



CHAP NEWSLETTER: December 2023

Editor: Sharan Lail (CHAP Secretary 2023-2024)

Mission Statement: *To bring together pharmacists with a clinical and research focus in HIV and/or viral hepatitis to optimize patient outcomes and promote the profession of pharmacy through communications, education, research, and clinical practice.*

Message from the Chair - Tasha Ramsey, 2023-2024

Hello CHAP members!

Thank you all for another excellent year. I am so grateful to be your CHAP Chair for 2023-2024. I appreciate learning from all of you through our CHAP email chain and the projects our working group members are engaged in.

CHAP executive was busy in 2023 with past-Chair Carley Pozniak organizing and leading our Annual General Meeting in Quebec City where we were finally able to connect in person. CHAP chats continued this year with the most recent in November: HCV Resistance and Re-treatment with Dr. Feld (recording available [here](#)). We plan to continue our CHAP Chats in 2024. Planning is also underway for our 2024 CHAP Annual General Meeting in London Ontario on April 24th.

We welcomed Benoît Lemire, Jonathan (Jon) Smith, and Erin Ready as working group members and Linda Akagi will continue her CHAP involvement with emeritus status.

I would like to thank Carley Pozniak for her work in 2022-2023 as Chair, Deborah Young and Alice Tseng for their continued commitment as CHAP co-treasurers, and welcome Sharan Lail as our secretary.

I look forward to what 2024 will bring for CHAP and hope that you all have restful holiday season.

Tasha Ramsey

Updates From Across the Country

- **CHAP observership program.** Coming back after a hiatus due to (you guessed it) COVID, three CHAP members participated in the [Observership Program](#) this year:
 - **Jon Smith, Casey House (Toronto). Observership with Alice Tseng, UHN (Toronto) and Carley Pozniak, Royal University Health Hospital (Saskatoon):**
 My name is Jonathan Smith, and I am a pharmacist at Casey House in Toronto. I had the opportunity to complete a 1-day observership with Alice Tseng at the TGH Immunodeficiency Clinic, and 2 days with Carley Pozniak at Royal University Hospital in Saskatoon. At TGH we had discussions about the utility of pro-viral genotyping, using newer agents in multi-drug resistant HIV and research in general. In Saskatoon I had the opportunity to be involved in a clinic visit with a newly diagnosed pediatric/young adult, which I would not see in my current position. Carley and I also discussed TDM at my request since this is an area of interest for me. This led into unique case discussions including around the utility of CNS penetration efficacy of various antiretrovirals. At both sites we talked about various knowledge resources used in patient care. Although I'm not a new HIV practitioner, I also appreciated the collegial aspect of the observership since I've only been practicing back in Canada since 2018. Post-covid it was great to put a face to two of the names I recognize as HIV pharmacy leaders. Overall, as the sole pharmacy practitioner at a site, this experience introduced me to new patient populations, gave me new ideas for patients similar to mine and allowed me to discuss unique cases on a collegial level. I am thankful CHAP gave me the opportunity to participate in such a great experience.
 - **Janhavi Malhotra, LHSC (London). Observership with Dominic Martel and Rachel Therrien, CHUM (Montreal):**
 I had the wonderful opportunity to be a part of the CHAP Observership Program with Dominic Martel and Rachel Therrien at the CHUM. I was able to gain tremendous insights on the role of a pharmacist across different institutions and their practice in managing HIV/HCV/HBV. They were gracious hosts and helped educate me on the various ways in which serology can be used to improve patient care outcomes. Some of the teaching included the interpretation of HIV genotypes and extrapolation of information to provide sound recommendations on treatment choices. In addition, we also focused on gathering information on HBV/HCV serologies and using clinical information to make appropriate drug therapy choices. Dominic and Rachel also highlighted the role of therapeutic drug monitoring in their practice and its use in managing drug interactions. The observership program is a unique opportunity for new pharmacists in the field of HIV/HCV to learn from experience colleagues. Thank you to the CHAP group for fostering such a unique program.
 - **Becki Rosenbaum, pharmacy.ca (Toronto). Observership with Deb Yoong, SMH (Toronto):**
 Going into the CHAP observership, my learning objectives centred around understanding the clinical side of HIV diagnosis and ongoing treatment. This included learning more about treatment initiation and considerations when starting therapy, monitoring parameters, interpretation of lab values/genotyping results, and gaining experience with resistance testing prior to adjusting therapy. I work in a community

pharmacy where we serve a large population of people living with HIV. My practice mostly involves counseling on new or changed ARV regimens, assessing drug interactions, facilitating financial access to medications and support programs, as well as navigating side effects and adherence issues. Without having an understanding of all that happens in clinic prior to that prescription coming to me, it felt as though I was lacking clarity on what a person living with HIV experiences as they are connected to care and through ongoing treatment.

- During my observership at the Positive Care Clinic at St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto, I observed Deborah Yoong as she helped people in clinic during various stages in their HIV care - some who were new to therapy, some new to therapy in Canada, and some who had been coming to the clinic and managing their HIV for years. We also reviewed and discussed previous cases so I could see how resistance testing is done in practice, and to demonstrate the importance of baseline testing and routine viral load monitoring. I now have much more of an understanding about how different mutations confer associated resistance and how that translates to choosing an appropriate regimen. This experience will undoubtedly strengthen the HIV care I provide. Not only did I broaden my knowledge in the field, but it is also more evident to me how important my current role in community pharmacy is, especially when adherence to therapy and having access to treatment are such crucial factors in treatment success. Thank you for such a great learning opportunity.
- Observership applications for next year will be open in early 2024. The program is open to new practitioners as well as experienced pharmacists looking to gain exposure to new areas of practice. In person, virtual, or hybrid Observerships are available. More information on the Observership program and the application process are available at:
<https://hivclinic.ca/chap/activities.php>
- **HIV/HCV Drug Therapy app:** The updated version of the app is now live at:
<https://hivclinic.ca/app/> As a reminder, some of the new features include Quick Pick links in the Drug Information section so users can quickly find information on Liquid/Crushing information and Renal Dosing for individual drugs. In the Drug Interactions section, you can now search for complete chemotherapy regimens by acronym (e.g., you can type and select "BEACOPP" rather than typing and selecting the individual components of this regimen). A real time-saver!

Alice Tseng

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