



Abbreviations at end of Communiqué

The Ontario Stroke Network provides leadership and coordination for the Ontario Stroke System. It is funded by the Ministry of Health Promotion, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, and Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario.

#### OSN Board of Directors

Malcolm Moffat - Chair  
Ilsa Blidner – Vice-Chair  
Adam Watson - Treasurer  
Mark Bayley  
Sandra Black  
Gabrielle deVeber  
Sandra Ireland  
Darren Jermyn  
Mary Lewis  
Lori Marshall  
Cally Martin  
Demetrios Sahlas  
Joann Trypuc

## Welcome

In this issue of *Communiqué*, you will learn about our progress on a number of projects. Please be sure to read our Evaluation and Research updates for the latest news. As always, we welcome your input. Please don't hesitate to [be in touch](#).

## Telestroke Program

The Ontario Telestroke Steering Committee (OTSC) endorsed a recommendation to conduct a Telestroke program review. The first phase of the review is a current state analysis. Recommendations will be developed that address current and future needs. The Ontario Telemedicine Network (OTN) has retained a consultant, **Susan Tremblay**, to conduct the review. She has been interviewing key stakeholders and reviewing evaluation data and will present the recommendations next month.

The second phase of the review will involve developing recommendations for the program's expansion beyond tPA/stroke thrombolysis but within the emergency/acute care sectors.

We are pleased to announce that the Ministry had confirmed that funding for Telestroke Neurologist payments will continue for FY 12/13. The funding will be provided through the existing agreement with the Ontario Telemedicine Network according to the current Telestroke on-call rates. The Ministry will continue to develop options for funding beyond FY 12/13 in the context of, and in alignment with the Hospital On-Call Coverage Program.

*Board/Staff Participants: Demetrios Sahlas, Darren Jermyn, Chris O'Callaghan, Linda Kelloway*

## Research Update

The OSN Research Committee [membership](#) was approved by the OSN Board on November 29, 2011. **Sandra Ireland** has been appointed Chair of the Research Committee for a three-year term (2011-2014).

A list of successful projects for the fiscal year 2011/2012 will be disseminated to the OSS and posted on the OSN website in April.

The 2012-2014 Call for Proposals was issued on March 6<sup>th</sup> with the submission deadline of March 30<sup>th</sup>. Research proposal decisions will be made in June, pending confirmation of MoHLTC funding.

On February 28, 2012, **Linda Kelloway and Sandra Ireland** delivered a provincial [video conference](#) to provide an overview of the [OSN Research Grant Administration Policy](#), the Managed Research Cycle and to provide advanced notification of the 2012-2014 Call for Proposals and details on the proposed areas of research focus.

Twenty-five percent of available research funding will be targeted towards two Directed Research Priorities: Optimal [TIA Management](#) and [Investigating Stroke Unit](#)



[Care](#). The remaining funding will go to seven Investigator Driven Areas of Research Focus. The decision was based on OSN's Research Committee recommendation, which was approved by OSN's Board. The recommendations follow MoHLTC's Applied Health Research Question (AHRQ) principles and are in accordance with the OSN Research Grant Administration Policy and Managed Research Cycle.

*The 3rd Annual Research Impact Assessment Report* (formerly titled the OSS Research Program Evaluation Report) will be finalized and circulated to OSS stakeholders by the end of April. The Report summarizes new knowledge and tools created and address the impact of the research findings across the continuum of care as a result of OSN funded research.

*Board/Staff participants: Sandra Ireland, Linda Kelloway, Ruth Hall, Chris O'Callaghan, Deborah VanOosten*

## Knowledge Translation

The Ontario Regional Educators Group hosted provincial videoconference rounds to highlight their work on adopting the *Knowledge to Action* framework by Graham et al (2006) and its application to current and future activities.

The [3rd Canadian Stroke Congress](#) will be held in Calgary, Alberta on September 29-October 2. The call for abstract submissions opened on February 13th and closes on April 2nd.

The 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Stroke Collaborative will be held on **October 15th**. Program planning is underway and is being coordinated by the Ontario Stroke Network and the Heart and Stroke Foundation.

**Gwen Brown**, Regional Stroke Community & Long Term Care Coordinator, Stroke Network of South Eastern Ontario and **Gina Tomaszewski**, Regional Acute Care Coordinator, South Western Ontario Stroke Network have been invited to participate as stroke expert panel members for the development of a new Registered Nurses of Ontario (RNAO) Best Practice Guideline: Transitions in Care.

*Board/Staff Participants: Sandra Ireland, Linda Kelloway*

## Communications and Stakeholder Relations

The [Communications Audit](#) and [Stakeholder Relations Strategy](#) were completed in January; the results confirmed our desire to maintain a focus on communications going forward. The areas of focus for the next nine months are:

- **Build Communications Infrastructure**
  - Including policies, procedures, communications toolkit, coaching and training
- **Update current communication channels**
  - e.g. Website, Member site, Communiqué
- **Signature Reports/Events**
  - Including Annual Report, Release of Stroke Report Card & Evaluation Report/Stroke Month, Annual Stroke Congress

*Board/Staff Participants: Sandra Ireland, Cally Martin, Linda Kelloway, Chris O'Callaghan*



## Evaluation Update

We are pleased to announce that as of FY 2012/2013 **it will be mandatory for the stroke data elements within the CIHI “Special Project 340” to be collected by Ontario Hospitals** (Stroke Symptom Onset Date and Time, CT Scan/MRI scan within 24 hours of hospital arrival, admission to a stroke unit, administration of acute thrombolytic therapy (tPA), prescription for antithrombotics at discharge, stroke prevention clinic referral for patients discharged directly from the emergency department).

The largest ever Ontario acute stroke care audit, featuring more than 17,000 charts, has been completed. The data will be used to update the indicators for the provincial and LHIN stroke report cards. **The 2012 edition of the SEQC Evaluation Report will, for the first time, include data from the Continuing Care Reporting System databases, and the inter-RAI (Resident Assessment Instrument).** The data will be used to provide a description of stroke patients in complex continuing care and long term care facilities. The 2012 report will also include pediatric stroke data and examine stroke care delivery through a gender lens.

Significant progress has been made in the analysis and interpretation of acute stroke “trajectories of stroke care” data. One of the outcomes of this work will be a paper in collaboration with [Dr. Walter Wodchis](#) examining costs associated with the various trajectories. **A paper on the development of the “ABC stroke benchmarks” will be submitted to the International Journal of Stroke by the end of March.** Three posters were presented at the 2012 Internal Stroke Conference (*Facility Stroke Volume and Outcome Relationship; Gender Differences in Stroke Secondary Prevention Care; and, From Data to Action: Improving Knowledge Translation through Ontario's Stroke Report Cards*). Additionally, the LHIN Stroke Report Card was selected for poster presentation at the MoHLTC Health Research Showcase on December 1<sup>st</sup> 2011.

The OSN funded research project “*Evaluating the Quality of Secondary Stroke Prevention Clinic Data*” has been completed. **The final report will be available in April and will be distributed to stakeholders and presented at upcoming OSN meetings. The key finding was that only 13/21 SPCs data can be used with confidence for provincial reporting (because completion of data elements was voluntary).** Current limitations of the SPC database support the need for the OSN to undertake a comprehensive SPC audit in 2012 to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of secondary stroke prevention care in Ontario.

In preparation for the 2012 SPC audit, a webinar demonstration of the new case record form was held on December 5<sup>th</sup> 2011. A revised case record form was pilot tested at six SPC sites. The outcomes from the pilot testing were positive and revealed a user-friendly system with an average data entry time of 15 minutes per chart. **The case record form will be revised based on pilot site recommendations for minor revisions and data clarification. The SPC audit is scheduled to launch April 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

In follow-up to the transition of “**prescribed registry status**” from the Canadian Stroke Network to ICES, **the database has been renamed to the Ontario Stroke Registry (OSR).** Over the next year, the stroke database will be referred to as the OSR (formerly known as the Registry of the Canadian Stroke Network).

*Board/Staff Participants: Mark Bayley, Darren Jermyn, Cally Martin, Ruth Hall, Chris O’Callaghan*

## Ontario Integrated Vascular Health Strategy (OIVHS)

The OIVHS Advisory Council confirmed four focus areas:

- **Understand & Improve The Patient Journey**
- **Improve Quality & Access To The Continuum of Services**



- **Ensure Cost-Effective Use of System Resources/Assets**
- **Develop Supportive Vascular Health Policies & System Enablers**

The Report and Executive Summary is being reviewed by the three founding organizations (Cardiac Care Network, Heart and Stroke Foundation and Ontario Stroke Network). The report will then be sent out for consultation to Ministry, LHIN and vascular stakeholders.

*Board/Staff Participants: Linda Kelloway, Chris O'Callaghan*

## Expert Panel on Rehabilitation and Complex Continuing Care

In support of the mandate of the “ER/ALC and Rehabilitation/CCC Expert Panel” the OSN submitted the preliminary report [“The Impact of Moving to Stroke Rehabilitation Best Practices in Ontario”](#) was submitted to the Ministry in January. The OSN hosted a [provincial videoconference rounds featuring Matthew Meyer](#), discussing this report. **A final report will be submitted in June . OSN is collaborating with Health Quality Ontario on this work.** A Stroke Rehabilitation Resource Portal is being incorporated into the OSN website and will be launched in May.

Members of the OSN Stroke Reference Group have been invited to continue providing advice and feedback to the Ontario Association of Community Care Access Centres on the development of a Stroke Pathway.

*Board/Staff Participants: Mark Bayley, Malcolm Moffat, Chris O'Callaghan, Linda Kelloway*

---

**ABBREVIATIONS:** CIHI=Canadian Institute for Health Information; DAD=Discharge Abstract Database; DC=Discharge DSC: District Stroke Coordinators; ED=Emergency Department; FY=Fiscal Year, HSFO=Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario; HAPS=Hospital Annual Planning Submission; HSAA=Hospital Service Accountability Agreement; ICES=Institute for Clinical Evaluative Science; KT=Knowledge Translation; LHIN=Local Health Integration Network; MoHPS=Ministry of Health Promotion and Sport; MoHLTC=Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care; OSA=Ontario Stroke Audit; OSN=Ontario Stroke Network; OSS=Ontario Stroke System; RPD=Region Program Director; RSC=Regional Stroke Centre; SEQC=Stroke Evaluation & Quality Committee; SPC=Stroke Prevention Clinic; TIA=Transient Ischemic Attack