

Cancer Program News

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Margaret Ann Morrison
Senior Director



Drew Bethune
Medical Director



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You can find archived
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[website](#) and on SharePoint

Story ideas? Email us
cancercareinfo@nshealth.ca

A Message from Cancer Program Leadership

As we continue to evolve as one provincial cancer care team we are pleased to introduce the first issue of our electronic newsletter, *Cancer Program News*. This newsletter will be one way for us to share information and to celebrate our collective successes. The newsletter will be published three times this year in summer, fall, and winter.

We welcome your feedback on topics covered and we invite you to submit information you would like shared and ideas for future topics. Comments, questions, suggestions and news can be emailed to cancercareinfo@nshealth.ca

We hope you enjoy this first issue.

Drew Bethune, Medical Director
Margaret Ann Morrison, Senior Director

Welcome to our new Senior Director

Margaret Ann Morrison officially moved from her previous role as Director of Cancer and Palliative Care for Eastern Zone on May 22, 2018 to become Senior Director of the Nova Scotia Cancer Care Program on May 22, 2018. Margaret Ann replaces Erika Nicholson who resigned earlier in the year to provide leadership in cancer screening at the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer.



Margaret Ann is a graduate of the Victoria General Hospital School of Nursing and Dalhousie University. She began her career in Halifax, working as a Staff Nurse in the operating room. She returned to Cape Breton in 1985 and since then she has held a number of roles including: Staff Nurse, Nursing Supervisor, Manager of Perioperative Services for the Cape Breton Regional Hospital, Director of Perioperative Services for the Cape Breton District Health Authority, and Director of Integrated Health for Community Hospitals.

Margaret Ann's home office will be at the Cape Breton Cancer Centre, but she will travel to other sites as necessary. Over the coming weeks, she will be meeting with cancer teams across the province. You may reach Margaret Ann at margaret.morrison@nshealth.ca or by phone at 902-567-8159 (office) or 902-574- 1897 (cell). Welcome Margaret Ann!

A special thank you to Maureen MacIntyre, Director, Cancer System Integration, who has provided leadership and guidance as Interim Senior Director for the last four months. She stepped in to fill this critical position on short notice and has provided leadership on some important new initiatives.

Strategic and Operational Leadership

Over the last year, Cancer Program leaders have continued work to establish and recruit members for three over-arching teams to guide the Program's strategic and operational planning and decision making, enabling us to respond to both provincial and local needs.

The teams are: Quality and Safety Council, Cancer Patient Family Advisory Council, and the Portfolio Leadership Team. All three are provincial in scope and include members from across the province.

[The Interdisciplinary Quality and Safety Council](#) leads and coordinates the development and implementation of cancer policies and clinical standards, based on the latest evidence and clinical practice, to ensure cancer patients continue to receive consistent, high quality cancer treatment and care – regardless of where they live or receive that care.

Listening to and learning from people, based on their lived experience with cancer is also important for a quality cancer system. Although patient/public advisors have been members of cancer working groups and committees for some time, the creation of a [Patient Family Advisory Council](#), brings us one step further to understanding patients' present and future needs. Fifteen members from across the province include

representatives from communities including: LGBTQ, African Nova Scotians, Adolescent and Young Adult (AYA), First Nations, Metis, persons with disabilities, immigrants, and individuals of various socioeconomic status.

The Quality and Safety and Patient Family Advisory councils provide information and advice to the [Portfolio Leadership Team \(PLT\)](#), the Cancer Program's decision making and implementation body, for review and consideration. This may include standards and guidelines, quality and safety issues, and feedback on the cancer system and its programs from the patient and family perspective. PLT members review and approve policies and standards; work with teams to develop and implement strategic and operational plans; decide on appropriate alignment of resources; identify priorities, best practices; performance indicators; address risks and develop mitigation strategies.

[View the NSCCP Organizational Chart](#)

Take Home Cancer Drug Fund – Retroactive until April 1, 2017

The Take Home Cancer Drug Fund, launched the end of February 2018, means that patients who are prescribed take home cancer drugs will pay no more than four per cent of their net family income for these drugs. Although only introduced this year, it is retroactive to April 1, 2017.

Patients who filled prescriptions for take-home cancer drugs between April 1, 2017 and February 13, 2018 may also be eligible for reimbursement. The deadline for applying for retroactive reimbursement is September 30, 2018.

[More information is available on the NSCCP website.](#) Health care providers or patients who have questions about the fund should speak with their cancer care team or call 1-866-599-2267, option two.

Internal Communications Survey

In the summer and fall of 2017, the Nova Scotia Cancer Care Program asked team members to complete an electronic survey to help guide the development of an internal communication strategy. One-hundred-and-thirty-five people completed the survey.

Respondents answered questions related to: how they currently receive information, preferred frequency and methods of communication, topic areas of interest and other suggestions or feedback they wanted to share. [View a summary of the survey results.](#)

Kudos

- Philip Shaheen, Oncology Pharmacist, Cape Breton Cancer Centre, was presented with the 2017 Best Paper Award on June 3rd by the Canadian Pharmacists Journal for the paper, "Guidelines for Outpatient Cancer Care by Community Pharmacists." This award recognizes the early leadership of Larry Broadfield and the continued work of NSHA's Systemic Therapy Committee. Congratulations to Philip and all who were involved early on and to those who continue the work in this very important area.

- Paramedics Providing Palliative Care at Home Program' was awarded NSHA's 2018 Silver Quality Team Award. The program enhances the palliative and end-of-life experience for patients/families by "bridging" support until the usual care team can take over. It has and continues to reduce the number of times palliative patients have to be transferred to Emergency Departments. Today, close to half of palliative care calls for paramedics result in the patient being able to stay home. Congratulations to Marianne Arab, Manager, Provincial Psychosocial Oncology Program, Palliative and Spiritual Care, and Dr. Alix Carter, medical director of research for Emergency Health Services and EMS division director of Dalhousie Department of Emergency Medicine, their team and many partners for this leading work.
- Congratulations to Dr. Melanie Keats and Scott Grandy from Dalhousie University, and Judy Purcell, NSCCP Prevention Coordinator, who were awarded first prize in the QEII Foundation's Dragon's Den competition for ACCESS - Activating cancer communities through an exercise strategy for survivors. The \$50,000 award and earlier funding of \$10,000 from the Robert Pope Foundation will help integrate physical activity as an important part of the treatment plan for cancer patients and survivors.
- Congratulations to Meg McCallum, Manager, Education, NSCCP Practice Support and Special Projects, who was selected as the 2018 recipient of the Nova Scotia Hospice Palliative Care Association's Leadership Council Award. The award recognizes contributions to the field of palliative care by individuals who are not palliative care staff or physicians. Meg was recognized for her leadership in developing the Nova Scotia Palliative Care Competency Framework as well as other educational resources.

We want your thoughts - What could you stop doing? What might you do instead?

If you are like most of us, there are not enough hours in your work day, and there is always something more we could be doing.

We have two challenges for you: Think about one thing you could stop doing right now. What do you lose if you stop doing it? What do you gain? Next, think about what you could do with that saved time? What new thing could you do that would add value to your role / to the patients you care for?

Email your ideas with the subject line *Things I could stop doing*, to cancercareinfo@nshealth.ca

Cancer Care Program Update | Summer 2018

This is a newsletter for and about the people and issues affected by Nova Scotia's cancer care system. It is produced by the Nova Scotia Cancer Care Program.

We welcome your comments and story ideas. Email us at cancercareinfo@nshealth.ca or call us at 1.866-599-2267.

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