We Have A Winner!

Our congratulations go out to Bill Hurley on winning the grand prize for 2011, as the top fundraiser in the province in last year’s campaign. Bill is the leader of the PCCN — Trinity South Prostate Cancer Support Group. For his outstanding efforts, Bill raised over $5000. Bill and Nancy can choose to fly to one of over seventy scheduled WestJet destinations throughout North America, Hawaii and the Caribbean.

We are extremely grateful to our generous supporters at WestJet for offering this fantastic incentive for our Walk participants, and it gives us great pleasure to announce that they have once again offered two tickets to any of their scheduled destinations to the top fundraiser for the 2012 Walk A Mile In His Shoes campaign. In addition to this major prize, several other valuable prizes will also be available this year.

Thank you to Bill Hurley and to all our many volunteers, and thank you to WestJet and our numerous other sponsors who so generously support Walk A Mile In His Shoes, the only charity event that keeps all its funds right here in Newfoundland and Labrador to benefit prostate cancer survivors.

Good luck to all participants in 2012!

Assistance Programs Available

For Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who find themselves in need of medical services, even our universal free health care can get costly. As too many of us know, just getting to and from your doctor’s office runs into major dollars if you happen to live in one of those many areas of our province that are considered ‘rural’. All too often, lack of services in all but the major centres means that we must cover vast distances for diagnoses, treatments, follow-up examinations, etc.

A number of programs are in place that will assist you, if you know about them and if you qualify. One of the biggest of the provincial government’s assistance programs is the Medical Transportation Assistance program (MTAP). According to a recent publication put out by the provincial government, this program has been improved, and now offers more assistance than it did previously. The following text is from a news release issued by the Provincial Government:

To help ease the financial burden of paying upfront for travel for medical services, effective January 1, 2012, eligible residents booking commercial air travel for

(continued on next page)
ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
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specialized insured medical services will now have 50 per cent of economy airfare prepaid prior to travel. Before this change, eligible individuals had to absorb the full cost of airfare initially and be reimbursed afterwards with the portion covered by the Medical Transportation Assistance Program.

“The Medical Transportation Assistance Program is one of the most comprehensive of its kind in Canada, and has been recently expanded to further assist individuals who must travel both within and outside the province for insured medical treatments,” said the Honourable Susan Sullivan, Minister of Health and Community Services. “We recognize the financial hardship that travelling for medical reasons can place on the patient and family and through this program enhancement we hope to reduce that stress.”

The new air travel enhancement complements a recent change to the program that allows patients and their immediate family members travelling for insured medical services by private vehicle to be reimbursed at the rate of 16 cents per kilometre for each additional kilometre in excess of 2,500 kilometres. The Medical Transportation Assistance Program provides financial assistance to those with a valid MCP card who incur travel costs related to required insured medical treatments.

Under the program, specialized medical services include: visits to a specialist; treatments such as chemotherapy, dialysis, and radiation; and, investigations such as nuclear medicine tests, MRI and PET scans.

The Medical Transportation Assistance Program also assists with taxi fares incurred in relation to commercial air travel, scheduled bussing, purchased registered accommodations, and in conjunction with these accommodations, a meal allowance can be claimed for air and road travel in and out of the province.

“Significant investments have been made in the last two years to expand the Medical Transportation Assistance Program,” said Minister Sullivan. “These enhancements will further help to alleviate the financial burden experienced by residents who must travel to receive the specialized medical services they require.”

In Budget 2011 Standing Strong: For Prosperity. For Our Future. For Newfoundland and Labrador, $700,000 was allocated for the enhancement of the Medical Transportation Assistance Program. The Provincial Government is investing approximately $3.8 million in the program in 2011-12.

To raise awareness regarding the recent improvement to the Medical Transportation program a new advertising campaign was launched. The campaign consists of both print advertisements and promotional posters and brochures. For further information about the Medical Transportation Assistance Program and to view the campaign material, please visit www.health.gov.nl.ca/mtap or call 1-877-475-2412.

(Editor’s note: the MTAP is not only for cancer patients, and is not income-related.)

Patients are advised to keep track of dates and kilometres.

OTHER HELP AVAILABLE
Various types of help for patients and survivors may be (continued on next page)

Corrections
The following errors appeared in the previous issue of In Touch:
The toll-free telephone number for the Patient Navigator program appeared incorrectly in some copies. The correct number is 1-855-848-3888.
In a photo caption on page 6, Paula Tessier of the Breast Cancer Foundation was incorrectly identified as a representative of the Canadian Cancer Society.
We regret any inconvenience or confusion caused by these errors. - Editor
ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
(continued from previous page)
found in a number of different places. For example, the Department of Health and Community Services has a brochure available on financial programs.

The Special Assistance Program is a provincial program which provides basic medical supplies and equipment to assist with activities of daily living for individuals living in the community who meet the eligibility criteria for the program. Benefits of the program include:

- medical supplies (such as dressings, catheters and incontinence supplies),
- oxygen and related equipment and supplies,
- Orthotics such as braces and burn garments, and
- Equipment such as wheelchairs, commodes or walkers.

For more information on accessing this service contact your regional health authority.

For younger men who are still in the workforce, Canada Pension Plan offers a disability allowance, which can be used even if you also have coverage through your workplace insurance.

There is a Pharmacy Service dedicated to the Cancer Patient Navigator Program. This is available only in the St. John’s area, but the Patient Navigator can refer patients. This is a “Compassionate Access Program” in which patients may qualify for a drug card. Under this program, nurse visits may be covered, and insurance companies may allow for a co-pay.

The Dr. H. Bliss Murphy Cancer Centre has a Patient Support Fund, which is supported by corporate donors Dominion Supermarkets and North Atlantic Refining. Applications to this fund are assessed by a social worker. The payment is made in the form of gift cards which may be used towards groceries and/or fuel, in denominations of $100 and $500, for one-time expenses. To avail of this Patient Support Fund and other programs offered by the Dr. H. Bliss Murphy Cancer Centre, it is extremely important that patients get a referral and get registered with the Cancer Centre. Once the patient is registered they are in the system and can then get access to services. A family physician can make the referral and there is no need for the patient to see a specialist regularly to stay in the system and access services. There is no follow-up by hospital social workers after discharge.

For patients in the St. John’s area, there is a Seniors’ Resource Group, and the Victorian Order of Nurses administers a Meals on Wheels program, which provides hot meals 2—3 times per week at $5 per meal.

A prostate cancer clinic is held at the Cancer Centre Library, and to help young children deal with cancer in the family, the Janeway Hospital Hostel has a pediatric family counseling centre.

A new brachytherapy program will begin in April, 2012, and Dr. Jonathan Greenland does video follow-up with cancer patients, easing the need to travel to St. John’s.

It is hoped that some of the information presented here will be of benefit to you, our readers, as you deal with the difficulties of a prostate cancer diagnosis, either for yourself or someone you care about.
PCCN—Avalon

The 2011 Christmas Social of PCCN—Avalon at St. James Church Hall was very well attended, and enjoyed by all.

Christmas Social

With entertainment by The Singing Legionnaires and a pot-luck meal, the Christmas spirit was certainly alive and well on December 5.

BIG Collector

One of the basic messages of our awareness campaign is that prostate cancer is not just a man’s disease. When a man is diagnosed, his whole family is affected. In the same way, our annual awareness event, Walk A Mile In His Shoes, is also a family affair. When five-year-old Mackenzie, grandson of Bill and Nancy Hurley of the PCCN—Trinity South Support Group, heard that his grandparents were walking to raise money for prostate cancer, he took on the responsibility of going door to door in his neighbourhood to collect for the cause. All on his own initiative, Mackenzie raised $105 to donate to his Pop’s support group. Congratulations, Mackenzie, and we all say a big “thank you” for your contribution.

Cheque Presentation

Elaine Holden, Social Worker at the Dr. H. Bliss Murphy Cancer Centre, accepts a cheque for $500 from Keith Guzzwell, Chair of the PCCN—Avalon Prostate Cancer Support Group.

Annual Survivors’ Retreat

The prostate cancer survivors’ retreat and conference is an event that is eagerly anticipated by many men from all around the province every year. This September 21 and 22, we will be hosting our ninth annual retreat. Each year, prostate cancer survivors gather from all parts of the province for a time of fellowship and sharing. Expert speakers are there to deliver the latest information in the field of prostate cancer survivorship. New developments in screening, diagnosis and treatment are highlighted, and advice and support are readily available for those of us living with the disease and its after-effects. We invite spouses and partners to attend, as we are planning to have information-sharing sessions for spouses and partners of survivors, as well as for survivors themselves. The conference begins on Friday afternoon, with registration and check-in. Supper will be served following the annual general meeting of the Advisory Board on Friday afternoon. An information session and entertainment are planned for Friday evening, and sessions continue on Saturday morning. The event wraps up with a farewell lunch on Saturday.

This year, after a long...

(continued on next page)
Prostate Cancer Survivors’ Conference 2012
Pre-Registration
Lavrock Camp and Conference Centre  Salmonier Line  September 21—22, 2012

Name: ................................................................................................................................................
Address: ................................................................................................................................................
Town / City: ............................................................. Postal code: ........... ........
Phone: .............................................. Email: .................................................................................................

Please check the appropriate boxes:

☐ I will stay at Lavrock Camp overnight on Friday.
☐ I will not be staying at Lavrock Camp overnight on Friday.
☐ My spouse/partner will attend the Conference with me and will also stay overnight.

Please note:
The camp has a maximum capacity of 150 persons. Registrations will be accepted on a “first come, first served” basis. Your accommodation and food will be free. Except in special circumstances, you will be responsible for your own transportation costs.
You may wish to pre-register as a group through your support group Chair or, if you are not a member of a prostate cancer support group, you may register by calling Darrell toll free at 1-888-753-6520 extension 230. You can also email Darrell at dyetman@nl.cancer.ca

Otherwise, please complete this form and send (by June 30, 2012) to:

Darrell Yetman, Canadian Cancer Society, P.O. Box 8921, St. John’s  NL  A1B 3R9

ANNUAL RETREAT

(continued from previous page)
successful association with the Lion Max Simms Memorial Camp in Bishop’s Falls, the 2012 Annual Survivors’ Retreat will be held at the Lavrock Centre, the Anglican Church’s camp on Salmonier Line on the Avalon Peninsula. (http://anglicanenl.net/lavrock-centre.php)
The Advisory Board decided to move the venue to the eastern end of the island this year for several reasons. It is an idea that had been considered in recent years, partly due to the larger population of survivors concentrated in the Avalon region, and also because there is a larger pool of potential speakers for the conference within the greater St. John’s area.
It is hoped that with the change of location we will have as successful a conference as we have enjoyed every year since its beginning.
Groups who are planning to hold Walk A Mile In His Shoes events in September are urged to take note that the 21 – 22 weekend will be taken up with the Fall Retreat and to plan accordingly.
If you plan to attend, please complete and send in the form above, or you can call or email us.
The Newfoundland and Labrador Prostate Cancer Support Groups Advisory Board

The activities of the Newfoundland and Labrador Prostate Cancer Support Group network are guided by a nine-member volunteer Advisory Board. Members are drawn from various stakeholder groups – the medical community, the Canadian Cancer Society—Newfoundland and Labrador Division (CCS-NL), provincial government, and prostate cancer survivors representing the community at large and our regional support groups.

The role of the Advisory Board is to decide on the major direction for provincial support group activities, and to advise and assist the Coordinator in the execution of those activities. Except in unusual circumstances Board meetings are held at noon on the last Thursday of every month at the head office of the CCS-NL in St. John’s. Board members who are unable to be at the meeting in person may join the meeting by teleconference.

At the time of this writing, the members of the Newfoundland and Labrador Prostate Cancer Advisory Board are:

Chairperson Curtis LeGrow
Tolson Chapman
William Kennedy Ph.D.
Susan Hammond R.N.
Derek Penney
Matthew Piercey
Chesley Stanford
Edward Vatcher
Charles Ward

Avalon Support Group
Avalon Support Group
Avalon Support Group, PCCN representative
Urology Nurse
Dept. of Health & Comm. Services
Executive Director, CCS-NL
Chair of PCCN – Trinity North
PCCN – Grand Falls - Windsor
Chair of PCCN – Labrador West

Provincial Coordinator Darrell Yetman arranges and publicizes the monthly meetings and records and distributes the minutes. By the time you are reading this article, Matthew Piercey will have been replaced on the Board by Maria Callahan, Manager of Community Services for the Canadian Cancer Society—Newfoundland and Labrador Division. The Prostate Cancer Advisory Board meets monthly at the St. John’s offices of the Canadian Cancer Society.

The Annual General Meeting and election of officers is held each fall at the provincial prostate cancer survivors’ retreat, which this year will take place on September 21 and 22. (see Annual Survivor Retreat, p. 4)

Officers of the Advisory Board serve a two-year term. Following the expiry of their term, and after a one-year absence from the Board, an individual can once again become an Advisory Board member.

OUR VOICE is a free Canadian magazine all about prostate cancer, published four times a year. For your free one-year subscription, mailed direct to your home or office, write to:

Parkhurst / Our Voice
400 McGill Street, 3rd Floor
Montréal, QC  H2Y 2G1

On the Internet: www.ourvoiceinprostatehealth.com
Or contact: denise@parkpub.com
Health Matters

Note: The articles presented here are for informational purposes only, and are not intended to take the place of professional health care advice. Please always talk to your physician about your concerns and questions related to your health.

Study Compares Three Prostate Cancer Treatments

A new look at the three most highly regarded prostate cancer treatment options is the first of its kind to consider long-term cost and quality of life post-treatment. Researchers at the Cleveland Clinic found prostatectomy surgery and brachytherapy to be less expensive and less toxic than external beam or internal seed implantation. The third choice, prostatectomy surgery, is used to remove the cancerous prostate entirely, through traditional, laparoscopic, or less-invasive robotic surgery.

Among patients in the study, external beam radiation, the most costly of the choices, resulted in the highest rates of urinary bleeding, scarring, and gastrointestinal issues. According to the findings, prostatectomy surgery and brachytherapy make better sense for both the patient and the U.S. healthcare system.

If patients choose radiation as their first course of prostate cancer treatment, follow-up procedures are limited. Should the prostate cancer return or remain following radiation, for example, prostatectomy surgery becomes more complicated and riskier. Reserving radiation as a secondary, Plan B strategy improves prostate cancer treatment outcomes and reduces the dose of radiation needed, thereby reducing undesirable side effects.

DID YOU KNOW ...

In Touch is carried as an electronic supplement to Nexus, the newsletter of the Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association?

New Hope For Erectile Dysfunction?

You may have heard about a new product called Neo40. The people who discovered it in 1998 won the Nobel Prize for doing so. Neo40 is used to treat high blood pressure, osteoporosis, the complications of diabetes, high cholesterol, the pain of arthritis, and it also helps the immune system fight off infections. The prime ingredient in this ‘wonder drug’ is nitric oxide (NO), which is also present in nitro-glycerine, administered to prevent heart attacks. Why is nitric oxide important for us to know about as prostate cancer survivors? Because it appears that Neo40 may also be able to help us to
My Story
by George Campbell
Executive member,
PCCN—Avalon

On February 26th, 2002, I was carrying groceries from my van and I had trouble breathing when I wanted to go out to get a second box. My wife, Doris, then decided that I had to see the doctor.

So on the 26th I went to my family doctor who referred me to a specialist for a stress test. I failed the test so badly that I was hospitalized immediately and within days I was scheduled for heart surgery. While in intensive care I had a massive stroke, losing all my left side functions.

Thank God, according to Doris, the nurse showed her how I would look coming out of surgery. Doris said that she would have fainted had she not known what to expect.

While I was recovering in the Miller Centre I had an ulcer attack and turned completely white. The nurse put me on oxygen and scheduled a test in which the doctor puts a tube and camera down your throat. That confirmed that I had many ulcers that needed treatment. During this treatment I received an email from my brother telling me to get checked for Prostate Cancer.

The DRE showed the doctors that I had something there. I was then scheduled for a biopsy which showed that my Gleason score was 9 and that surgery was not an option due to my previous stroke. I underwent hormone treatment at $1596.00 a shot and 35 treatments of radiation — luckily no adverse effects from either treatment. But in 2006 my PSA started to rise again. When it got to 25.6 I was put on hormone treatment again.

This time the cost was reduced to $333.10 a shot and a set of pills that were another $85.00. This reduced the PSA to 0.4 in three months. I expect to take one more shot and 90 more pills, then more watchful waiting.

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