Message from the Chair

What a year it’s been! But we made it.

And our organization thrived, grew and changed.

• We’ve mastered Zoom for our meetings, sharing sessions and presentations from professionals.

• We’ve successfully launched our Carer/Family Member Sharing sessions.

• We’ve disbursed $50,000 in funding for research into Androgen Deprivation Therapy (ADT), PSMA PET Scan Technology amongst others.

• We’ve explored offering hybrid sessions and have bought the equipment necessary to allow all of us to attend and interact online or face-to-face simultaneously.

• Sadly, we had to say “Salut” to seven Board members over the last year. Thank you David Cook, Jim Thomson, Norm McDonald, John Kirk, Ken Sanford, Michelle Faber and Jim Chittenden for your service and support to the Board. As a result, we have a new Chair, and six new Board members profiled below.

Looking to 2022, we’ve got a series of excellent presentations set up, we’ll be offering Zoom and Zoom/In-person meetings and we’ll have a tiny name change to align more closely with the broader Canadian association to which we belong.

Wishing you a warm holiday season and a bright new year.

Al Carl, Chair

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Monthly Meetings

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions on public gatherings, our monthly in-person meetings have been suspended. Moving into the new year, our plan is to offer hybrid meetings (i.e. video link + in-person sessions). In-person attendees will be able to access the session location at 6:30pm and the hybrid sessions will run 7:00-9:00pm.

We normally meet the 3rd Thursday of each month (except July and August) at St. Stephen’s Anglican Church, 930 Watson Street, off Pinecrest, north of the Queensway. Free parking is available at the rear of the church. A contribution for the St. Stephen’s food bank is always appreciated.

See Events page for details.

Our monthly meetings are dedicated to providing information, fellowship and support to all who have been touched by prostate cancer. Come join us anytime—we hope to see you soon! Watch our website for updates.

The content in The Walnut is taken from reputable sources. However, it is not intended nor recommended as a substitute for medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the advice of your own physician or other qualified health care professional regarding any medical questions or conditions.
Message From The Editors

Greetings and apologies!

It’s been almost a full year since we last produced an issue of The Walnut. And we’re now offering only a slimmed down version of it.

But we wanted to reach out, let you know about the busy times the Board has been having behind the scenes and give you a preview of the season ahead.

The Walnut will be along for the ride, as Board members expand their audience, open up their online presence and tap into the national perspective that Prostate Cancer Support Canada (PCSC) offers.

We can’t wait to bring you news of trials, advancements and things we’ve learned.

Cheers!

What’s in a Name?

If you’ve been around long enough, you know that our little prostate cancer support group has undergone a number iterations over the years as well as a few name changes.

In fact, you’ll likely have noticed a name change at the top the page you’re reading right now.

With our joining forces with Prostate Cancer Support Canada, we will aligning our name with theirs.

While we will be switching out the word “network” for the word “support”, rest assured that our commitment, our mandate and our mission will remain the same.

We have been and continue to be available for men and their families as the undertake the journey from diagnosis through treatment and recovery.

And we will continue to advocate for early PSA testing, prostate cancer research, and networking amongst patients and the medical community.

*photo by Markus Spiske on Unsplash*
Events

Presentations in 2020

We have a great slate of presenters lined up for the New Year. Fingers crossed that we can start meeting in person soon!

For now, we’re prepared to offer them online through Zoom.

January 20 – Zoom Meeting/ Presentation
Dr. Rob Rutledge, a Radiation Oncologist in Halifax, & Gabriela Ilie Ph.D, a Soillse Scientist in Prostate Cancer Quality of Life Research at Dalhousie University, will present in two-part parts:
• mental health issues associated with prostate cancer
• introduction to a prostate cancer patient empowerment program that they would like new patients in Ottawa to access.

For more info on Rob and Gabriella go to https://healingandcancer.org/about_us/our-presenters/

February 17 – Zoom Meeting/ Presentation
Dr. Lori McFarlane MD, CCFP, a Supportive Care Physician from Inspire Health. This British Columbia firm provides guidance on healthful diet changes, stress reduction, emotional counselling, decision-making, exercise, and personal coaching. They offer these services virtually to Ontario residents as well. Her topic will be emotions and cancer. For more info on Lori, go to https://www.inspirehealth.ca/about-us/team/#foobox-1/2/member-1954

March 17 – Zoom Meeting/ Presentation
Kristen Parise Registered Physiotherapist, PT BSc. MSc. BHSc. PT. Kristen is the Clinic Owner of Blueberry Therapy in Dundas Ontario. Her topic will be Pelvic Floor Muscle Training and Erectile Disfunction. For more about Kristen, go to https://www.blueberrytherapy.ca/kristen-parise

April 21 – Zoom Meeting/ Presentation
Justin Lorentz, M.Sc., Genetic Counselling. Justin practices clinically out of the Sunnybrook Odette Cancer Centre in their Cancer Genetics and High Risk Program. He will bring us up to date on genetics as it relates to Prostate Cancer. For more background on Justin’s work, go to: http://www.moleculargenetics.utoronto.ca/genetic-counselling-fac/2020/2/13/justin-lorentz

May 19 – Zoom Meeting/ Presentation
PCSO Annual General Meeting & Sharing

FUNDRAISING, OUTREACH & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT
In 2022 we will participate (CoVid-19 willing) in some special events. These include various ones in association with the national group Prostate Cancer Support Canada (PCSC) such as The Father’s Day Walk Run (https://www.thefathersdayrun.ca/)
Introducing Your Newest Board Members

With the recent retirement of seven Board members, the PCSO is pleased to profile six new members of the Board of Directors. Al Carl, who also joined late-last year, was profiled in the last Walnut.

Cyndi Beales-Alcock
Cyndi Beales-Alcock joined the Board of PCSO in April 2021 as Secretary. She is the proud spouse of a decorated veteran and the parent of two adult children. No stranger to Prostate Cancer, Cyndi lost her paternal Grandfather, Christmas Day 1990, to metastatic bone cancer, but she never imagined that at age 50 her husband, Ken, and she would be facing a similar battle. A few weeks before her husband’s prostatectomy, Cyndi became a Grandmother. Given her experience, Cyndi got involved with local area Prostate Cancer groups; she strongly advocates for the support, education, and research these groups offer.

Terry Day
After being treated for prostate cancer with radiation and hormone therapy in early 2017, Terry attended several PCSO meetings and got involved in supporting newly-diagnosed men and their partners/caregivers through the initial and ongoing stages of their cancer journey. He joined the PCSO Board in October 2020 and was later named Peer Support Team Lead. He worked with the Ottawa Regional Cancer Foundation to develop and deliver a one-day workshop to qualify selected PCSO volunteers as peer support team members. Terry’s ongoing support work also includes facilitation of PCSO sharing meetings and staying abreast of the latest developments in prostate cancer diagnosis and treatment.

Dean Avery
Dean Avery first attended a PCSO meeting in 2016, 9 days after his radical prostatectomy. Before that, he had unknowingly been a supporter of PCSO because of his work as a Team Captain for Movember for several years prior to his diagnosis. Dean personally raised over $10,000 in donations to the cause. Upon reading in The Walnut that the then Treasurer was retiring in 2020, Dean responded to the opportunity to ‘give back’ to PCSO and ‘apprenticed’ under the watchful eyes of Treasurer Jim Thompson for several months. Dean is also a trained peer supporter and has retired to the beautiful Kingston waterfront.

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Margaret Gourlay
Margaret Gourlay joined the Board in April 2021 as Director-At-Large and has focused on communications fundraising and group facilitation. In 1993, Margaret’s father, Jim, was diagnosed with prostate cancer. After surgery and radiation therapy, Jim became a strong advocate for early PSA testing and monitoring. More recently, Margaret’s brother-in-law was diagnosed with prostate cancer. A former University Professor and federal public servant, Margaret strongly believes that pro-social awareness training, public outreach and education can make a significant difference.

Jim Summers
Jim Summers was involved with the Ride For Dad first as a volunteer and then as a member of the National Ride For Dad Team (RFD). He retired from RFD in 2017 to care for his parents. In 2019, Jim was diagnosed with prostate cancer and had his prostate removed in February 2020. During Jim’s time with Ride For Dad, $300,000 was donated toward the purchase of the Da Vinci Robot. Jim never dreamed that eight years later, he would be on the business of that robot! Jim decided to get involved with PCSO to help get out the word and to offer support to men going through the same experience.

Rob Taylor
Rob Taylor joined the PCSO Board in April 2021 as a Director-at-large. A seasoned Government Affairs and Government Relations executive, Rob joined PCSO to gain a broader perspective related to his work and to better understand the disease as well the impact it has on the patient, couple and family.

Projects & Activities Funded
Many of you have been a big part of our organization’s fabric over the years. We can’t thank you enough for your support as a donor, participant or volunteer. Happily PCSO was in a position to fund a number of initiatives related to prostate cancer support and research this past year. These included key work related to androgen deprivation therapy (ADT). This is important because men receiving androgen deprivation therapy are at risk of bone loss and osteoporosis.

As always, the funds raised went to support prostate cancer research work in the Ottawa area. Here are some of the details:

1. $28K for research related to use of ADT
   • Lead: Rodney H. Breau, MSc, MD, FRCSC, Ottawa General Hospital
2. $30K for research related to the use of Prostate-Specific Membrane Antigen (PSMA), Positron Emission Tomography (PET) & Bone Health Care.
   • Lead: Dr. Luke T. Lavallée, MDCM FRCSC, Ottawa General Hospital
3. Ottawa Regional Cancer Foundation - $2K for ongoing work.
What is prostate cancer?

In each iteration of The Walnut, we explore symptoms, causes and risk factors, as well as the latest information on prostate cancer prevention. We also examine the importance of promoting awareness, so that men and their families can be proactive in managing their health.

Recent decades have seen dramatic changes in the management of prostate cancer based on novel research findings. We have moved from a “one-size-fits-all” approach in prostate cancer management to multidisciplinary strategies tailored to the individual patient and his specific cancer.

Every treatment approach involves potential harms and benefits. Every strategy can be debated. The intricacies and challenges of trying our best to understand and manage this disease continue to puzzle and to fascinate us.

Join the Team

For many of us, contributing is part of survival. We learn and find comfort by doing things with other survivors.

Participating in the prostate cancer-specific or the broader community helps sustain our quality of life. Your help is needed and you’ll find it rewarding.

Contact us at info@pccnottawa.ca or use the form on the website to introduce yourself and let us know how you’d like to help out. http://pccnottawa.ca/volunteers/join-team

Share Your Story

Knowing about other people’s personal experience of prostate cancer can be a source of support and inspiration when you or someone you love is going through cancer treatment. Your stories can also support the work of PCCN Ottawa to promote and deliver personal support, education, awareness and health advocacy on behalf of all men and their families that are affected by prostate cancer.

What is your experience in dealing with prostate cancer? What has this journey been like? What insights can you share with those about to make, or in the middle of making, important decisions and choices? If you are the spouse, partner or family member of a prostate cancer patient what experiences can you share to benefit others?

Write us, and we will include your stories in your stories in a future issue of The Walnut! We cannot promise we will publish every story we receive, but we will share as many as we can.