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SHORT REPORT

Ottawa Cardiac Oncology Program wins 2013 Cancer Quality Council of Ontario Innovation Award

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The Ottawa Cardiac Oncology Program (OCOP) has won the 2013 Innovation Award from the Cancer Quality Council of Ontario. The Innovation Award recognizes the development of novel programs and processes that enhance cancer care in Ontario and that directly affect patients and their families alike.

With the evolution of systemic and targeted therapies in cancer therapy, it has become increasingly evident that damage to the heart can occur as a result of cancer treatment. Although the cardiac toxicities associated with conventional chemotherapy are well known, the short- and long-term effects of targeted agents on the heart are less well understood. The OCOP was established at The Ottawa Hospital in October 2008 by a multidisciplinary team consisting of medical oncology, cardiology, and pharmacy—the first program of its kind in Canada.

The goals of OCOP are to

- streamline referral of patients with cardiac complications related to chemotherapy and targeted therapies.
- gain expertise in the management of cancer therapy–induced cardiotoxicity.
- provide consistent cardiac care.
- further the cardiac oncology field through research and education.

To date, more than 500 patients have been assessed in the program. For patients and their families, navigating the complexities of the cancer care system can be overwhelming. The OCOP provides patients with an integrated approach to cancer therapy, seamless communication between health care providers, and timely access to medical assessment and treatment services, thereby affecting quality of life after treatment. The collaboration that the OCOP fosters results in improved patient satisfaction, better compliance with therapy, and better overall treatment outcomes.



2013 Cancer Quality Council of Ontario Innovation Award recipients and presenters (from left to right): Jeffrey Sulpher [cardiac oncology fellow, Ottawa Cardiac Oncology Program (OCOP)], Sean Hopkins (pharmacist, OCOP), Nadine Graham (research assistant, OCOP), Christopher Johnson (cardiologist, OCOP), Susan Dent (medical oncologist, OCOP), Virginia McLaughlin (chair, Cancer Quality Council of Ontario), and Martin Kabat (CEO, Canadian Cancer Society–Ontario Division).

Dr. Susan Dent, medical oncologist at The Ottawa Hospital and a member of the OCOP team, accepted the award in Toronto, November 20, 2013: "This is a program we have worked on for five years that I am very passionate about. To receive that recognition was very special."

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