

# Awareness

The "PCCN-Toronto" and "Side by Side" Prostate Cancer Support Groups

## Welcome to a new feature in our PCCN-Toronto AWARENESS newsletter – "Ask the Doctor"

PLEASE SEE PAGE 4



MAY 2015

### PCCN-TORONTO Prostate Cancer Support Group

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PLEASE SEE  
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INSERT

\*\*\*\*

"DO IT FOR DADS  
WALK RUN"  
JOIN OUR TEAM  
JOIN OUR WALK  
MAKE A DONATION  
THANK YOU FOR  
YOUR SUPPORT

Please see page 2

Three doctors have agreed to participate in a Q & A-type forum by answering questions that you send in, to those that are on the minds of many, or the questions or prostate cancer topics that are important to the doctors at a particular time.

And so, if you have a prostate cancer-related question that would be of interest to others, please send it to me at [ronbenson@rogers.com](mailto:ronbenson@rogers.com) and I'll pass along the questions to our doctors for their consideration. Please know that because of the number of questions we might receive, or because some questions are not best answered in print and require a face-to-face conversation, or because of space limitations, your question may not appear in our newsletter. However, we will do our best.

We hope that *many* will participate in this new feature by submitting a question. And we hope that *all* our readers will find the column to be a welcome addition to our communication with you, our PCCN-Toronto group.

### Introducing our panel of medical practitioners:

**Dr. Sharon Sharir MD, MPH, FRCSC:** is a graduate of the University of Toronto medical school and the Urology residency program. During her residency she completed a Master of Public Health (MPH) degree at Columbia University where she spent 2 years in clinical research. She subsequently completed the U of T Uro-oncology Fellowship including additional training in laparoscopic surgical skills.

Dr. Sharir is currently a urologist at the Humber River Hospital and an Assistant Professor in the Department of Surgery at the University of Toronto.



**Dr. Robert (Rob) Hamilton MD, MPH, FRCSC:** Division of Urology at The University Health Network, completed his medical school and urology residency at the University of Toronto where he is now an Assistant Professor in the Department of Medicine. During his residency, he earned a Masters of Public Health (MPH) from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and completed a research fellowship at Duke University. Before joining the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Toronto, he completed a fellowship in Urologic Oncology at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York City. Dr. Hamilton treats all genitourinary malignancies but has particular interest in prostate cancer. He performs both open and robotic prostatectomies, and conducts research in prostate cancer.



**Dr. Danny Vesprini BSc, MSc, MD, FRCPC:** is a staff radiation oncologist at the Sunnybrook Odette Cancer Centre, Affiliate Scientist in the Biological Sciences at the Sunnybrook Research Institute, and an Assistant Professor in the Department of Radiation Oncology at the University of Toronto. Dr. Vesprini earned his B.Sc. degree in Molecular Biology and Biotechnology at McMaster University; his M.Sc. in the Department of Immunology, University of Toronto; and his MD from the Faculty of Medicine, U of T. He then went on to complete his residency in Radiation Oncology at the University of Toronto and did a fellowship focusing on prostate cancer treatment and research at the Princess Margaret Cancer Centre.



"Raising prostate cancer awareness" - [pccntoronto.ca](http://pccntoronto.ca)

## "DO IT FOR DADS" Scheduled for Ashbridges Bay Park on Father's Day June 21st, 2015

This year on **Father's Day** morning - fairly early on that morning - we will all gather once again at **Ashbridges Bay Park**, down on the Toronto waterfront, to celebrate the culmination of our major fundraising event of the year - Prostate Cancer Canada's **"Do it For Dads" Walk Run**.

But before that happens, we have a lot of work to do! That's the raising of those all-important funds, which are then allocated to prostate cancer research, education and awareness.

That's where you all come in, as **PCCN-Toronto** has once again entered a "team" of prostate cancer survivors in this year's event. The task of each individual team member is to ask their family members, friends, and co-workers to support their efforts in this "Walk Run" by going online and making a donation in their name. It is very simple to do, and, within minutes, an official tax receipt will be emailed to your donors.

But first, please join our team by clicking on this link: (hold control key down)

<https://secure.e2rm.com/registant/TeamFundraisingPage.aspx?teamID=588264&langPref=en-CA>

Once at our team page, please click on **JOIN THE TEAM**. This will take you to a page where you can enter your username and password from last year (if you still have them or have recorded them somewhere). If not, you can start a new account using a new username and password by clicking on **CREATE NEW ACCOUNT**.

Select a location—**Toronto** - next

Accept the waiver - next

Click **Join a Team** - next

Click on **Adult** - then click on **I will fundraise \$125 or more to waive my registration fee**.

Enter **PCCN-Toronto** under team name and click on **Search**.

When **PCCN-Toronto** comes up, click on team, then next.

Complete your personal information and follow the instructions to complete your registration. Please **record your username and password** somewhere, so that you can easily log back into your account.

***Remember that each family member planning to join you on your walk on Father's Day has to be registered this same way so that PCC knows exactly how many people to expect! Adults have to register by clicking the box which says that you will fundraise \$125 or more, etc., but you don't have to raise anything, since our team normally raises more than enough to cover everyone. Children also have to be registered but do not pay the registration fee.***

If you have any questions, please contact Aaron: email [aaronbacher@rogers.com](mailto:aaronbacher@rogers.com) or call **416-414-4961**.

You can make a donation to any team member. Simply go to [doitfordads.com](http://doitfordads.com) and click on **Find a participant or team**. Scroll down until you find the participant on our team that you want to support and click on their name. Once on their page, click on **DONATE NOW** and follow the instructions. You will receive your thank-you email and official tax receipt within minutes.

**Thank you for supporting PCCN-TORONTO.**

*If you would rather receive this newsletter electronically, please email [info@pccntoronto.ca](mailto:info@pccntoronto.ca) and we'll remove you from our regular mailing list and add your name to our email list. Thank you.*

**PCCN-Toronto & Side by Side**

invite you to attend a

**Scotiabank Awareness**

**Night Meeting**

at the

**Toronto Botanical Garden**

in the Floral Hall

777 Lawrence Ave. East at Leslie Street

on

**Wednesday  
May 27, 2015**

at 7:30 p.m.



featuring our guest speaker

**Dr. John Kell** BA, MD, FRCSC

Toronto East General Hospital

topic:

**"Radical prostatectomy:  
Do differences in technique  
make a difference?"**

Open, perineal, laparoscopic, robotic, nerve sparing... To what extent if any do differences in surgical technique influence cancer control, risks of surgery, recovery and longer term outcomes such as erectile dysfunction and incontinence?

A question period will follow.

All family members, partners & friends are most welcome!

**FREE parking!**

If you have any questions, please call us at  
**416-932-8820**

**Doors open at 7 p.m.**

**2015 Meetings Benefit  
North York Harvest Food Bank**

**P**lease bring some non-perishable food with you to our 2015 Scotiabank Awareness Night Meetings, which PCCN-Toronto will donate to the *North York Harvest Food Bank*.

Here is a list of their much-needed items. Please note that all expiration dates must be valid and canned goods cannot be damaged (dented). Thank you very much.

- |   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| √ Canned fish & meat                      | √ Flour                  |
| √ Canned vegetables                       | √ Brown pasta            |
| √ Canned fruit                            | √ Powdered milk          |
| √ Cooking oil - canola or olive oil       | √ Canned or dried beans  |
| √ Cereals - high fibre                    | √ Rice - white & brown   |
| √ Peanut/almond butter                    | √ Baby formula & diapers |
| √ Cookies (arrowroot, digestive, oatmeal) | √ Baby food & cereals    |
|   | √ Fruit juice - 100%     |



[www.northyorkharvestfoodbank.com](http://www.northyorkharvestfoodbank.com)



**A**ll of our 2015 Awareness Night meetings at The Toronto Botanical Garden and our PCCN-Toronto Man to Man Peer Support Group meetings at Valleyview Residence are being sponsored by Scotiabank.

We are very proud to continue calling our meetings at the Garden "The Scotiabank Awareness Night" meetings.

We sincerely thank Janet Slasor and all the people at Scotiabank for their very generous on-going financial support.

# ASK THE DOCTOR

"Thank you" to **Dr. Danny Vesprini**, who has agreed to share his perspective on the question around PSA testing.

Here's what he has to say:

## Why PSA screening is still important - despite what you might read or hear.

"Unfortunately, PSA screening has come under fire in the past several years, and most recently with the Canadian Task Force on Preventative Health Care's strong recommendation against PSA screening in men of any age. In a nutshell, the groups against PSA screening believe that too many men are 'over-diagnosed' and then treated for a disease that in the majority is detected at a very early stage. In my opinion, this stance is an inappropriate response that will ultimately lead to bad outcomes for men diagnosed with prostate cancer, as the problem is not over-diagnosing men, it is the over-treating them!

In Canada, because of a Prostate Cancer Canada grant which is, in fact, the first grant they have ever given, we have been leaders in showing that it is safe to screen men for prostate cancer, identify the disease at an early stage, and then carefully WATCH these men. This approach called 'Active Surveillance', allows us to make sure that disease that has the potential to become aggressive is detected and treated early if needed, while allowing those men with disease that does not threaten their life to be monitored without undergoing aggressive therapy and its inherent risks.

I am in 100% agreement that men who were diagnosed with very early stage disease because of PSA screening and went on to have surgery or radiation were not served well. But I do not believe that recommending against PSA screening is the appropriate response. I see

enough men in my clinic on a regular basis with very aggressive disease who have never had a PSA test, to know that PSA screening works. Therefore, I feel the Canadian Task Force lost a golden opportunity to improve the health of men by promoting prostate cancer screening, and then reinforcing intelligent management by promoting active surveillance in those men whose disease is caught very early.

I fear that the focus on stopping the 'over-diagnosis' and not the 'over-treatment' will just lead to under-diagnosis and ultimately poorer outcomes for men with prostate cancer in Canada.

Ask your family doctor to order the PSA test. If you get resistance, ask for a second opinion. Promote PSA screening by discussing it with your family and friends. **All screening tests have risks, but not getting screened is the riskiest test of all."**

## Blue wrist bands being distributed, helping us raise awareness!

**R**aise prostate cancer awareness by wearing one of our blue wrist bands. They are definitely "conversation starters" and you can talk about the importance of being screened (PSA blood test and digital rectal examination) and an early diagnosis. They are available at all of our meetings.

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**2015 Awareness Season  
off to a great start!**

**O**ur January and March Scotiabank Awareness Night meetings were both very thought-provoking and highly successful.

**Dr. Andrew Feifer**, a staff urologist at Credit Valley Hospital, was appearing before our Awareness audience for the first time and did an excellent job. He reinforced the importance of PSA and DRE testing, discounting the results from the Canadian and U.S. task forces, neither of which included a urologist or a radiation oncologist. He answered many questions from the audience.

For **Dr. Michelle Flax**, a clinical psychologist, this was not her first time speaking at one of our Awareness meetings. She had spoken to one of our audiences in 2005, and her message is quite different than that of our medical specialists. That's because she discusses the psychological effect that a cancer diagnosis can have on an individual. Since every person deals with stressful situations like this very differently, each diagnosis is unique from strictly a psychological outlook. Family support becomes crucial, as any cancer diagnosis affects the entire family. She also answered several questions from our attendees.

We sincerely thank them both for taking time and coming to speak to our group. Donations were made in their names to a charity of their choice.

If you were not able to attend either of these presentations, please look for them soon on our website at [pcntoronto.ca/videos](http://pcntoronto.ca/videos)

**Please tell us what you think of our newsletters, website and other programs by going to our website ([www.pccntoronto.ca](http://www.pccntoronto.ca)) and taking our brief survey. Thanking you in advance.**

**"Women need a REASON to have sex!"  
"Men just need a PLACE!"**

*Billy Crystal*

**Thanks  
... from the PCCN-Toronto Board**

**A**t our Annual Information Meeting (AIM) last year (August 26th), volunteers were invited to participate in our planning sessions.

In order of priority, the top recommendations resulting from this exercise were:

- a) address concerns regarding the Side by Side program,
- b) increase awareness of our programs among specialists,
- c) introduce a medical corner in our Newsletter,
- d) establish regular volunteer social events,
- e) increase awareness of our programs among medical doctors,
- f) introduce a buddy system for first-time attendees at Tuesday night Peer Support meetings,
- and g) firm up guidelines and policies for suggestions offered by volunteers to survivors.

All but the last two recommendations have been addressed to date, but they are still being looked at.

Thank you for your valuable input. It provided the Board with clear direction.

**New guidelines in place regarding our Side by Side support group.**

The Side by Side program has undergone some changes.

All meetings are now *BY APPOINTMENT ONLY*; through our support line 416-932-8820 or an email to [info@pccntoronto.ca](mailto:info@pccntoronto.ca).

You may choose to talk to one of our female volunteers by telephone, or in a face-to-face situation at 7 p.m. on the first Tuesday of each month at the Valleyview Residence.

*Winston Klass, Chairman*

# Our on-going projects for 2015



## Scotiabank Awareness Night Meetings

These meetings are held at the **Toronto Botanical Garden (Floral Hall)**, at the corner of Lawrence Avenue East and Leslie Street, from 7:30 - 9:30 p.m. Leading medical professionals speak on a range of topics related to prostate cancer and then, following a refreshment break, answer your questions. Family members and friends are welcome to attend. If you are on our mailing list, a notice of each meeting will be sent to you. **PARKING IS FREE.**

*Please bring some non-perishable food with you for the North York Harvest Food Bank. See page 3.*

<u>DATE</u>	<u>SPEAKER</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>
Jan 28	Dr. Andrew Feifer Credit Valley Hospital	Testing procedures & diagnosing prostate cancer.
Mar 25	Dr. Michelle Flax	The psychology of a cancer diagnosis.
May 27	Dr. John Kell Toronto East General Hospital	Radical prostatectomy: "Do differences in technique make a difference?"
Jul 29	Dr. Gerard Morton Odette Cancer Centre	Radiation and hormone therapy
Sep 16	Dr. John Bartlett Ontario Institute for Cancer Research	Research grants.
Nov 25	Dr. Dean Elterman Toronto Western Hospital	Incontinence & Erectile Dysfunction

### Man to Man Peer Support Meetings - 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

These meetings take place on the **first** and **third** Tuesday evenings of each month at **Valleyview Residence**, 541 Finch Avenue West (just west of Bathurst Street on the Branson Hospital site) in the All-Purpose Room. They provide an opportunity for men to talk in a safe and comfortable setting about dealing with their diagnosis of prostate cancer.

### Side by Side Peer Support Group

*This program has undergone some changes recently. Our ladies' support group, although still very active, now provides advice by appointment only. Please see previous page to read our latest guidelines.*

### Visitation

Trained volunteers, all prostate cancer survivors, will talk to you/your family in your home, by telephone or in the hospital. Each week our volunteers visit surgical patients at **Toronto General Hospital** (Thursday & Saturday) and **Sunnybrook Hospital** (Thursday), bringing them messages of hope and support.

### Counseling

Our volunteers counsel men in prostate cancer clinics at the **Princess Margaret Cancer Centre** (Monday through Friday), the **Odette Cancer Centre** (on Thursday), and **The Gale & Graham Wright Prostate Centre at North York General's Branson site** (on Tuesday afternoon).

### **PCCN - Toronto Board of Directors**

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