

CARDIOVASCULAR HEALTH & STROKE STRATEGIC CLINICAL NETWORK

Cardiovascular Health & Stroke Strategic Clinical Network Update

All the news from the Cardiovascular Health & Stroke SCN! We welcome your feedback and input, and hope you enjoy our latest issue. Please feel free to share it with any colleagues or friends who might be interested.

“Always believe something wonderful is going to happen. Even with all the ups and downs, never take a day for granted. Smile and cherish the little things and remember to hug the ones you love.”

- Roger Martin, Patient Advisor; See more [here](#)

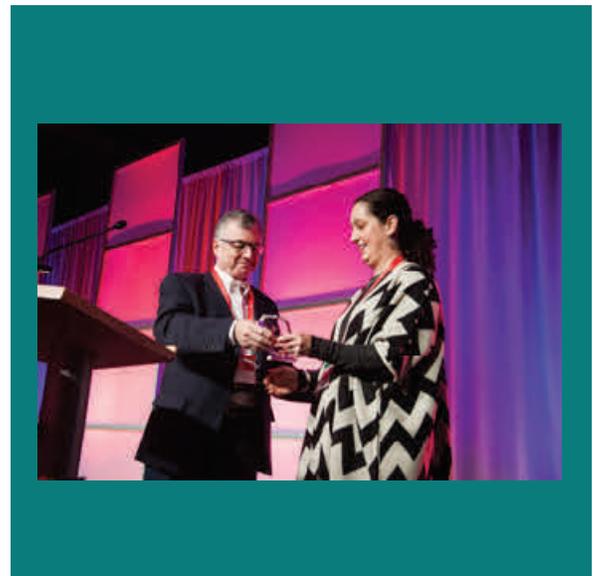
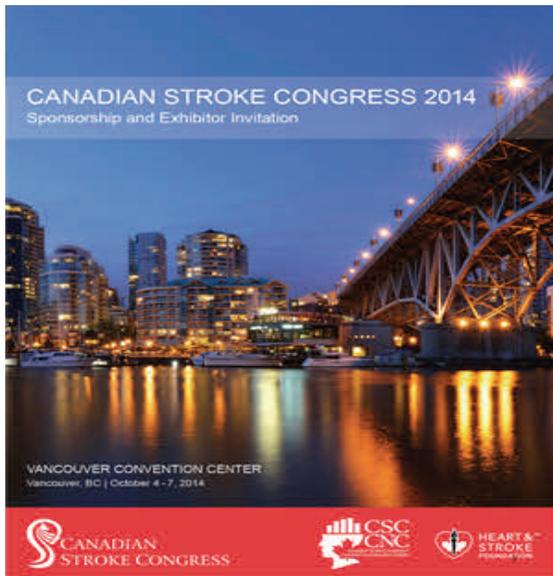
Healthy Holidays: Reduce Your Risk this Holiday Season

The Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada has put together some tips to help us stay healthy and reduce our risk during the holidays. Have a look at this [helpful article](#) for more information!



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Canadian Stroke Congress

At the 2014 Canadian Stroke Congress, Alberta's presence was truly impressive. Clinicians and researchers were there in force highlighting the incredible efforts and gains being made in this province to advance stroke care.

Our SCN's Stroke Action Plan (SAP) receives high honor by being awarded Chair's Award for Impact

The SAP project received national attention and recognition being awarded the Chair's Award for Impact. This award validates years of hard work in stroke care in Alberta as SAP builds on many past successes to further those positive strides. The CvHS SCN wants to congratulate all of the individuals involved at every SAP site, and shares this award with each and every person.

Stroke Distinction Award goes to Calgary Stroke Program

The Calgary Stroke Program received its third Stroke Services Distinction award from Accreditation Canada. Wendy Nicklin, president and CEO of Accreditation Canada further describes this: "Distinction recognizes organizations that excel in stroke care...To Achieve Stroke Distinction is recognition of outstanding commitment to best practices, excellence and leadership in stroke services."

Dr. Andrew Demchuk, Director of the Calgary Stroke Program, received the award for the program, which is one of very few comprehensive stroke programs in the country with this status.



Highlights from Canadian Cardiovascular Congress 2014

Congratulations to Dr. Todd Anderson, Annual Meeting Chair, for a very successful and informative Congress. Some of the highlights included:

Dr. Perry Kendall, British Columbia's provincial health officer, gave the opening address *The Heart of the Matter: Addressing Barriers to Healthy Public Policy*. He urged healthcare providers to lead the way in encouraging government and public action to address health issues that threaten to flood our health system. Lack of action, he warned, could compromise the ability of healthcare providers to cope with the growing surge of health problems in Canadians. Public policy can play a significant role in improving the health of Canadians by creating an environment where the healthy choice is the easy choice. This message is well aligned with the CvHS SCN Vascular Risk Reduction Project and the Knowledge Translation Working Group's messages which serve as a call to action to our partner organizations to engage their member healthcare providers in addressing physical inactivity, tobacco use, poor diets, and evidence-based lipid management to prevent vascular diseases, dementia and other chronic diseases.

The first Cardiac Quality Collaborative brought together individuals from jurisdictions across Canada with an interest in performance monitoring and quality improvement. Alberta and the CvHS SCN are regarded as important contributors to understanding the practicalities of collecting and reporting on quality indicators. Dr. Colleen Norris, the CvHS SCN Scientific Director, presented on patient engagement in designing quality indicators and quality improvement initiatives.

The Canadian Vascular Network held their annual meeting and included a presentation by Louise Morrin, ED for the CvHS SCN, on the experience of engaging patients in network quality improvement and research activities.

Dr. Andrew Pipe, Medical Director of the Prevention & Rehabilitation Centre at the University of Ottawa Heart Institute, gave the Terry Kavanagh lecture for the Canadian Association of Cardiac Rehabilitation, titled *Cardiac Rehabilitation: From Whence to Where*. Based on anticipated population and health system demands, the future of cardiac rehabilitation will include participation in the management of heart failure to prevent readmissions, far fewer stress tests, innovative education methodologies, and integrated chronic disease management strategies. His vision included a hub and spoke model where cardiac rehabilitation programs are the hub and partnerships with public health, recreation departments, community organizations, regional health authorities, primary care teams and employers are the spokes.



Better Care is Cost-effective: Quality as a Core Business Practice



In September 2014, Dr. Brent James visited the province as part of the SCN Connects Conference to speak on the importance of integrating evidence into practice as a quality improvement strategy. In his presentation, Dr. James shares his experience that high-quality care comes with the unexpected benefit of reduced costs.

Dr. James' talk is truly motivating and is both timely and relevant to our goals as a network! He spoke of the systems at Intermountain Healthcare in Utah and how those systems have encouraged new ways of thinking about quality and have led to improved patient outcomes. Take a moment to [hear his talk](#) and become inspired about the possibilities for us here in Alberta!

Choosing Wisely is one of the Alberta Medical Association's priority activities this year

The Canadian Medical Association (CMA) is working with eight medical specialty groups to identify a list of five tests or procedures that may be overused or harmful. Once these lists are developed, the AMA will be approaching the relevant AMA sections to validate them for use in Alberta. The 5 tests and procedures that have been identified for cardiac care are found in the following table.

Here's a Reminder! Choosing Wisely – Five Don'ts for Cardiac Care

Don't perform stress cardiac imaging or advanced non-invasive imaging as a pre-operative assessment in patients scheduled to undergo low-risk non-cardiac surgery.

Don't perform echocardiography as routine follow-up for mild, asymptomatic native valve disease in adult patients having no change in signs or symptoms.

Don't perform annual stress cardiac imaging or advanced non-invasive imaging as part of routine follow-up in asymptomatic patients.

Don't order annual electrocardiograms (EKGs) or any other cardiac screening for low-risk patients without symptoms.

Don't perform stress cardiac imaging or advanced non-invasive imaging in the initial evaluation of patients without cardiac symptoms unless high-risk markers are present.

New Members!

My journey: From a small village in Quebec, son of a dairy farmer and the only one of a family of 9 to get a master's degree. I found the love of my life and we travelled the world with our three children.

As a cardiovascular patient I want to be part of the ground breaking work that is being done to ensure that all that we do is based on the need of the patient.



Roger Martin



Marcie Smigorowsky

I have been passionate about cardiac care since I began my nursing career in the mid '80's. My career has included: CCU staff nurse and clinical nurse educator, air transport for cardiac patients, pacemaker clinic, cardiac rehabilitation and currently Nurse Practitioner for the Cardiac EASE Clinic and the Atrial Fibrillation Program at the Mazankowski Alberta Heart Institute. My interest in participating in the Cardiovascular Health & Stroke SCN evolved as my father experienced a heart attack followed by a stroke and ultimately passed away. I have always been very proud of the work we do but my family's experience helped me realize we still have a lot to learn and how much more we need to do for our patients and families.

Healthy Holiday Eating

Our friends at the American Heart Association have put together a guide to help us make healthier choices this holiday season! For tips and tricks to keep the holiday indulgence under control, have a look at the [Healthy Holiday Eating Guide](#)



Does Choosing Wisely® Make you Happy?

Professor James McCormack, Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences at UBC has released a catchy Choosing Wisely parody of Pharrell Williams' hit song 'Happy'. Take a quick break to check out the [video!](#)

More Information

In the coming months we will keep you posted on the work of our Cardiovascular Health & Stroke SCN. If you wish to learn more, or become more involved, please contact:

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