



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.

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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) has completed its [review of the Telestroke program](#). The Telestroke program review focused on several areas: the planning process to determine needs and priorities for program expansion; alignment of Telestroke with all stroke best practices; governance and accountabilities; physician consultant policies and accountabilities; and, performance metrics and quality assurance. The OTSC has accepted the recommendations and developed an action plan. The OSN Board has received the report and is reviewing the recommendations. OTN has offered project support to facilitate implementation of recommendations. OSN is developing a framework to guide regions/LHINs in confirming and/or indentifying additional Telestroke sites while ensuring access to stroke unit care in collaboration with OTN and Regional Stroke Acute Care Best Practice Coordinators.

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

Research Update

The MOHLTC launched Health System Research Fund (HSRF) Program Awards in July 2012 as per its announcement to establish a new health research agency. The HSRF promotes research and/or knowledge translation and exchange (KTE) initiatives of strategic value to Ontario. The HSRF Program Awards will provide up to a maximum of \$7.5 million over three years to each applicant, awarded through a competitive process. The process is a two stage process: a Notice of Intent (NOI) and a full application submission for those invited. The OSN, in consultation with the OSN Board and stakeholders, submitted its NOI on August 13, 2012. The NOI was submitted in the category of Knowledge Translation and Exchange program, with a directed /policy driven research component, focused on the following areas; a) Access to best practices across the patient journey (e.g. Ontario Stroke Evaluation Program; Quality Based Funding; MOHLTC ER/ALC Rehab Expert Panel) b) Vascular and Brain Health, c) Reaching Ontarians through Telemedicine. We are anticipating a response to the NOI from the MOH in late September/early October regarding an invitation to submit a full application later in the fall.

The scientific review of the research proposals received in response to the 2012-2013 Call for Proposals (issued on March 6th 2012) has been completed and researchers are currently being notified of the outcome of their proposal submissions. A list of all successful proposals will be announced once all research agreement documentation is completed.

[The 3rd Annual Research Impact Assessment](#) was released in June. The key findings were: FY 2010/11 represented the highest amount of increased (by 148%) leveraged investment through external agencies; total number OSN supported of Principal



Investigators and Co-Investigators increased from 43% to 69%; 58% of survey respondents indicated they implemented changes in practice as a result of OSN funded research.

The Research Committee is determining strategies to address the recommendations from the report and will finalize these in the fall.

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

Knowledge Translation

The [3rd Canadian Stroke Congress](#) will be held in Calgary, Alberta from September 29-October 2. Notification of successful abstracts submissions have been released in June. Registration for the conference is now open.

Provincial Stroke Rounds have restarted this fall. The next scheduled rounds is November 7 from 8:00am-9:00am, hosted by the Central East Stroke Network. Details to follow.

The 15th 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. [Registration is now open](#) and a [preliminary agenda](#) can be found on the HSF website...The theme for this year is "Successful Transitions: the Key to Recovery".

The OSN funded research initiative to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of the revised provincial paramedic acute stroke prompt card, led by Dr Ian Stiell titled "Evaluation of the Implementation of the Revised Acute Stroke Medical Redirect Paramedic Protocol in Urban and Rural Settings" is nearing completion. The last patient was enrolled in the study this July and the research team is currently analyzing the data. Preliminary results indicate that paramedics were highly accurate in identifying patients who needed urgent stroke center transport and showed excellent interrater agreement for the criteria. A provincial stroke rounds presentation will be planned upon completion of the study.

Board/Staff Participants: Sandra Ireland, Linda Kelloway

Communications and Stakeholder Relations

The [2012 Ontario Stroke Evaluation Report](#) media release for stroke month was successful, achieving strong television, radio, newspaper and internet coverage through provincial and local channels. The first OSN annual report will be released the week of Sept 17th.

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

Evaluation Update

The Evaluation office has undergone staffing changes this summer. Sarah Meyer left to return to London, Ontario, Kathryn Hodwitz was promoted to replace Sarah Meyer as project manager for the Ontario Stroke Audits, and Shivali Kipali joined us as a research assistant to replace Kathryn Hodwitz.

A part-time epidemiologist (Laura MacLagan) has been hired for 6 months to work on validating the paediatric stroke ICD-10-CA codes in preparation of the next acute stroke audit, and to work on the Ontario Telestroke Steering Committee (OTSC) [Telestroke Program Review](#) evaluation recommendations.



The paper on the development of the “ABC stroke benchmarks” has been submitted to the International Journal for Quality in Health Care.

The 2012 SPC audit was launched on April 18, 2012 technical difficulties since the launch have resulted in slower data entry. As a result the deadline for data collection has been extended to November 11, 2012. As of September 4th, 8,160/19,000 charts have been completed, and 14 out of 41 sites have completed the audit.

Work is progressing between the OSN, MoHLTC and CIHI on establishing a process to collect an indicator of “inpatient rehabilitation intensity” within the National Rehabilitation Reporting System (NRS) database. The goal is to have this indicator collected in fiscal year 2013/14 through a special project approach similar to “[CIHI special project 340 for stroke](#)”. Current work is focusing on examining the feasibility of collecting this data element in routinely collected administrative databases.

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

Ontario Integrated Vascular Health Strategy (OIVHS)

The [Ontario Vascular Health Blueprint](#) was released in August by the Ontario Vascular Coalition (OSN, HSF and CCN). The Blueprint recognizes that an organized, integrated approach is needed to address the common risk factors associated with vascular and other related chronic diseases. A tremendous potential to reduce the burden of these diseases exists by enhancing prevention and disease management in primary care, exploring new approaches to collaborative care and empowering patients.

Over the coming months, the Coalition will start implementing three central initiatives:

- 1. Form a Vascular Health Implementation Steering Committee** of leaders to identify objectives, guide strategy and support provincial and regional implementation. The Committee will initially establish two working groups:
 - i. Vascular Primary Care
 - ii. Knowledge Management
- 2. Form Regional Vascular Collaboratives** to develop LHIN-based strategies to support locally developed initiatives to improve prevention or care activities.
- 3. Form a Patient and Family Panel** composed of patients and caregivers to ensure that Blueprint implementation activities are patient-centred.

A webinar on October 4th 2012, from 11:00 a.m. - Noon will provide more detailed information. To request an invitation to the webinar or volunteer for a work group, please contact Sharon Mytka, Project Manager at smytka@ontariostrokenetwork.ca

Board/Staff Participants: Linda Kelloway, Chris O’Callaghan



Quality Based Funding and Stroke Rehabilitation Recommendations

The final report on “The Impact of Moving to Stroke Rehabilitation Best Practices in Ontario” was released in September. The key finding was that full attainment of the stroke rehabilitation best practices would result in:

1. Improved patient outcomes for Ontario residents who experience stroke, and;
2. Approximately \$20M healthcare dollars made available annually which could be used to support stroke patients and their families remain in their homes and become re-engaged in their communities

OSN is co-chairing the HQO Stroke Quality Based Funding Expert Panel. The objectives of the Expert Panel are:

- To aid Health Quality Ontario (HQO) in developing recommendations for the MoHLTC regarding episodes of care for stroke;
- To aid HQO in recommending definitions for stroke patient groupings with similar clinical management characteristics and utilization profiles;
- To aid HQO in recommending evidence-based standards of care for stroke; and,
- To aid HQO in developing recommendations for the MoHLTC to inform the development of Quality Based Procedure funding mechanisms for stroke (for FY 13/14).

The Stroke Expert Advisory Panel met on August 9th. At this meeting the panel defined the patient population under consideration for this project. The panel also identified the major building blocks of a high quality care pathway for stroke.

The OSN is collaborating with [Ontario Health Technology Advisory Committee](#) in the completion of a stroke mega analysis which will be used to inform the stroke QBF process.

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, HSF=Heart and Stroke Foundation; HAPS=Hospital Annual Planning Submission; HQO=Health Quality Ontario; 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; OTN= Ontario Telemedicine Network; RPD=Region Program Director; RSC=Regional Stroke Centre; SEQC=Stroke Evaluation & Quality Committee; SPC=Stroke Prevention Clinic; TIA=Transient Ischemic Attack