



# Awareness

Prostate Cancer Support Toronto

## A MESSAGE FROM THE CO-CHAIRS

With the end of our three-year term as co-chairs on Dec. 31, 2022, we'd like to reflect on the past three years at Prostate Cancer Support Toronto (PCS Toronto).

When we took over as co-chairs on Jan. 1, 2020, little did we know that the next three years would turn out the way that they did.

Early in the first quarter of 2020, we found out that Prostate Cancer Canada had merged with the Canadian Cancer Society. This left all the national prostate cancer support groups outside of British Columbia without an umbrella organization to support them. It also required us to change our name and logo and to re-incorporate. (We are incorporated as a non-profit corporation.) So we became PCS Toronto.

A few months later, COVID-19 took over the world with its related restrictions and lockdowns, forcing us to stop our in-person meetings at the Valleyview Residence. We switched to online meetings using the Zoom platform within a month. While that has worked well for most members, not all are comfortable with Zoom and have not participated. On the flip side, we now have people joining our meetings from across Ontario and Canada, as well as from faraway places like Australia. We are now trying to wait out COVID so that we can have some in-person meetings again. We are also investigating hybrid meetings. We continue to support men, their families, caregivers and friends through our phone helpline, email and our website, which is updated regularly.

The pandemic also forced us to suspend hospital and clinic visits. Our volunteers have returned to Sunnybrook's Odette Cancer Centre, as well as the Prostate Centre at North York General Hospital. We are still waiting for permission to return to The Princess Margaret Cancer Centre.

Within the last year or so, a new organization called Prostate Cancer Support Canada (PCS Canada) was created by the Prostate Cancer Foundation of British Columbia. It has taken the place of Prostate Cancer Canada and is actively supporting all the national prostate cancer support groups, including PCS Toronto. A national council with representatives from each province has been set up to work between the support groups and PCS Canada.

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PCS Toronto Support Line:  
(416) 932-8820  
Go to <https://pcstoronto.ca>  
for more information  
or contact us at  
[info@pcstoronto.ca](mailto:info@pcstoronto.ca).

## A MESSAGE FROM THE CO-CHAIRS

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With the end of our term as co-chairs, we would like to thank our fellow board members, the regular attendees of our Zoom support meetings, as well as our extended membership for their support over these past three years. We are also thankful for the co-operation we received from all the Ontario support group leaders and members, as well as PCS Canada.

We would like to introduce you to our incoming co-chairs – Ari Katz and Denis Farbstein, who will lead the group for the next three years starting in January 2023. Both have been members of our board of directors for many years and are intimately involved with helping manage the group's activities. We are sure all of you will join us in giving them the same great support that you have given both of us.

On behalf of Prostate Cancer Support Toronto, we would like to wish you and your loved ones a happy, healthy and prosperous year in 2023.

John Roth and Keith Braganza

## THE STATUS OF PROSTATE CANCER SUPPORT CANADA: A PERSPECTIVE

**By Winston Klass**

It has been over two years since the Prostate Cancer Foundation of British Columbia (PCFBC) invited support groups east of B.C. to join its national network.



PCFBC positioned itself simply as a back office for support groups (an appealing proposition). Of equal significance was the creation of an operating arm – Prostate Cancer Support Canada (PCSC) – and the fact that PCSC was overseen by a council composed primarily of provincial representatives, signalling transparency and sensitivity to support group needs.

So far, PCFBC has lived up to its back-office expectations – with joint fundraising initiatives, facilities for design and production of communication pieces, group insurance and equipment (complete with training) for hybrid support group meetings.

PCFBC has in fact been more than just a back office, with significant contributions made to support group activities – support targeted to advanced prostate cancer patients, those undergoing active surveillance and LGBTQ patients. It has also been involved with support for partners of diagnosed men, several education and awareness webinars, and a September conference (in collaboration with network members, with

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## THE STATUS OF PROSTATE CANCER SUPPORT CANADA

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the first day catering specifically to the needs of support group leaders).

The breadth, depth and proximity of the PCFBC relationship with its member groups exceeds levels experienced with previous umbrella groups. As a result, the overall impression east of B.C. is that the PCFBC network initiative has been quite successful. Several major support groups have not joined the network as yet. But it is expected that this will change as the benefits accrued from joining the PCSC network become more evident.

Members of our PCS Toronto support group have made solid contributions to PCFBC initiatives. Toronto Warriors form the nucleus of the national advanced prostate cancer support group. Phil Segal spearheads the national active surveillance support group and has also provided the lead for a productive Ontario fundraising initiative. In addition, I am on the PCFBC board and am a member of the national committee (which oversees PCSC). Keith Braganza, Phil Segal and myself are currently involved in recent efforts to develop a system for providing one-on-one advice to diagnosed men.

PCFBC is currently in a consolidation mode, intentionally leaving space for the network to organically define and assert itself. It is also encouraging more 'bottom up' initiatives – opportunities for support group leaders to work together, get to know each other and appreciate the provincial differences. Hopefully the PCSC network will continue to move forward in manner beneficial to all.

While PCFBC has made good progress (so far), there are several moving parts – and it will take some time before the PCSC network achieves a stable structure and modus operandi.



PCS Toronto members (L-R) Phil Segal, Keith Braganza and Winston Klass are actively involved in PCS Canada initiatives.

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## THE STATUS OF PROSTATE CANCER SUPPORT CANADA

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In the first place, the B.C. support groups have a long-standing and comfortable relationship with PCFBC – a relationship tailored to the B.C. prostate cancer support and health services environment. Groups east of B.C. and PCFBC, on the other hand, are still going through a rather sustained period of getting to know each other. Support group leaders east of B.C. are slowly getting to know their counterparts in B.C. (and vice-versa). As opportunities increase for dialoguing and working together, this process should quicken.

Within PCFBC, there is the recognition that the national committee (which oversees PCSC) should include more prostate cancer survivors. To this end, PCFBC is actively seeking seasoned, “battle scarred,” grassroots support-group members – folks who would provide useful and relevant input to the national committee.

Signals regarding the use of PCFBC research funds need to be clarified. PCFBC has an active research arm, financed by vigorous ongoing promotions in B.C. and in support of B.C.-based initiatives. It is expected that, given the realities of the politics of fundraising, support groups interested in making contributions to research will, in the short term, be expected to focus on projects within their own provinces supported by funds raised within each province. Hopefully, group leaders east of B.C. will learn much from fundraising collaborations with their promotions savvy B.C. colleagues.

There is also a branding issue (which arose in particular for the Toronto support group). Toronto has been designing and producing its own communications pieces (brochures, etc.) with, as expected, dominant Toronto branding. Material produced by PCFBC has prominent PCFBC branding and this creates some dissonance when used for fundraising outside of B.C. Folks heavily favour having the funds that they raise applied to local/provincial projects. And the appearance of prominent B.C. branding on the PCFBC-generated designs sends out an unwelcome signal. PCFBC therefore is contemplating the feasibility of changing to national branding.

Finally, you should know that the PCSC council (the operating arm of PCFBC) is comprised of provincial representatives, with each representative having an alternate. Representatives attend council meetings, keep the council apprised of provincial support group activities, inform provincial group leaders of PCFBC initiatives and programs, and participate in committees associated with PCSC networking initiatives. Toronto is allocated two representatives. They are Walter Eadie of PCS Oakville/Mississauga (whose alternate is Ed Long of Thunder Bay), and Phil Segal of PCS Toronto (whose alternate is Clark Weddell of PCS Durham). Positions are renewable every two years and you will be notified of openings for Toronto representatives. Many of you have accumulated valuable experience with regard to grassroots prostate cancer support activities and hopefully some of you would be tempted to consider participating on the PCSC council.

A happy new year to all!

# Naturopathic Care for Prostate Cancer

By John Schofield

Naturopathic doctor Eric Marsden discussed a wide range of approaches to improving prostate cancer outcomes during a very informative and well-received Awareness Night presentation via Zoom on Sept. 28, 2022.

During a one-hour presentation to about 40 attendees, the Vaughan, Ont.-based expert in naturopathic approaches to cancer care discussed several therapeutics that have shown some evidence-based effectiveness in fighting prostate cancer, including melatonin, modified citrus pectin (MCP), hyperthermia, fermented wheat germ extract, pomegranate, genistein (soy beans) and curcumin. A busy Q&A session after his presentation stretched to just beyond 9 p.m.

Dr. Marsden, who is the founder of the Marsden Centre for Excellence in Integrative Medicine, also discussed treatments for some of the most common side-effects stemming from prostate cancer treatment.



Dr. Eric Marsden

For erectile dysfunction, for instance, he said that acupuncture and the supplement arginine have helped some men. And to help prevent osteoporosis resulting from androgen deprivation therapy (ADT), he recommended doing a baseline bone density test before treatment, engaging in regular resistance training, and supplementing with vitamin D3, vitamin K2, and an acid-base balance supplement like Basentabs

For maintaining cognitive function, Dr. Marsden suggested supplementing with CoQ10, Lion's Mane and Lipic Acid, along with regular physical activity.

He noted that a diet that features reduced animal protein, less dairy, more plant-based foods and even intermittent fasting can help promote cancer prevention. Alcohol consumption should also be reduced in accordance with the "2/4 rule" – no more than two drinks at a time and a limit of four servings per week.

In Canada, he explained, naturopathic doctors receive four years of post-graduate training and are a self-regulated profession. They believe in an integrated, team-approach to health care that complements conventional medicine and incorporates other disciplines, including traditional Chinese medicine, nutrition science, physiotherapy and psychology.

Dr. Marsden is a graduate of the Toronto-based Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine and, among his many achievements, he has lectured internationally on integrative cancer care, intravenous therapy in integrative medicine and environmental medicine, and he has been quoted many times as an expert by media organizations such as the CBC, the Toronto Star and Reader's Digest.

A full video recording of his presentation can be found here: <https://pcstoronto.ca/2022/10/22/video-naturopathic-or-integrative-care-for-prostate-cancer/>

## Book the Dates: A Great Year Ahead for Awareness Nights in 2023

DATE	SPEAKER	TOPIC
Jan. 31, 2023	Dr. Andrew Evans Mackenzie Health	Understanding Gleason scores and pathology reports
March 28, 2023	Dr. Martin Smoragiewicz Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre	Immunotherapy in prostate cancer
May 30, 2023	Dr. Brian Wodlinger	ExactVu micro-ultrasound technology for targeted biopsies
July 25, 2023	Dr. Richard Wassersug University of British Columbia	Androgen deprivation therapy (ADT) and bone health
Sept. 26, 2023	Justin Lorentz, Sunnybrook and Emily Thain, UHN	Prostate cancer genetics
Nov. 28, 2023	Reanne Booker, Alberta Health Services	Intimacy after prostate cancer

### NYGH PROSTATE CENTRE MARKS 15TH ANNIVERSARY

A Canadian leader in developing the safer, trans-perineal approach to prostate biopsies is celebrating its 15th anniversary.

The Gail and Graham Wright Prostate Centre at North York General Hospital marked the occasion at a dinner on Sept. 19, 2022, at Il Ponte Cucina Italiana restaurant on Queen Street East in Toronto. The special presentation for the evening was given by Dr. Abi Kirubarajan of the centre and was titled Results of 623 MRI Fusion-Guided Transperineal Prostate Biopsies Under Local Anesthesia. The event was solely supported by Tolmar Pharmaceuticals Canada.

In 2016, NYGH's Gale and Graham Wright Prostate Centre became the first in Canada to use the so-called TPBx (trans-perineal biopsy) approach, which involves obtaining the biopsy using a needle through the skin. Studies have shown that TPBx is a safer alternative for patients, as compared to transrectal biopsies, due to the lower risk of serious infections, which can result in hospitalization and admission to an intensive care unit. Data shows that this method of prostate biopsy has the same accuracy rate, if not better, than conventional transrectal biopsies.



## A Successful 2022 Father's Day Walk Run!

For the second year in a row, PCS Toronto took part in the Father's Day Walk Run on Father's Day, Sunday, June 20th. This continued our tradition of supporting prostate cancer support and awareness for many years as PCCN Toronto (with Prostate Cancer Canada) and currently as PCS Toronto, a member of Prostate Cancer Support Canada.

This year was also a somewhat sad event in that our usual team captain, Aaron Bacher, would not be leading the team due to his passing a few months earlier. In addition, one of the team's co-captains and top fundraisers, Stan Mednick, had also passed away late last year. In their honour, the team was named PCS Toronto (Team Bacher-Mednick).

Sunday was a beautiful day to get together in person for the first time in a couple of years. There was a small turnout but everyone who attended was very enthusiastic.

Phil Segal, our PCS Toronto treasurer, together with his wife Tanny and daughter Anne and son-in-law Andrew and two grandsons Ben and Jonah gathered at the Ashbridge's Bay site on Woodbine Beach. They were joined by PCS Toronto's co-chair Keith Braganza and his wife Sharon and co-chair John Roth and his wife Irene. John and Irene's son and daughter from Arizona and their kids were there, as well.

The morning started early with a tailgate (really a table-gate) party in the parking lot at Ashbridge's Bay and then continued with the walk on the boardwalk by the water.

The Bacher family, including Aaron's sons, his wife Ronnie and assorted friends and relatives, did a separate walk-run in the Thornhill area.

The board at PCS Toronto would like to thank everyone who participated in fundraising and especially all those who donated to the cause. Just over \$19,000 was raised by PCS Toronto, which will go to supporting prostate cancer support and awareness. In terms of fundraising, PCS Toronto ranked third among all teams in Canada and also had five members among the top 25 individual fundraisers in Canada.



John Roth, Phil Segal and their families gather on the boardwalk during the Father's Day Walk-Run in June at Ashbridge's Bay.

## Celebrating Lives: Remembering Bill Lifchus and Glen Tolhurst

Members of PCS Toronto were saddened to learn of the recent passing of two leaders in Ontario's prostate cancer support community: Bill Lifchus and Glen Tolhurst.

Bill, a former member of PCS Toronto's board of directors, was a pharmacist by training and was remembered on his memorial web page as "friendly and generous to a fault." He died on Nov. 22. Numerous family members, friends and acquaintances shared tributes online at <https://steelsmemorialchapel.com/condolence/william-lifchus/>.

One reflection was shared by Toronto urologist, surgeon and medical professor Dr. Jack Barkin, a previous PCS Toronto Awareness Night speaker.

"Very saddened by Bill's passing," he wrote. "Having him work part-time in the office for the past many years was very rewarding. The patients that he helped will miss him terribly.

"He would always give me the latest updates about Israel, business ideas, his grandchildren, the upcoming events that he was planning and our colleagues," added Dr. Barkin. "A great man who will be missed."

PCS Toronto board member Ari Katz remembered Bill as "a man with a heart of gold" who was especially supportive of men with erectile dysfunction as a result of their treatment. His advice and information "really helped to settle men's nerves," he said.

Glen Tolhurst, a longtime PCS Toronto member and occasional facilitator and the founder of Prostate Cancer Support Group Waterloo-Wellington, died on July 14. The sad event was made sadder by the passing of his wife of 51 years, France, only four days later.

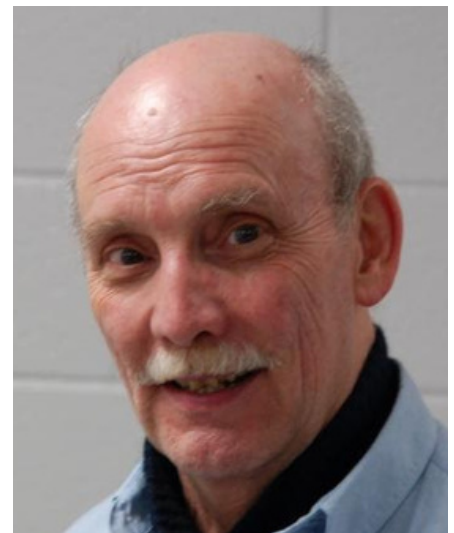
Following a successful battle with prostate cancer in 2009, Glen co-founded the Prostate Cancer Support Group of Waterloo Wellington. He also travelled regularly from his Guelph residence to attend PCS Toronto meetings at the Valleyview Residence. He was on the roster of meeting facilitators and responded to telephone calls from time to time received on the PCS Toronto support line.

"Thank you, Glen, for seeing us through a frightening journey and teaching us how to guide others," said a tribute written by Bill and Kareen Faulkner on Glen and France's memorial web page.

A native of Regina, Sask., Glen ultimately enrolled in ROTP (Air Force) at the University of Manitoba and graduated with a degree in mechanical engineering. After graduating with an MBA from the University of Western Ontario, he went on to become an operations executive for many years.



Bill Lifchus



Glen Tolhurst





## A Message for Men on Active Surveillance

While PCS Toronto's twice monthly peer support meetings cater to men at various stages on their prostate cancer journey – ranging from newly diagnosed to advanced prostate cancer – those recently diagnosed and considering active surveillance may benefit from dialogue within a group dealing specifically with active surveillance.

This was one of the main reasons behind the establishment of Prostate Cancer Support Canada's nationwide active surveillance group.

The group meets on the second Thursday of each month at 7:30pm EDT. It is facilitated by Phil Segal, a PCS Toronto board member who has been on AS since his initial diagnosis in 2007. Phil actively encourages all men on AS to join the Canadian nationwide group. In the AS community, strength in numbers benefits all men on AS and new attendees are always welcome.

To register for the monthly meeting please use the link: <https://www.prostatecancersupport.ca/support-groups/>

In addition to the Canadian nationwide AS group, there are two other excellent sources for AS support.

The AnCan active surveillance group in the U.S. meets on a weekly basis and offers great information and support. The link for further information is <https://ancan.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/AS-PCa-PDF-flyer.pdf>. Lastly, Active Surveillance Patients International is a strong resource for AS information. They present monthly webinars on a variety of interesting topics dealing with AS and featuring many of the leading doctors specializing in AS. The link for further information is <https://aspatients.org/>.

## A SUCCESSFUL MOVEMBER 2022

It was a successful Movember in Toronto, thanks in part to active Movember volunteer and PCS Toronto member Glen Williams, pictured at right. Glen has been a speaker at Movember events and appeared in a CTV Toronto report to kick off the men's health campaign at the end of October: <https://www.ctvnews.ca/mobile/video?clipId=2557167>.

The Movember movement, famous for its many mustaches, raises funds to promote awareness of and research into men's health issues such as prostate cancer, testicular cancer and depression.



# IN THE NEWS



## BLACK MEN IN ONTARIO AT HIGHER RISK, STUDY SHOWS

A new study published in the Canadian Medical Association Journal indicates that men who immigrated from West Africa and the Caribbean have a significantly higher incidence of prostate cancer than other immigrants and long-term residents in Ontario.

The research was sponsored in part by the Brampton-based Walnut Foundation, a health and prostate support group that focuses on the Black Community. Our own Winston Klass is a director.

According to the report, which looked at population-based data between 2008 to 2016, Ontario has the second-highest age-standardized incidence rate of prostate cancer of all provinces, at 121.8 cases per 100,000. Men who had immigrated from West Africa and the Caribbean had 171 per cent and 90 per cent, respectively, higher incidences of prostate cancer, the study showed.

The study also found that men from South Asia tend to have a lower incidence than other Ontario men. It recommended that future research should focus on further exploring prostate cancer risk and epidemiology, including screening, stage of diagnosis, treatment patterns and mortality. (Source: CBC News)

## NDP MPP CALLS FOR OHIP COVERAGE FOR ALL PSA TESTS

Niagara Falls NDP MPP Wayne Gates is calling on Ontario's Conservative government to ensure that OHIP covers the cost of PSA testing for all men referred by a physician, even if they show no symptoms of prostate cancer.

In late November, Gates introduced a motion in the provincial legislature saying that "the Ontario government should follow the lead of eight other Canadian provinces and ensure PSA testing is an eligible procedure under OHIP for individuals referred by their healthcare provider."

Gates previously introduced the non-binding motion, which received all-party support, but the government failed to follow up with action, he said.

PSA testing guidelines posted online by the Ontario government say OHIP will only cover the laboratory test if a man's physician or nurse practitioner "suspects prostate cancer" based on family history, race or the results of a physical examination or if the man has already been diagnosed with prostate cancer and is receiving treatment or a check-up. (Source: Toronto Sun)

## INTRODUCING OUR BOARD

Since its inception in 1994, Prostate Cancer Support Toronto (PCS Toronto) has been ably guided by a volunteer board of directors chosen from among its members.

Over the years and through two name changes, the group has helped thousands of men on their personal prostate cancer journeys, with funding drawn from donations, our annual Father's Day Walk-Run and PCS Canada.

Our board today numbers 12 regular members and two associates: John Roth, Keith Braganza, Ron Benson, Winston Klass, Bernie Schoub, Jerry Garshon, Allan Lappin, Phil Segal, Denis Farbstein, Ari Katz, Darryl Radstake, Roberto Stopnicki, Govindakumar Ramakrishna and John Schofield.

Some members of the board have taken responsibility for certain tasks. Here's an overview of those tasks and the board members involved:

**Ari Katz:** Incoming co-chair as of January 2023. Ari also serves as the group's Awareness Nights co-ordinator.

**Denis Farbstein:** Incoming co-chair as of January 2023. Denis is also PCS Toronto's phone support line co-ordinator and looks after the group's "hearts and flowers" service for members and their families dealing with significant life events.

**John Roth:** John is outgoing co-chair and webmaster.

**Keith Braganza:** Keith is outgoing co-chair.

**Ron Benson:** Ron currently co-ordinates and edits the "Ask the Health Team" newsletter articles, communicates with Awareness Night (AN) speakers and handles AN flyer revisions and editing. He also oversees volunteer communications for Princess Margaret Cancer Centre volunteers, is PCS Toronto's librarian, and looks after scheduling and training of our meeting facilitators.

**Winston Klass:** Formerly a chairman of PCS Toronto and now an associate, Winston has taken a small step back from his PCS Toronto duties to take on a board role with PCS Canada. He remains moderator for the Toronto Warriors group, which supports men with advanced prostate cancer.

**Allan Lapin:** Allan is our mailings and communications co-ordinator.

**Darryl Radstake:** Darryl serves as board secretary.

**Phil Segal:** Phil is the treasurer for PCS Toronto and organizer of social events for volunteers.

**John Schofield:** John produces the group's quarterly newsletter.

**Roberto Stopnicki:** Roberto handles volunteer scheduling at Sunnybrook, North York General Hospital's Consumers Road location, and Princess Margaret Cancer Centre.