

**Conference Report
The Inaugural Regional Oncology Nurses Conference
May 4 & 5, 2006
Kingston**

The Regional Oncology Nursing Council (RONC) in conjunction with the Southeastern Ontario Regional Cancer Program held its first Regional Oncology Nurses Conference in Kingston at the Four Points Sheraton Hotel May 4 and 5th. Dr. Anne Smith, VP, Regional Cancer Services, Southeastern Ontario welcomed the conference delegates. There were over 100 oncology nurses, radiation therapists and physicians from Southeastern Ontario and beyond e.g. Ottawa, Hamilton. Dr. Smith congratulated the Regional Oncology Nurses Council (RONC) for its leadership in supporting education needs of regional nurses. Nurses identified “attending conferences” as their second preferred mode of learning on the RONC’s “Registered Nurses 2005 Oncology Learning Needs Survey: Across the Continuum of Cancer Care”.

The focus of this year’s conference was cancer care continuum from prevention to palliation. There were four plenary speakers, eight concurrent sessions and two breakfast sessions over the two days.

Cynthia Struthers gave the first morning plenary session in Esther Green’s (Chief Nursing Officer & Director of Health Human Resource Planning Cancer Care Ontario) absence. The presentation “Prevention to Palliation Oncology Nursing: The Next Five Years” was provoking and highlighted strategies for meeting the challenges on fighting the chronic disease of cancer e.g. advanced oncology nursing roles. Cynthia Struthers is the principal consultant in her own nurse-consulting firm and was the first Advanced Practice Nurse in cancer pain management in Canada.

Other plenary speakers included, world renowned, Dr. Robert Buckman, author and medical oncologist. His presentation, “Cancer Is A Word Not A Sentence”, addressed issues and stresses encountered by patients newly diagnosed with cancer and the ongoing myths and misinformation about cancer that influence patients and families. Dr. Buckman made himself available to conference delegates following his presentation for book signing, wine and

cheese. Dr. Ray Viola, Palliative Care Medicine Program, Queen's University, provided an update related to the effectiveness of methadone in the management of pain and the inherent challenges this drug presents. Th Page 2 of 2 plenary speaker, Judith Gould, Organizational Development Educator, I General Hospital, provided important strategies on how to combat horizontal hostility, e.g. bullying, offensive and intimidating behaviours of colleagues in the workplace.

Breakfast sessions were well attended on "Management of Lung Cancer" and "Management of Non-Hodgkins Lymphoma".

Nurses, dieticians, pharmacists, and physicians provided new and updated knowledge for concurrent session attendees. Multidisciplinary evidence-based practice issues were presented from more than 30 speakers. Concurrent session themes ranged from prevention, screening, symptom assessment, treatment, supportive care, palliation and vascular access devices.

Many of the presentations will be posted on the regional Oncology Nursing website (www.krcc.on.ca/ronc). Plans are already underway for the next conference to be held in May 2008 in Kingston. It will again take place at the Four Points Sheraton Hotel.

Conference planners welcome your input related to oncology-related topics and speakers. If you have ideas to share please contact the Regional Oncology Nursing Council at RONC-SEO@krcc.on.ca or visit their website www.krcc.on.ca/ronc.