020, San Francisco, CA**

<https://www.virology-education.com/event/upcoming/international-workshop-hiv-transgender-people-2020/>

**23<sup>rd</sup> International AIDS Conference – July 6-10, 2020, San Francisco & Oakland, CA**

<https://www.aids2020.org/>

Abstract Submission Deadline January 14, 2020

Late Breaker Abstract Deadline April 15, 2020

Early Registration Deadline January 15, 2020

**2020 Infectious Diseases Society for Obstetrics and Gynecology (IDSOG) Annual Meeting – August 13-15, 2020, Boston MA**

<https://idsog.org/annual-meeting>

**HIV Drug Therapy Glasgow 2020 – October 4-7**

<https://www.hivglasgow.org/>

**11<sup>th</sup> International Workshop on HIV & Aging – October 15-16, 2020, New York, NY**

<https://www.virology-education.com/event/upcoming/international-workshop-hiv-aging-2020/>

**ID Week 2020 – October 21-25, 2020, Philadelphia, PA**

<https://idweek.org/past-and-future-events/>

Check out the CAHR travel awards program for help with funding to go to HIV meetings! <http://www.cahr-acrv.ca/hcp-travel-awards-competition/#conditionsoffunding>

### **2019 Canadian Association of HIV Research - HCP Travel Award Competition Recipients that are part of CHAP**

1. Alice Tseng – CROI (Conference of Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections)
2. Pierre Giguere & Dominic Martel – 20<sup>th</sup> International Workshop on Clinical Pharmacology of HIV, Hepatitis and other Antiviral Drugs
4. Jennifer Hawkes – 10<sup>th</sup> IAS Conference on HIV Science
5. Carly Pozniak – 17<sup>th</sup> European AIDS Conference

### **REMINDER:**

**CHAP AGM – April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020 Quebec City**

## **CHAP NATIONAL OBSERVERSHIP PROGRAM**

A request for funding renewal has been submitted to Gilead for continuation of the Observership program into 2020. When funding has been confirmed, the next call for applications will be sent via the CHAP listserve. As a reminder, this program is open to both experienced clinicians who are interested in gaining exposure to a different area of HIV practice, or pharmacists new to HIV who wish to establish or expand their practice in HIV and/or HCV. The hope is that applicants granted an observership will stay in this field for at least a few years in order to build on their experiences, become more involved with CHAP, and perhaps even serve as preceptors for future Observerships.

### **CHAP Observership with Linda Robinson Oct 1-2, 2019 (Sarah Zorzit):**

In early October 2019, I travelled from Sault Ste Marie to Windsor to spend a wonderful two days with Linda Robinson and the HIV clinic team at the Windsor Regional Hospital. This opportunity was the best fit for my HIV learning needs, as the Sault Area Hospital recently opened out an outpatient pharmacy in 2017. We

are currently looking for ways to expand our pharmacy to more specialty niches, as we currently serve the oncology population. An HIV specialized pharmacist became an area of need when we welcomed our infectious disease doctor, Dr. Castellani, to the Sault Area Hospital in 2017/2018.

The pre-observership survey helped me identify specific learning goals for my time with Linda. Some of my goals included: learning the workflow and pharmacist role at the Techumseh-Bying Clinic Pharmacy, review key HIV resources commonly used by the pharmacist, see resistance test reports and observe how this is used to change antiretroviral regimens, and determine how to best encourage and track compliance among our patients. Linda went above and beyond to use our time effectively and everyone at the clinic was so welcoming to learners.

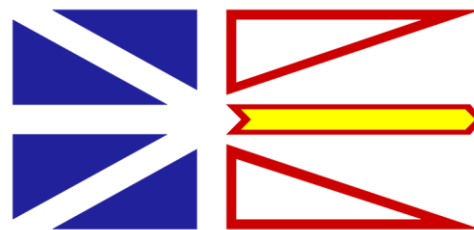
By the end of the two days, I had a clear framework in mind for how we could expand and develop the role of a HIV pharmacist at the Sault Area Hospital as well as use our current outpatient pharmacy to maximize care for these patients. It was also great to meet Linda so I can reach out to her with future questions and possibly have her come speak to our clinic staff. I hope to initiate this framework when I return from parental leave in 2021, however our staff seem very excited about the future possibilities. Linda also encouraged me to seek an AAHIVP certification, which would be a great learning occasion for myself and any other pharmacist interested on our team. All this thanks to the CHAP Observership opportunity that was provided to me, I am very grateful.

### **CHAP Observership with Pierre Giguere (Erin Ready)**

This fall, I travelled to Ottawa for the CHAP National Observership Program with Pierre Giguere. It didn't take long for me to realize how fortunate I was to have been able to take part in this program. Pierre is a fantastic teacher who clearly has an excellent rapport with his patients and colleagues; I really appreciated how much time he dedicated to teaching to ensure that my learning experience was valuable. By the end of the observership, my learning objectives pertaining HCV were not only met, but my HIV knowledge was also enhanced through discussions we had on current trends in HIV research and care. Last but not least, Pierre also taught me a lot more about CHAP itself and the opportunities that exist to become more involved with CHAP in the future. Many thanks to Pierre and to CHAP for this excellent learning opportunity!

## **NEWS FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY**

### **NEWS from Newfoundland**



❖ **From the Provincial HIV Program, Eastern Health, St. John's (Debbie Kelly)**



Things in our clinic have been pretty stable this past year. We're looking at getting into HCV treatment for our co-infected patients as the wait for hepatology has been unacceptably long, so this may be something we get into in 2020. We hosted the Atlantic HIV education conference in Sept and as part of our presentation we reviewed our clinic statistics – proud to say 97% of our patients are on treatment, and 94% are undetectable! If we could just get testing more widely available we'd be in good shape. We've had a couple new diagnoses from Labrador this year -- with terrible linkage to care -- which makes me very nervous that we are missing cases as result of problems with HIV and HCV testing access across our province.

Lots happening on the HIV testing front here... for our second year participating in this initiative, I trained a group of nurses and nurse practitioners for National HIV testing day to increase our testing efforts in June. Unfortunately, we still struggle with a lack of policy and standards for ongoing/regular POCT in NL (and the Atlantic provinces). I was part of a CIHR-funded Best Brains Exchange held in Halifax back in June where we met with the Atlantic provinces' Chief Medical Officers to discuss our challenges with STBBIs (ie. outbreaks and lack of testing options), and there is interest in collaborating to move the STBBI agenda forward so that is definitely something to look forward to. Some of you may be aware that we have received funding from CIHR to conduct the APPROACH 2.0 study –

this is the follow up study to APPROACH, which will evolve to develop, implement and scale up a pharmacist-testing model for HIV, Hepatitis C and Syphilis. Funding was received as part of a large team grant led by REACH, which has 5 projects, all in various stages of development and implementation. We anticipate rolling out the APPROACH 2.0 study in 2020, in 3 provinces: NL, NS (led by Tasha Ramsey), and AB (led by Christine Hughes). So stay tuned for more info on that! Meantime, I'm really pleased to see the pharmacist-testing model being piloted in other areas as well – the OHTN has been working with the AIDS Ministry to implement a pilot in downtown Toronto and Ottawa. I recently returned from doing training in Toronto and Ottawa ... I'm so proud to have worked with this amazing team and look forward to their launch soon! Lots to be thankful for and more to look forward to next year.

Hope everyone has a safe, relaxing and joyous holiday season!

## NEWS from Nova Scotia



❖ **From the QEII Health Sciences Center Infectious Diseases Clinic, Halifax** (Tasha Ramsey)

Please refer to the summer 2019 newsletter for the most recent updates. I am on parental leave until August 2020 and Sarah Burgess (also a CHAP member) is covering my HIV responsibilities while I am away. I hope to make it to CAHR and the CHAP working group meeting this year- so hopefully I will see you all then!

## Nouvelles du Québec

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### ❖ From the McGill University Health Centre, Montréal

*(Alison Wong on behalf of the Chronic Viral Illness Service (CVIS) pharmacy team)*

We are proud to announce that we received a visit from the CPRB accreditation team to assess the HIV Advanced (Year 2) Pharmacy Residency Program, which is a joint UHN/MUHC program. We believe that the visit went smoothly and we hope to share with you positive results in the near future (fingers crossed)!

Laurence Messier, our new pharmacist recruit has been very active! She presented 2 posters at the PK workshop in the Netherlands, May 14-16 entitled High incidence of drug-drug interactions with hepatitis C direct-acting antivirals in patients hospitalized during their treatment

(MONTREAL-C) and IV PPIs and H2 antagonists did not thwart response to ledipasvir or velpatasvir. They are also planning to submit the first study for publication in the near future.

Katherine Mousseau is also very involved in the solid organ transplant sector. Katherine's extensive experience at the Chronic Viral Illness Service has proven to be complementary to last year's residents' project. They completed a pilot study to implement a pharmacist in an outpatient solid organ transplant clinic with Nancy Sheehan as the faculty director and Christian Coursol a co-clinical director. The team is hoping to present the abstract at the American Transplant Congress in Philadelphia in 2020.

This year, Benoît Lemire, Katherine, Nancy and Dominic Martel (from the CHUM) are collaborating with 5 residents on a scoping review on the pharmaceutical care of patients with HIV who receive a solid organ transplant. They will also describe the CHUM and CUSM experiences. To complete the research team, Anne-Julie Frenette is also a co-faculty director of the research project. We will give you an update of this interesting project throughout the year!

### **Publications:**

Kronfli N, Linthwaite B, **Sheehan NL**, Hardy I, Cox J, Lebouché B, de Pokomandy A, Frenette C, Roger M, Klein MB. Delayed linkage to HIV care among asylum seekers in Québec, Canada. BMC Public

Health (accepted for publication, in press).

David PM, Robert E, **Wong A, Sheehan N.** The relational dimensions of pharmaceutical care : Experience from caring for HIV-infected asylum seekers in Montreal. *Res Social Adm Pharm.* 2019 Sep 3. pii: S1551-7411(19)30185-8.

Tseng, Alice L.; **Wong, Alison Y.J.**; McLelland, Cassandra J, Walmsley SL. Drug interactions are not always predictable the curious case of valproic acid and dolutegravir and a possible explanation. *AIDS* 2019; 33(10):1677-1679.

❖ **From the Centre Hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal (CHUM), Montréal** (Dominic Martel on behalf of the CHUM HIV pharmacists - Mathieu Laroche, Suzanne Marcotte, Marie-Pierre Marquis, Dominic Martel, Rachel Therrien)



It has been an interesting year for all of us with many highlights. Many of our research projects are now almost completed and we were able to submit many abstracts at different conferences. Here is the list and some links if you are interested in

knowing more about some of our work.

### **Projects and Publications:**

This pharmacy residency project will have an oral presentation at the London fast-track cities 2019 conference in September 8-11, 2019:

Bouchard A, Bourdeau F, Taillefer VT, Roger J, Jean Baptiste François J, Schnitzer M, Wang G, Klein M, Tremblay C, Sheehan NL and Therrien R. Predicting factors of detectable viral load in HIV patients: the PREDICTED-HIV Study.

Viral hepatitis related projects:  
Messier L, Verreault V, Arbour P, Trudeau C, Marcotte S, Sheehan NL, Martel-Laferrrière V, Bally M, Larocque-Laplante L and Martel D. High incidence of drug-drug interactions with hepatitis C direct-acting antivirals in patients hospitalized during their treatment. 20th International Workshop on Clinical Pharmacology of HIV, Hepatitis & Other Antiviral Drugs. May 14-16, 2019. Noordwijk, the Netherlands. Abstract 41.

Here are some links from NATAP regarding this study:

[http://natap.org/2019/Pharm/Pharm\\_06.htm](http://natap.org/2019/Pharm/Pharm_06.htm)

[http://natap.org/2019/Pharm/Pharm\\_29.htm](http://natap.org/2019/Pharm/Pharm_29.htm)

Verreault V, Trudeau C, Arbour P, Messier L, Marcotte S, Sheehan NL, Martel-Laferrrière V, Bally M, Larocque-Laplante L and Martel D. Short-term intravenous proton pump inhibitors and histamine H2 antagonists do not negatively affect



sustained virologic response in hepatitis C cirrhotic patients treated with ledipasvir or velpatasvir containing antiviral regimens: a case series. 20th International Workshop on Clinical Pharmacology of HIV, Hepatitis & Other Antiviral Drugs. May 14-16, 2019. Noordwijk, the Netherlands. Abstract 42.

Here are some links from NATAP regarding this study:

[http://natap.org/2019/Pharm/Pharm\\_08.htm](http://natap.org/2019/Pharm/Pharm_08.htm)

[http://natap.org/2019/Pharm/Pharm\\_31.htm](http://natap.org/2019/Pharm/Pharm_31.htm)

Messier L, Verreault V, Arbour P, Trudeau C, Marcotte S, Sheehan NL, Martel-Laferrrière V, Bally M, Larocque-Laplante L and Martel D. High incidence of drug–drug interactions with hepatitis C direct-acting antivirals in patients who have been hospitalized during their treatment. 8<sup>th</sup> Canadian Symposium on HCV. May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2019, Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

Boutin CA, Adam JP, Martel D, Doucet S and Martel-Laferrrière V. Risks of hepatitis C virus reactivation in a real life population of oncology patients treated in an academic centre. Canadian Liver Meeting 2019. May 24-26, Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

S. Brissette, LC. Juteau, V. Martel-Laferrrière, J. Parent, A. Roy, N.Soucy, B. Kotsoros, S. Marcotte, D. Martel, R. Therrien, I. Thibeault, C. Wartelle-Bladou. Implementation of an ECHO Hepatitis C Program in a large University Hospital: Opportunity to increase access to

HCV treatment for drug users and provide advice in addiction. P143. 2018 CSAM Annual Meeting and Scientific Conference, October 25-28, 2018, Vancouver, British Columbia.

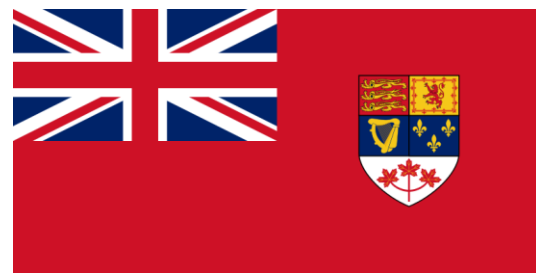
V. Martel-Laferrrière, A. Roy, N. Soucy, S. Brissette, M.-C. Chayer, L.-C. Juteau, B. Kotsoros, D. Martel, R. Therrien, I. Thibeault, C. Wartelle-Bladou. Implementation of the first French speaking ECHO® hepatitis C program in a large tertiary – quaternary care university hospital: participants’ satisfaction, knowledge and self-confidence after year 1. P2-122. Global Hepatitis Summit 2018 (16th International Symposium on Viral Hepatitis and Liver Disease), June 14-17, 2018, Toronto, Ontario.

We have other projects in the pipeline, but I will let you know more next time!

As you can see, we have been busy. Next steps are to submit all these results for final publication!

Hope to see you all next year in Quebec City, a wonderful city!

## NEWS from Ontario



❖ **From Ottawa** (Pierre Giguere)

You may have heard me talking about our new EMR system that was

implemented last June. It was quite a change as my Institution implemented a new schedule for pharmacy and reshuffled the way we are providing clinical services. Since, things have slowly improved but we are still facing many challenges. We are hopeful that 2020 will fix most of the remaining issues.

From a HIV perspective, we were sad to learn of the retirement of one of our physicians, Dr Corrin. Dr Corrin has worked at Health Canada and at WHO in the HIV field. He will be missed by the team and his patients. Very timely, Dr McGuinty has just started an HIV practice, so no one will be left behind! Business wise, the clinic load is expanding, as more patients are coming in than leaving. I am quite busy in assessing treatment simplification, particularly in experienced patients. Less PI, more integrases & doravirine.

Lastly, I had to pick up the HCV workload as we lost the funding for the pharmacist who was in that position for a few years. It is interesting to note the uptake of glecaprevir/pibrentasvir over the last 6-12 months.

I am looking forward to meeting you all in my native city at our next AGM.

❖ **From Toronto General Hospital, Toronto** (Alice Tseng)

We've had a few more staff changes (comings and goings) but the main core of staff are still here. Recruitment has started for Sharon Walmsley's CHANGE-HIV study, which is a geriatric (>65 yo)

cohort study involving sites from Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver. <http://www.hivnet.ubc.ca/clinical-trials/ctn-314-change-hiv/> There is great interest in the community in this study.

**UHN/MUHC HIV residency program.** The residency underwent accreditation by the Canadian Pharmacy Residency Board the first week of November. Surveyors were impressed by the level of support from clinic staff, quality of interdisciplinary care, and roles of the pharmacy resident at both sites. The board will provide a final recommendation on accreditation status in the new year.

**HIV drug interaction booklet (2019 edition) – now available!** Hard copies of the spiral-bound booklet on antiretroviral DDIs with colour-coded summary are now available for distribution. New/revised sections include DAAs, chemotherapy, hormone replacement and gender-affirming hormone therapy, osteoporosis medications, transplant drugs, and vitamins/herbals/body building supplements. Electronic versions of the English and French booklets are posted on the clinic website at: <https://hivclinic.ca>

❖ **From Windsor** (Linda Robinson)

Well, we finally got our new home for our clinic in Windsor. We had abruptly been closed due to a mold problem in the early part of the year and were temporarily located in a makeshift area of the hospital where we operated our pharmacy out of 2 patient exam rooms. This lasted

until September but I am pleased to say that our new home is wonderful. There is a pharmacy space that is unlike any we've had before and a great office/counseling room for Sheri and I to work out of. We feel very lucky.

You may have heard a rumour that I retired, which I actually did in May. However, I came out of retirement in July (LOL) but only in a 1 week a month capacity. This has worked out very well for Sheri and I as well as for the hospital. Sheri is the main pharmacist now but will have me for back up so that the pharmacy department does not have to train anybody else in this area for now. Basically, we have swapped schedules with her working 3 weeks and me working 1 per month. It's a win win for all and I still get to see patients that I've known and loved for a long time. We are both in the process of obtaining (renewing in my case) our AAHIVP certification as well, so 2020 will be an exciting year for us in our new home.

I am also still trotting around the country educating new treaters, primarily on HIV resistance. There is a new surge of interest in this area as some of the newer people coming into the practice of HIV medicine don't have the experience from the earlier era when resistance was much more at the forefront of issues in practice, yet they are inheriting long term patients with complicated ARV past history. I am excited to share this knowledge, as you all know that it has been a favourite area for me for many years.

On the provincial front, the Ontario HIV Pharmacists Education Day is scheduled to be held on Dec 12 in Toronto for our 11th year! Once again we have a great agenda set up which does include a 90 minute segment on medical cannabis in HIV. We felt that it was appropriate to include this because all Ontario pharmacists are expected to have taken a course in medical cannabis before renewal of licensure in March 2020. We are trying to add to this knowledge base by going one step further in seeing how medical cannabis can apply to our practices. We look forward to a great day of learning.

Looking forward to seeing all in Quebec City in April! Happy Holidays to all!

❖ **From The Positive Care Clinic, St. Michael's Hospital, Toronto**  
(Deborah Yoong)

Everything is status quo here at St. Michael's, although we have officially merged with 2 other hospitals (St. Joseph's hospital and Providence) and collectively are known as Unity Health Toronto. With 2 weeks left to 2019, I thought I'd share some of our numbers and stats because we're pharmacists and we all love numbers right? We had 418 patients booked as a new patients to our clinic, with an almost 25% no-show rate (317/418). For follow-up visits there was a 16% no-show rate (2768/3307). We saw 99 new patients for PrEP and there were 748 visits for PrEP follow-up. And finally, we had 209 individuals referred from the ED for PEP follow-up.

We continue with 5 ID physicians providing HIV care, 4 full-time plus casual nurses, 3 physicians providing PrEP, 2 specialists (hepatologist and a psychiatrist), and a partridge....I mean, and a social worker. Happy holidays everyone!

## NEWS from Manitoba



❖ **From the Manitoba HIV Program** (Shanna Chan)

In case you missed it: The Winnipeg Blue Bombers WON the 2019 Grey Cup!!!



On a more serious note:

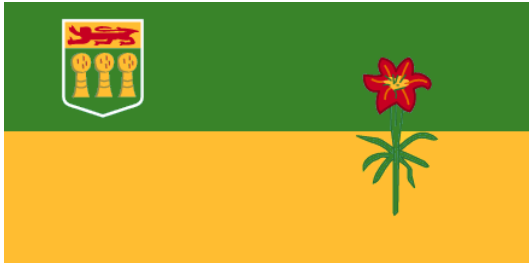
As an HIV Program, we are continuing to advocate for no out of pocket cost for antiretrovirals for Manitobans. A GINORMOUS thank you to Mike Stuber and other folks in Saskatchewan for providing us with their experience and guidance and to Deborah Yoong, et al. for the publication “Public prescription drug plan coverage for antiretrovirals and the potential cost to people living with HIV in Canada: a descriptive study” which highlights the great disparity of out of pocket cost of ARV therapy across Canada. All of this info has been instrumental in our advocacy and we hope to join the rest of the prairie provinces with free ARVs for those living with HIV.

We are continuing to struggle with the crystal meth epidemic and astronomical syphilis rates in Manitoba. With this, the number of new HIV diagnoses and those coinfecting with HCV continues to rise with approximately 50% of new HIV diagnoses reporting a risk factor of IVDU. With the shift from oral opioids and smoking crack to IV crystal meth we are seeing patients who had been adherent on ARV therapy, with suppressed viral loads and able to attend appointments now disengaged in care/lost to care and off their ARVs.

On a more upbeat note:

I received my extended practice license in Manitoba and can prescribe ARVs and other meds in the context of HIV care.

## NEWS from Saskatchewan



### ❖ From Regina (Mike Stuber)

It's been a busy year for Saskatchewan's HIV care team members with a large increase in new cases and the impact of crystal meth on our vulnerable and marginalized patients.

In Regina we are also happy to welcome a new contingent of nursing staff. Although we've said goodbye to colleagues with extensive experience, we are quickly getting up to speed with a number of enthusiastic and patient focused individuals. We have also welcomed a new ID physician, Dr. Stephen Lee back in late spring. Long time HIV nurse, Debbie Rodger who has been working in HIV/HCV outreach in Regina's core as of the last few years will also be retiring (again). She will be greatly missed by everyone here.

With our capacity for cases not keeping up with demand I have been busy with the Saskatchewan HIV Collaborative Team ([skhiv.ca](http://skhiv.ca)) working on some exciting educational projects. We are pleased to be working with the University of Saskatchewan's Continuing Professional Development for Pharmacy Professionals (CPDPP,

<https://pharmacy-nutrition.usask.ca/cpdpp/>) to provide an introductory course on HIV basics, testing, treatment and prevention aimed at healthcare providers including pharmacists, nurses/NPs, physicians and others. Ideally this program will be available at no cost and should be launching in late winter.

Carley and I have also been involved in small workshops across Saskatchewan targeting hot spots of HIV transmission with our latest in North Battleford which declared an outbreak earlier this year.

## NEWS from Alberta



### ❖ From The Northern Alberta Program, Edmonton (Christine Hughes, Michelle Foisy)

It seems to be busier than ever but this will be a short update. We have seen winter come and go here in the north but we can certainly expect it will be back! Here are some updates on behalf of the pharmacist team with the Northern Alberta Program (KEC + RAH sites).

#### Staffing changes:

We are sad to say goodbye for now to Michelle Bender who was a casual pharmacist at both the Royal Alexandra Hospital and Kaye Edmonton Clinic site. Michelle has



moved back to BC to be closer to family. We hope one day she will be back!

#### Connect care is here!

Connect care is now live at our site after much anticipation, training (and trepidation). This is a province wide (AHS) Clinical Information System that will be rolled out in phases over the next several years. Lots of new features to learn and a few bugs to fix but fortunately nothing too overwhelming so far from our clinic's perspective. Thanks to Pam and Domina our Connect care super users for their support!

#### **Publications:**

Foisy M. *Clinical Feature*: HIV infection- Treatment update for community pharmacists. *Pharmacy Practice + Business* 2019 (Nov):6(9):17-21. Available at: <https://issuu.com/ensembleiq/docs/pb-1119?fr=sY2FiOTcxMjU>

Robinson J, Hughes C. Prevention of in utero and intrapartum transmission of human immunodeficiency virus infection. *Journal of the Association of Medical Microbiology and Infectious Disease Canada*. 2018 (Dec): 3(4): 155-160. Available at: <https://jammi.utpjournals.press/doi/pdf/10.3138/jammi.2018.06.26>

Discusses issues in perinatal HIV prevention that are not necessarily in the DHHS guidelines.

#### **Awards:**

Foisy M. Preceptor Recognition Award for "Preceptors Modelling Professionalism", 2019. Faculty of

Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences, PharmD for Practicing Pharmacists.

## **NEWS from British Columbia**



❖ **From St. Paul's Hospital, Vancouver** (Linda Akagi)

The BC HIV program announced some recent changes to its treatment program, including the addition of Biktarvy® to its formulary. Other changes include updated criteria for Descovy® prescribing. These changes are intended to help sustain and provide for additional program growth. Providers will be encouraged to initiate treatment with regimens that are clinically effective, but also have a cost benefit. However, more costly options will continue to be available for patients who have an identified clinical need. The treatment guidelines have also undergone a revision and are anticipated to be released some time before the end of the year.

The HIV PrEP program continues to grow and we have surpassed over 5000 active patients in the program. The pharmacy and other staff involved in the program continue to look for ways to streamline the

workload as the number of program patients has not plateaued.

As far as staffing goes, Jack da Silva has returned to the SPH Ambulatory pharmacy (after a very short retirement) into a 0.5 FTE position. Jack's return has been a bonus for Oz Sin as he is now fully immersed in his role as pharmacy manager and it has been nice to have Jack available for his 'institutional memory'.

Finally, I would like to congratulate Kathy Lepik for her recent recognition from the editors of AIDS. The paper she led entitled

"Emergent drug resistance with integrase strand transfer inhibitor-based regimens" published in June 2017

[https://journals.lww.com/aidsonline/Fulltext/2017/06190/Emergent\\_drug\\_resistance\\_withintegrase\\_strand.9.aspx](https://journals.lww.com/aidsonline/Fulltext/2017/06190/Emergent_drug_resistance_withintegrase_strand.9.aspx)

It was identified as the most highly cited full article in 2018 in the category of Clinical Science published in *AIDS*.

❖ **From the Oak Tree Clinic, Vancouver** (Karen Tulloch *On behalf of the Oak Tree Clinic team* (Stacey Tkachuk, Gloria Tsang, Mazen Sharaf))

While we do not have a lot of updates since the publication of the last newsletter, the Oak Tree clinic did celebrate its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of service with an evening education session for community partners and health care providers. At this event

Stacey presented a session on important drug interactions to consider when prescribing medications to patients LWHIV.

We are excited that BC will now cover Biktarvy® for our patients and we are looking forward to updating you on a number of new studies/initiatives in the New Year.

We extend our best wishes to everyone.

❖ **From Northern Health, Prince George** (Jennifer Hawkes)

The overdose crisis has been greatly affecting us. There continues to be around 20 overdoses per month in northern BC and 3-4 deaths per day in all of BC. The nurse practitioners on our team started an outreach Opioid Agonist Treatment (OAT) drop-in clinic at the Needle Exchange in Prince George in November 2018 that started with 1 half day per week and has expanded to 2 half days per week with approx 40 patients seen each week. Since then our NP time has decreased from 0.8 FTE to 0.1 FTE, but thankfully these clinics continue under a different program. It is a great experience to occasionally cover these clinics, and something I think that pharmacists could be easily trained to do in community (at least to get people started until they see a provider) as many people have so many barriers to stability to attend a scheduled appointment.

We have plans to treat the many Hepatitis C infected patients seen at these OAT clinics, and we are

ecstatic that as of October 30, 2019 pharmacare will accept the nurse practitioner special authority applications to prescribe Hepatitis C treatment.

<https://www.bccnp.ca/bccnp/Announcements/Pages/Announcement.aspx?AnnouncementID=99>

If anyone would like a copy of an advocacy letter that summarizes the special authority criteria from across Canada please let me know.

We had our first CHAP observership pharmacist in the spring of 2019 - which was great opportunity to network and share the HIV and Hepatitis C knowledge.

We had our first hepatitis outreach “clinic” in the community of Tl’azt’en November 6 and we called it a “Liver Health Day” to decrease the stigma in the hopes that it would not be a “Hepatitis C Clinic Day”. We had our Nurse Practitioner, Social Worker,

Pharmacist, “Auntie” from one of our community partners, a peer and this was partnered with the local health center and nurse. We had general liver, health, nutrition and harm reduction information and trivia as well as screening labs, consultations, naloxone training and influenza vaccines. This community has a population of approximately 800 people, but since it is 65km away from Fort St James (a small city of 1,700 people with one community pharmacy, one community hospital and one medical clinic that visiting specialists attend) often people do not travel for health services. The peer was a great addition, she loved being involved, and we can see opportunity for her having a future role with supporting some of our clients through HCV treatment. Food is key to these events and was supplied by the Tl’azt’en health center.

## HIV ADVANCED (YEAR 2) PHARMACY RESIDENCY

Recruitment is open for a resident for our HIV Advanced (Year 2) Pharmacy Residency for 2020. If you know of any pharmacists who may be interested in completing the residency program, please remind them of this program and the due date for applications **is January 30th 2020.**

Alice and I have just gone through the CPRB accreditation survey visit in early November. We are the first Canadian advanced (year 2) pharmacy residency program to go through the accreditation process. It is expected that we will receive an official accreditation award in the coming weeks (retrospective to Salin Nhean's year in 2017/2018).

We have made important modifications to our program to improve the quality and our eager to recruit a new resident into the program.

They can find more information about the application process by consulting our residency program webpage on the CSHP website:

<https://www.cshp.ca/university-health-network-and-mcgill-university-health-centre-accreditation-pending-status>

Residency program website and residency manual (newly updated) at:

<https://hivclinic.ca/residency/>

<https://hivclinic.ca/residency/hiv-residency-program-manual/>

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*Have a magical holiday season and we will look forward to seeing everyone in Quebec City at our next Annual General Meeting.*

*With warm regards,  
Jennifer Hawkes (CHAP secretary 2019-2020)*